

Durbin, Duckworth, Bush, Budzinski Applaud More Than \$28 Million In Relief For Metrolink

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EAST ST. LOUIS – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) and U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), along with U.S. Representatives Cori Bush (D-MO-01) and Nikki Budzinski (D-IL-13), today joined U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg to announce \$28 million in U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) federal funding for MetroLink, the transit system servicing St. Louis and the Metro-East. The federal funding, supplied through Federal Transit Administration (FTA) emergency relief funding, will go toward repairing the MetroLink public transit system following the severe flooding in July 2022 that caused two fatalities and damaged the transit system by destroying rail vehicles, two station elevators, and a signal house. The extreme

flooding also damaged five miles of light rail track bed and communications, signal, and fiber optics systems housed in two communications rooms and four signal houses.

“Last summer, the Metro-East tragically experienced severe flooding that destroyed essential components of the public transit system that Illinoisans rely on to travel around the St. Louis region. I fought to ensure that MetroLink would have access to the necessary federal emergency relief funding to rebuild and continue to serve its riders,” said Durbin. “I’m grateful that my colleagues and I’s efforts yielded \$28 million in federal funding to address the damages. With this federal support, MetroLink will bounce back.”

“The severe storms and flooding over the last few years in the Metro East has devastated so many families and communities and had a remarkable impact on the local economy,” Duckworth said. “Today’s funding is critical in helping the region recover from capital and operating losses incurred by years of extreme weather. I will continue working alongside Senator Durbin to help bring the necessary federal resources like this back to Illinois to restore affected communities and revive local economies.”

“Around this time last year, my community was underwater when we received two months of rain in less than six hours. My office and I were on the ground talking to people who couldn’t get to work, school, and medical appointments because of the flood’s impact on our transit system. When we talk about losing access to public transit, we’re not talking about a mere inconvenience—we’re talking about survival,” said Bush. “I was proud to have advocated for \$214 million to repair transit systems impacted by the climate crisis alongside former Missouri Senator Roy Blunt and Senator Dick Durbin. It brings us pride that nearly \$28 million of that money will go straight to the St. Louis Region to address the 2022 flood damage. We will never stop advocating for our communities.”

“The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law isn’t just rebuilding our roads and bridges, it’s helping communities recover from disasters and investing in the future of our economy and our environment,” said Budzinski. “Today, I joined Secretary Pete Buttigieg, Senator Dick Durbin and Congresswoman Cori Bush to announce nearly \$28 million to help MetroLink recover from the devastating flooding our region experienced last year. This is on top of \$196 million secured for new railcars on this vital transit system. Together, these funds will help pave the way for faster, safer, more efficient travel for passengers while promoting resiliency in the face of future extreme weather.”

The lawmakers, led by Durbin and Bush, pushed for the emergency relief funding, securing FTA funding for MetroLink in the Fiscal Year 2023 omnibus appropriations bill that passed Congress last December. Last Congress, Durbin was an outspoken advocate of the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*, which designated a \$1.2 trillion

investment in the nation's infrastructure. Illinois is set to receive \$17 billion in direct funding from the historic legislation as well as the ability to compete for billions more in competitive grants made possible by the law.