



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR PAT QUINN

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Governors Quinn and Daniels Sign Agreement to Begin Work on Illiana Expressway

Planning Phase Begins This Year for New Expressway That Will Mitigate Congestion, Bring 14,000 Jobs to Illinois

CHICAGO – June 9, 2010. Governor Pat Quinn was joined by Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels today to sign legislation that will bring the two states together to build the Illiana Expressway, connecting I-55 from south of Joliet to I-65 near Lowell, Ind.

The Governors together signed a Memorandum of Understanding outlining a mutual commitment to the project, which is expected to create nearly 14,000 jobs in Illinois. Governor Quinn also signed Illinois Senate Bill 3659 which creates the Public Private Agreements for the Illiana Expressway Act.

“Today is a milestone in our efforts to build the Illiana Expressway,” said Governor Quinn. “The new expressway will open an era of bi-state collaboration and provide a crucial economic boost for both states. This is a significant achievement for northeast Illinois, which will create thousands of jobs and bring economic development benefits to this area.”

The Illiana Expressway will connect drivers on I-55 in Western Will County to I-65 in Lake County, Ind., and will serve as an alternate route to the highly traveled I-90/94 corridor. The new Illiana Expressway will also provide much needed access to Will County’s burgeoning freight and logistics centers and create more jobs in Will County to serve its fast-growing residential population.

“In Indiana, we believe great infrastructure means more jobs. We’re in the middle of the biggest road building boom in Indiana history and the Illiana project is its next natural extension,” said Governor Daniels. “Safer roads, less congestion and countless new jobs make this a huge step forward for the entire region.”

With its central location, the Chicago region serves as the nation’s largest freight hub, with over one third of all freight traffic passing through the region. The freight industry generates more than \$8 billion per year for the local economy, but congestion has threatened the region’s competitive advantage. Local planners have identified the Chicago Southland as an ideal location for cargo-oriented development, due to the existence of both waterways and rail intermodal yards. The Illiana Expressway will allow for more efficient movement of goods between transportation modes, while attracting new logistics and manufacturing companies looking to gain greater access to the marketplace.

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"Will County is the fastest growing county in Illinois, currently accounting for nearly half of the state's overall population growth. Transportation is the key to sustainable growth in the region," said Illinois Transportation Secretary Gary Hannig.

Illinois Senate Bill 3659 creates the Public Private Agreements for the Illiana Expressway Act. It allows IDOT to enter into one or more public private agreements with one or more contractors to develop, finance, construct, manage, or operate the Illiana Expressway on behalf of the state. The Illinois bill had a number of co-sponsors, including: Sen. Toi Hutchison (D - Olympia Fields); Sen. A.J. Wilhelmi (D - Joliet); Rep. Barbara Flynn Currie (D-Chicago); Rep. Anthony DeLuca (D-Chicago Heights); and Rep. Lisa Dugan (D-Bradley).

"This region serves as a crossroads of our nation's transportation system, and the Illiana Expressway will bring economic development and much-needed relief to the area's busy roadways. Today is a very important step forward for a vital, job-creating project, and I'm looking forward to continuing the work at the Federal level to make the Illiana a reality," said U.S. Rep Debbie Halvorson (IL-11).

The two states will begin their joint effort later this year with the initiation of Environmental Studies, which will seek participation from all stakeholders to define the transportation needs and evaluate alternatives.

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