



Governor Quinn Invests \$102 Million in High-Speed Rail Upgrades on Chicago-St. Louis Line

Governor Pat Quinn announced a \$102 million investment from the Illinois Jobs Now! capital program to improve system performance and reliability on a key segment of the Chicago-to-St. Louis high-speed rail line. The investment will allow the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Union Pacific Railroad to move forward with construction of a new bridge over the Kankakee River near Wilmington, as well as other safety and capacity enhancements along the busy corridor between Joliet and Dwight. Today's announcement is part of Governor Quinn's agenda to create jobs and build a 21st century infrastructure that will drive Illinois' economy forward.

"This investment is going to put people to work and take us one step closer to completing the high-speed rail connection between Chicago and St. Louis," Governor Quinn said. "None of this work on the Chicago-St. Louis high-speed line would be possible without the outstanding cooperation of the Union-Pacific Railroad. Investing in our Chicago-St. Louis line today will pay dividends to Illinois residents for years to come."

The \$102 million investment will build a second set of tracks between Mazonia and Elwood, including the new Kankakee River bridge to accommodate the increased capacity. The work, which will be performed by the Union Pacific Railroad and overseen by IDOT, will take place in 2016 and 2017. The \$102 million investment, part of the \$550 million the governor identified in Illinois Jobs Now! to improve passenger rail service across the state, will create or support 918 construction jobs.

Once completed, the improvements will eliminate about five minutes in travel time immediately and put the final upgrades in place between Joliet and Dwight in anticipation of the eventual double-tracking of the remainder of the Chicago-St. Louis corridor. This double-tracking will then allow more daily round-trips at increased 110-mph speeds.

"We value the public-private partnership between IDOT's Bureau of Railroads, the Federal Railroad Administration and Union Pacific Railroad in making the rail corridor between Chicago and St. Louis the premier

high-speed passenger corridor in the county," Union Pacific Railroad's Assistant Vice President for Public Affairs Wes Lujan said.

Today's announcement pushes the state's total commitment to the Chicago-St. Louis route to \$358.8 million, with the remainder of the \$1.7 billion project federally funded. Trains currently travel at 110 mph between Dwight and Pontiac. By the end of 2015, the trip between Chicago and St. Louis will be reduced to 5 hours from the current 5½ hours. When all of the improvements are finished in 2017, the trip will have been reduced even further to 4½ hours.

For more information on the high-speed rail project, visit www.idothsr.org.

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