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Congressman Daniel Lipinski Representing the 3rd District Of Illinois

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CONGRESSMAN LIPINSKI CALLS ON METRA TO ADD MORE TRAINS ON THE HERITAGE CORRIDOR

January 22, 2010

Today, Congressman Dan Lipinski (IL-3) called on Metra to add weekday train service to the Heritage Corridor line, which currently offers three weekday round trips between Joliet and Chicago's Union Station, with stops in Summit, Willow Springs, Lemont, and Lockport.

"I write to request that Metra implement a much-needed increase in weekday commuter rail service along the Heritage Corridor," Lipinski stated in a letter to Metra. "I strongly encourage Metra to coordinate with Canadian National Railway (CN) – the line's right-of-way owner – to accomplish this important service enhancement.

"Three round-trip trains per weekday are simply not enough to meet the current and future needs of residents along this corridor," Congressman Lipinski continued. "Given recent infrastructure upgrades to the line in 2007 that significantly improved efficiency and could facilitate additional trains, increased Metra service will provide more flexibility for current commuters and facilitate new ridership, and will help meet the future needs of residents along the corridor."

Rail capacity along the Heritage Corridor was increased in 2007 by the Brighton Park Junction modernization project, which eliminated delays that often forced the 70 trains passing through the junction each day to wait 10 minutes or more for manual track clearance before proceeding. This reduces the potential for commuter and freight train conflicts, and provides the flexibility necessary to add Metra trains.

Having already secured \$100 million in federal funding and \$300 million in state funding for the CREATE rail modernization program, Congressman Lipinski continues to seek additional money for the program, which will help untangle the region's roads and its commuter and freight rail system, thereby shortening commutes and growing the economy. The Brighton Park Junction modernization was a "pre-CREATE" project, and is an example of the type of projects that are being funded under CREATE.

Congressman Lipinski has worked successfully with Metra in the past. Last year, he was able to bring together Metra, Norfolk Southern Railway, and local municipal officials to reach an agreement that brought long-awaited weekend Metra service to the Southwest Service line, which stops in communities such as Ashburn, Wrightwood, Oak Lawn, Chicago Ridge, Worth, Palos Heights, and Palos Park.

"The lack of trains on the Heritage Corridor means there's a huge gap in Metra service in the area between the Southwest Service and BNSF Railway lines," Congressman Lipinski said. "The result is that many of my constituents who live along the corridor and work downtown have to drive on overcrowded roads, waste time driving to distant Metra stations on other lines, or settle for another, less convenient public transportation option. For some people, it undoubtedly means they are simply cut off from jobs and educational opportunities in the city. It's time we changed that. I look forward to continuing to partner with Metra to increase, enhance, and expand commuter rail service in Northeastern Illinois."

Click [here](#) to view the letter Congressman Lipinski sent to Metra.



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