



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR PAT QUINN

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Tuesday, January 24, 2012

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Governor Quinn Announces \$21.7 Million Award to Create “Safe Routes to School”

Program Supports Safety Instruction, Infrastructure Development and Encourages Alternative Modes of Transportation

SPRINGFIELD – January 24, 2012. Governor Pat Quinn today announced \$21.7 million in Illinois Safe Routes to School grants to schools and communities across the state. The federally-funded program is designed to enable and encourage children to walk and bike to school safely.

“These projects enhance roads, sidewalks, and other infrastructure within communities, which is important in keeping both drivers and pedestrians safe,” Governor Quinn said. “Encouraging children to walk and bike to school not only makes school routes safer, but also improves the quality of life for Illinois residents by easing traffic congestion and reducing emissions.”

The 229 funded projects support sidewalk repair and equipment for police and crossing guards. The funding includes \$1.5 million to assist communities with safety training, educational materials, and public service announcements encouraging safe walking and biking to school. This will help ensure a consistent statewide program and favorable outcomes from the Safe Routes to Schools projects.

“The Illinois Safe Routes to School grants help us build pedestrian-friendly roads and sidewalks while educating students and families on the importance of alternative forms of transportation and the benefits of an active lifestyle,” Illinois Transportation Secretary Ann Schneider said. “With these funds, we are also able to help communities implement projects aimed at lowering fuel consumption and air pollution.”

“This is exciting news for the entire state,” said Ron Burke, Executive Director of the Active Transportation Alliance, an advocacy organization that works to improve conditions for biking, walking and public transportation. “When we make bicycling and walking to school safer and more convenient, we are making our air cleaner and helping more kids get active and healthy.”

Illinois Safe Routes to School is a program of the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration, designed to enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school and encourage a healthy lifestyle from an early age. The program also facilitates projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of primary and middle schools.

For more information about the Illinois Safe Routes to School Program and to view a list of funded projects, visit <http://www.dot.il.gov/saferoutes/SafeRoutesHome.aspx>.

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