



Northeastern Illinois PUBLIC TRANSIT *Task Force*

Correspondence, Articles and Editorials

November 21, 2013

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1. Correspondence

A. Congressman Daniel Lipinski, Received August 19, 2013

DANIEL LIPINSKI
3RD DISTRICT, ILLINOIS
www.lipinski.house.gov

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE,
AND TECHNOLOGY

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1303

August 19, 2013

Ms. Ann Schneider
Secretary, Illinois Department of Transportation
Co-Chair, Governor's Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force
2300 South Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, Illinois 62764

Mr. George Ranney, Jr.
Co-Chair, Governor's Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force
30 West Monroe Street
Chicago, Illinois 60603

Dear Secretary Schneider and Mr. Ranney:

As Northeastern Illinois' only member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and founding co-chair of the Public Transit Caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives, I have been deeply concerned by the recent problems at Metra. Metra riders – and all taxpayers – deserve not only safe, affordable, and on-time service on a daily basis, but a long-term vision which is accompanied by leadership that puts that vision into action. For a number of reasons this leadership has been lacking, perhaps to an even greater degree than many recognize.

From my position fighting for federal funding for our cash-strapped transit agencies, I am concerned that these leadership issues could have potentially disastrous consequences as Congress looks to reauthorize the existing surface transportation law known as MAP-21, which is providing approximately \$450 million for CTA, Pace, and Metra in 2013 alone. Last year, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee passed a bill that put at risk hundreds of millions of dollars of funding for local transit agencies, but I was able to help build a coalition to block these cuts. During next year's reauthorization debate, it is imperative that Congress sees reforms of Northeastern Illinois transit agencies in order to help fight off new attempts to make significant cuts in federal funding. But no matter what reforms are instituted locally, the Committee will certainly consider ways to enhance congressional oversight of accountability and performance.

The Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force has the potential to serve an important role in reforming the transit agencies, and I commend both of you for your prior and future work in improving transportation. In order to implement the best reforms possible, I encourage the Task Force to engage and solicit input from the public during your review of our region's transit agency governance and performance. Public input was not emphasized in the announcement of the group, but I strongly believe that you should hold several public forums across the region where community members can participate in the process and offer official public comments. By

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CHICAGO, IL 60638
(312) 886-0481
(773) 767-9395 FAX

5309 WEST 95TH STREET
OAK LAWN, IL 60453
(708) 424-0853
(708) 424-1855 FAX

222 EAST 9TH STREET #109
LOCKPORT, IL 60441
(815) 838-1990
(815) 838-1993 FAX

14700 SOUTH RAVINIA AVENUE
ORLAND PARK, IL 60462
(708) 403-4379
(708) 403-5963 FAX

including the general public, the Task Force will be better informed and positioned to make recommendations to the General Assembly that are in the interest of area residents.

In addition, in order to meet the Task Force's stated objective of improving the "coordination, transparency, efficiency, and fairness in the operation of the Northeastern Illinois transit agencies," I request that you meet with me in early September to discuss the existing leadership issues and maintain regular communication with my office during your evaluation. It is important that any reforms recommended provide the relevant congressional committees with the confidence that Northeastern Illinois has taken steps to address any issues that exist in our transit agencies. If these concerns are not adequately addressed, it will make the fight for federal dollars even more difficult and we may risk undermining the future federal capital investment that is so desperately needed.

Over the past few years, it has become clear that the existing governance structure of our region's transit agencies is not serving taxpayers. While management has had issues, the existing transit board system itself is problematic. There is redundancy, waste, lack of coordination, and too often little or indirect accountability. The time for change locally is now. As the Task Force begins to meet, I am hopeful that you will consider all viable options to improve efficiency, including board consolidation and/or elimination.

I recently spoke with Metra Acting Chairman Jack Partelow, Deputy Executive Director/COO Don Orseno, and Deputy Executive Director for Administration Alex Wiggins. They assured me of the continued safety of Metra commuters and the continuity of service during this process. I am confident that the current leadership and everyone who works at Metra can keep Metra riders safe on a daily basis. But it is imperative that we move quickly to develop and implement reforms to assure the long-term success of Metra and all of Northeastern Illinois' transit agencies. I encourage you to make the general public part of the process and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



DANIEL LIPINSKI
Member of Congress

cc: Members of the Governor's Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force

B. Jack Schaffer Metra Task Force Letter, Received August 19, 2013

August 19, 2013

RECEIVED

AUG 21 2013

Honorable Pat Quinn
Governor of Illinois
James R. Thompson Center
100 West Randolph 16-100
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Governors Office

Dear Governor Quinn:

I am writing you this letter in the hope that you will refer it to your Transit Task Force. It will not surprise you that I have given the matter of METRA reform a great deal of thought, trying to figure out what could have been done to avoid this debacle. The thoughts I am giving you I have given to legislators of both parties and the OEIG.

I do not believe that the METRA board, left to its own devices would not have selected Brad O'Halloran as chairman, or attempted to get rid of Alex Clifford. The suggestions I am about to outline are designed to encourage the appointing authorities to pick good, honest, intelligent people and let them do their jobs without outside interference.

1. METRA board members should be appointed to one 6 year term, and cannot be reappointed. This would give them 2 years to learn and 4 years to lead.
2. The Board members should continue to be appointed by the appointing authorities but then confirmed by a 2/3 vote of the respective Boards (county, city and all suburban commissioners by weighted vote). The METRA board members should not be the personal property of any particular appointing authority.
3. The respective authorities should be able to remove their METRA board member at any time by a 2/3 vote.
4. There should be a comprehensive and rational disclosure ordinance for METRA board members to report outside influences in decisions involving METRA.

I'm also recommending that the METRA board appoint a transportation professional as Executive Director and then serve as an oversight board without getting inappropriately involved in the day-to-day decisions regarding hiring, firing, contracts, etc.

I've been around too long to suggest that this new system will be foolproof, but I believe it will be a major step in the right direction. I do not believe that this is a Republican or Democratic problem but think that there is blame on both sides of the aisle. I recognize that there will be numerous legislative solutions suggested but those that do not

Governor Quinn
Page 2

address the problem of outside political influence on the proper running of an agency like METRA, are doomed to failure.

I have served with a large number of good and honest people on the METRA board and truly believe the most recent trouble can, in my opinion, be traced to outside influence of some of the appointing authorities and other powerful political leaders.

You and I were both around in 1983 when the RTA Act was reformed and METRA was created. This was done in no small part to give the Cook County suburban area and the Collar Counties a reason for supporting mass transit. I continue to feel that one super-agency heavily dominated by the City of Chicago would quickly become hated by the residents of Cook County suburbs and the Collar County (and their legislators of both parties). Those who do not study history are doomed to repeat its mistakes. If I can be of any assistance to you or your task force, please let me know.

Thank you for your consideration of my thoughts.

Sincerely,



Jack Schaffer
McHenry County Appointee
METRA Board
4114 IL Route 176
Crystal Lake, IL 60014
(815) 459-1776

cc: Other Interested Parties

C. Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, Received August 19, 2013



August 19, 2013

The Honorable Pat Quinn
 Governor, State of Illinois
 100 West Randolph Street, 16-100
 Chicago, Illinois 60601

Karen Y. Darch
 President, Village of Barrington
 Executive Board Chair

Thomas Weisner
 Mayor, City of Aurora
 Executive Board Vice Chairman

Rahm Emanuel
 Mayor, City of Chicago
 Executive Board Secretary

Dear Governor Quinn:

We appreciate your decision to create the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Reform Task Force which was announced last week. The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus agrees that the Chicago region would benefit from the review and reform of the governance structures and policies currently in place at the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) and its service boards.

We also would like to make you aware that the Mayors Caucus created its own Transit Improvement Working Group toward the end of the spring legislative session. It was initially created in response to a bill proposed by Chicago Metropolitan Strategies which would merge the RTA and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). Since this spring, our Working Group and its leadership have met formally and have had several private conversations with Metropolis Strategies, the RTA, CMAP, transit experts and State legislators about the proposed bill. These discussions have led us to conclude that the merger as proposed is shortsighted.

CMAP is itself the result of a merger of the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission and the Chicago Area Transportation Study eight years ago. The Mayors Caucus believes CMAP has become a very effective regional planning agency since this merger.

From what we have been able to gather from discussions with its leaders, Metropolis Strategies seems to think that merging an ineffective RTA with a more effective agency like CMAP will solve the RTA's problems. We do not think the solution is that simple. In fact, our conversations with the groups and individuals mentioned above have led our Working Group to believe that the proposed merger will overburden CMAP and make it a less effective regional planning organization.

The Chicago region is finally doing planning well. The Mayors Caucus is very concerned that transferring the financial oversight, bonding and service board coordination responsibilities which are currently vested with the RTA to CMAP will overshadow the important and effective work the planning agency is doing on behalf of the region's local governments.

While our Working Group has serious concerns about the proposed merger of CMAP and the RTA, it does agree that reforms are needed at the RTA and its service boards. The Working Group is currently engaged in research and discussions in which it is looking at other ways to reform the region's transit governance. We are pleased to hear from your staff that the Task Force you have created will consider all possible reform options and not just the proposed merger of the RTA and CMAP. All reforms should be on the table. We welcome the opportunity to share our reform ideas on this important regional issue as they develop with you, the Task Force and your staff.

Sincerely,

Karen Y. Darch
 Chair, Mayors Caucus Executive Board
 and President, Village of Barrington

Jeffery D. Schielke
 Chair, Transit Improvement Working Group
 and Mayor, City of Batavia

City of Chicago · DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference · Lake County Municipal League · McHenry County Council of Governments
 Metro West Council of Governments · Northwest Municipal Conference · South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
 Southwest Conference of Mayors · West Central Municipal Conference · Will County Governmental League

233 South Wacker Drive, Suite 800, Chicago, Illinois 60606
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www.mayorscaucus.org

D. Cook County Commissioner Elizabeth Doody Gorman, Received
August 30, 2013

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118 N. CLARK STREET
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CHICAGO, IL 60602
(312) 603-4215
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ORLAND PARK, IL 60462
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NORTH DISTRICT OFFICE
711 CHELMSFORD LANE, SUITE A
ELK GROVE VILLAGE, IL 60007
TEL (847) 871-1717
FAX (847) 640-2058

ELIZABETH "LIZ" DOODY GORMAN
COMMISSIONER - 17TH DISTRICT
COOK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
liz@lizgorman.com

August 30, 2013

Honorable Pat Quinn
Governor, State of Illinois
James R. Thompson Center
100 W. Randolph Street, 16-100
Chicago, IL 60601

RE: Metra Board of Directors

Dear Governor,

Within the last 24 hours, yet another revelation has come to light publicly regarding the Metra Board of Directors and the severance agreement with former Metra CEO Alex Clifford.

This latest revelation reveals a questionable email exchange between Metra Board Member Jack Schaffer and then CEO Alex Clifford. This particular email exchange took place prior to the settlement agreement and prior to the release of Mr. Clifford's memo. (A copy of Mr. Clifford's email is enclosed.)

Upon your review, you will read that Mr. Clifford remarks to Mr. Schaffer, "my lawyers concluded that the attachments were likely communications protected by the Board's attorney-client privilege, and that you, as an individual Board member, probably are not authorized to share the attachments with me."

As governor, you recently created the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force, "charged with developing ways to eliminate waste, fraud and abuse and streamline operations to ensure improved transit service for the millions of users each year." I believe this task force will be a very useful tool in helping to make the needed reforms to our region's public transit bodies.

It's fair to say that the email exchange creates more questions for Metra and that's why I'm asking you to instruct the Public Transit Task Force along with the Office of Inspector General (OIG) to investigate this email communication between Mr. Schaffer and Mr. Clifford.

We need to know why Mr. Schaffer was sharing confidential information and precisely what confidential information did Mr. Schaffer share with Mr. Clifford?



Honorable Pat Quinn
Governor, State of Illinois
August 30, 2013
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Also, was this email exchange the only communication where confidential information was shared between the two men? Did Mr. Schaffer violate his fiduciary responsibility as a board member and potentially compromise the settlement agreement and, if so, would this be grounds for halting the agreement?

I think a forensic audit of the email and phone communications between the two men would allow your oversight bodies to examine this issue in an unfiltered manner. I believe these questions are quite significant and merit the appropriate review by the Public Transit Task Force and the OIG.

As always, I thank you for your commitment to our great state and I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience regarding this most important matter.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth "Liz" Doody Gorman
Cook County Commissioner
17th District

EDG/ctp
Enclosure

CC: Honorable Toni Preckwinkle
Honorable Rahm Emanuel
Honorable Dan Cronin
Honorable Tina Hill
Honorable Aaron Lawlor
Honorable Chris Lauzen
Honorable Herbert Brooks, Jr.
Cook County Board of Commissioners

From: Alexander Clifford
To: Jack Schaffer (jack@libertyetc.com)
Subject: Email follow-up
Date: Friday, April 05, 2013 4:52:31 PM

Jack:

Thank you for your March 12th email. Based on a limited review of a portion of the attachments, my lawyers concluded that the attachments were likely communications protected by the Board's attorney-client privilege, and that you, as an individual Board member, probably are not authorized to share the attachments with me. They have asked me to suggest that you not send me privileged communications between board counsel and board members, unless I was intended to be part of the group receiving board counsel's advice or your personal lawyer has advised you that the you are entitled to do so. Also, because the attachments are likely privileged, upon advice of my lawyers I intend to delete the email and the attachments. I appreciate your efforts on behalf of Metra.

Alex Clifford

E. Executive Director Joseph G. Costello, Received September 12, 2013

This Letter also included three attachments:

1. The Regional Peer Report Card
2. The Regional Transit Strategic Plan
3. The regional transit Strategic Plan

The Task Force Members received the attachments via flash drive in response to the request for Public Testimony at a task force meeting on September 25, 2013.



**Regional
Transportation
Authority**

175 W. Jackson Blvd,
Suite 1650
Chicago, IL 60604
312-913-3200
rtachicago.org

September 12, 2013

Ms. Ann Schneider, Secretary
Illinois Department of Transportation
Co-Chair, Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force
2300 South Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, Illinois 62764

Mr. George Ranney, Jr., Chief Executive Officer
Metropolis Strategies
Co-Chair, Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force
30 West Monroe Street
Chicago, Illinois 60603

Re: Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force Background Materials

**BOARD OF
DIRECTORS**

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Anthony K. Anderson
James Buchanan
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Christopher C. Melvin, Jr.
J.D. Ross
Donald L. Totten
Douglas M. Troiani

Joseph G. Costello
Executive Director

Dear Secretary Schneider and Mr. Ranney:

My staff and I have reviewed the Background Materials document discussed at the initial task force meeting on September 3, 2013 and made available on the task force website. So that you may begin your work with the most accurate information possible, I'd like to provide clarification on some items in the document which could be misleading. Specifically:

1. **Effectiveness and oversight.** Page 3 of your document states that the "...transit system is not functioning effectively and oversight of the service boards has been lacking." In fact, the RTA Act specifically limits the oversight role of the RTA to a very high level such as "yea or nay" budget approval. The RTA has long been seeking more effective oversight ability such as budget line-item veto authority. Despite this lack of effective oversight tools, the RTA system has unfailingly produced balanced operating budgets year after year.

The RTA Act requires us to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of public transit in Northeastern Illinois, a requirement which we have met with our Performance Measurement Program. One component of this effort is our latest customer



satisfaction survey, completed in 2012, which showed that 83% of our customers were satisfied with their transit service, and that 90% would recommend using transit to others. In addition, we measure our performance against nine peer agencies, and I have enclosed a copy of our latest Regional Peer Report Card. In it you will find that the performance of the RTA region compares very favorably to other large transit systems, ranking in the top half of our peers in twelve of the fifteen measures. In particular, I would like to point out that we led all peers in Operating Cost per Passenger Mile, an important measure of effectiveness, and in Miles Between Major Mechanical Failures, an important measure of reliability. In light of these very real results, it is not at all fair to say that the Northeastern Illinois transit system is not functioning effectively.

2. **Coordination of capital projects.** Page 7 of your document states that “there is also a lack of capital project coordination among the Service Boards.” In fact, the RTA has been nationally recognized for our capital planning and programming initiatives. All three Service Boards have been actively participating in an RTA-led working group which has developed both a Capital Optimization Support Tool (COST) to help prioritize future capital investments and the related Capital Asset Condition Assessment, which formally defines the 10-year capital needs of the region (an excerpt of which appears on page 45 of your document). Both efforts have been recognized by the FTA as models for RTA’s peers to emulate. While we encourage coordination between the Service Boards, again the RTA has limited authority to mandate it. However, the primary problem is a chronic shortage of capital funding.
3. **Ridership and Access.** Page 8 of your document states that Chicago’s public transit ridership has decreased by 1% over the last twenty years. However, for the most recent ten-year period, ending in 2012, ridership has increased by almost 12%. Ridership has exceeded 600 million in each of the last eight years and has experienced over 2% annual growth in both 2011 and 2012. Page 8 also cites a Brookings Institution study which stated that only 24% of the region’s jobs can be reached within 90 minutes by public transit. RTA’s own analysis, conducted in coordination with CMAP, showed a much higher level of access of 53%.
4. **Operating Funding Distribution.** The chart on page 44 of your document is outdated and misleading in that it does not include State Public Transportation Fund (PTF) amounts which constitute more than 30% of the RTA’s public funding, and most of which flow through to the Service Boards. Bringing that chart up to date reveals the following true allocation of \$1.358 billion of public funding (sales tax and PTF) in the 2013 budget:

RTA*	8%
CTA	45%
Metra	26%
Pace**	11%
ADA Paratransit	9%
ICE Fund***	1%

* Over two-thirds of this amount is used to cover regional expenses, mainly debt service of bonds issued on behalf of the Service Boards.

** Includes South Suburban Job Access and Suburban Community Mobility Fund.

*** Funding for regional Innovation, Coordination, and Enhancement.

5. **2013-2018 Regional Transit Strategic Plan.** In August 2013, the RTA Board adopted the 2013-2018 Regional Transit Strategic Plan, establishing a common vision for transit in our region and setting priorities for the next five years. The plan was created in partnership with CTA, Metra, and Pace and included extensive input from the general public, stakeholders and elected officials. I have enclosed the plan and its appendix, which documents the background analyses, survey results, and public input used in creating the plan. These documents are also available electronically on the RTA website at <http://rtachicago.com/strategic-plan.html>.

Please consider incorporating this feedback into your Background Materials document. I would also ask that you share this letter, the peer report, and the strategic plan with all task force members. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Joseph G. Costello

Executive Director

email: costelloj@rtachicago.org

phone: 312.913.3166

Enclosures: Regional Peer Report Card
Regional Transit Strategic Plan and Appendix

F. Chief of Staff Jordan Matyas, Received September 18, 2013

From: Armbrust, Jeanette [<mailto:JArmbrus@cityofbatavia.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, September 18, 2013 12:08 PM
To: Schneider, Ann L
Subject: FW: RTA

From: Armbrust, Jeanette
Sent: Wednesday, September 18, 2013 11:49 AM
To: 'Ann.Schneider.@Illinois.gov'
Subject: RTA

Dear Secretary Schneider:

Sorry for the delay in sending you down the enclosed info on the RTA which we discussed last week. The idea of diverting municipal retail sales taxes is becoming quite popular in Illinois. It would appear that the area beyond the six county RTA designated service region has taken on the title of "safe haven" for many businesses to divert sales taxes to one room offices with Fax machines and claim these to be their point of sale. In the case of Batavia, I am aware that this sort of activity is now costing my town over a half a million dollars in sales tax transacted from our town but credited to other places beyond the RTA service region. If Batavia is losing on an annual basis over a half a million dollars in this scam, that would mean that an additional \$125,000 was not collected for the RTA because the sales was not credited within the RTA region. It is very troubling to our community to have these events occur because the businesses involved are still in operation and selling here and we still provide them with full services and accept the wear and tear which some of their operations places on our streets and utilities.

If, as it is now suggested, between \$100 and \$200 million dollars in now being diverted to the region beyond the six county region. the loss of revenue to the RTA is staggering. It appears to the Mayors that the one true enhancement which the RTA truly needs is a revenue enhancement to pay for needed systems repairs, modernization and upgrades at CTA, Metra and Pace.

I would suggest to you that if the plan to open up the RTA Act by actions of the Governor's Commission, I can tell you that there are plenty of voices amongst the region's Mayors who are going to want to talk about how we plan to address RTA service extensions beyond the current boundaries as well as this whole growing retail sales tax diversion mess.

Thank you for your dedication, support and understanding as our State Transportation Secretary. In the 30+ years I have served on the CATS/CMAP Mayors Council you have proven to be a true friend to the cities and villages of Illinois.
Mayor Jeff Schielke, Batavia.

Armbrust, Jeanette

From: Matyas, Jordan [MatyasJ@RTACHICAGO.ORG]
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 5:17 PM
To: Serdiuk, Claire
Subject: RTA NAMES 70+ COMPANIES WITH TAX AGREEMENTS IN KANKAKEE AND CHANNAHON

I wanted to make you aware of a very important announcement made this morning. The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) has today released the names of some of the companies that have or had sales tax rebate agreements with Kankakee or Channahon. These names were discovered through a series of Freedom of Information Act requests, filings with the state and court filings outside of Cook County.

Upwards of 70 or more companies may have entered into sales tax rebate agreements with Kankakee or Channahon. The RTA alleges that many of these businesses have rented office space in these towns to avoid paying higher sales taxes from their actual offices in the six-county RTA region. These small, part-time offices are rarely occupied, but companies claim they make purchases – among their largest expenses – from these offices, so they are taxed at a lower rate. As you know, the RTA, which ensures each public transit agency receives all of the tax funds it is owed, is aggressively investigating sales tax agreements to determine if they are still being utilized. CTA, Metra and Pace rely on sales tax revenue to fund about half of their annual operating budgets.

Some of the businesses disclosed today utilize the services of tax consultants. In 2011, the RTA filed against Kankakee, Channahon and a number of tax consultants. The lawsuit arises from the utilization of tax sharing agreements which have induced companies operating within the six-county RTA region and across the State to claim that their sales are sourced through offices set up in Kankakee and Channahon which is believed to have resulted in the loss of over a \$100 million dollars in lost tax revenue. Under sales tax sharing agreements, the two municipalities have agreed to rebate a high percentage of their local share of the statewide sales tax to the participating companies.

More information about the RTA's lawsuit that led to today's announcement can be found here:
<http://rtachicago.com/press-releases-2011/rta-files-suit-against-kankakee-and-channahon-to-recoup-more-than-100-million-in-lost-tax-revenue.html>

More information about this suit and other important updates will be sent distributed via Regional Transportation Authority's (RTA) Government Affairs junk.

To ensure receipt of the Newsletter going forward, please:

- 1. Check to see if the Newsletter is in your spam/junk mail folder and if it's there, add the sender, govaffairs@rtachicago.org, to your contacts.*
- 2. If the Newsletter is not in your spam/junk folder, please ask your administrator to unblock all emails from the following domain: rtachicago.com. Below please find detailed directions, by email/spam program, on how to add an email address to your contacts/address book.*

The names of some of those businesses identified as having operated in Kankakee and Channahon are:

AIRLINES

Material Services Co. Inc. - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL.

This is a subsidiary of US Airways Group. Material Services offers services in the areas of purchasing, inventory control and fuel procurement and management to airline carriers that operate under agreements with U.S Airways Group Inc. or US Airways, Inc.

Southwest Jet Fuel Company - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL

Southwest Airlines operates more than 3,200 flights a day. It has approximately 46,000 employees and serves a combined 97 destinations in 41 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and six international destinations. Chicago's Midway Airport has more Southwest Airline daily departures (231) than any airport in the country.

RETAIL

Aldi Investments LLC - 388 E. Court Street, Kankakee, IL 60901

The Aldi group operates over 8,000 stores worldwide. There are over 1,000 ALDI stores in 31 states, from Kansas to the east coast.

Land's End, Inc. - 388 E. Court Street, Kankakee, IL 60901

Lands' End offers its products through multiple selling channels. These include its apparel website (landsend.com), catalog mailings, 14 retail stores, and 290 "store within a store" departments in Sears' retail stores. Within 100 miles of downtown Chicago, there are 14 locations selling Lands' End merchandise – all of them within the six-county RTA region.

SPS, Inc. (Sears Procurement Services) - 388 E. Court Street, Kankakee, IL 60901

The procurement arm of Sears Holding Corporation with an office in Hoffman Estates, IL. Sears Holding Corporation is a retailer with over 2,600 full-line and specialty stores in the United States and Canada.

Plass Appliance & Furniture, Inc. - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL

Founded in 1938, Plass Appliance and Furniture is a family-owned business with more than 100 employees. Plass sells home appliances, electronics and furniture from six showrooms and online. A furniture and appliance company with 7 showrooms spread throughout the Chicago area including locations in Elmhurst, Geneva, Marengo, Naperville, Northbrook, Addison and Arlington Heights.

Target Corporation - Kankakee, IL

There are 97 Target stores in Illinois, the majority of the stores are concentrated in the six-county RTA region. Target is the second largest discount retailer in the U.S.

TECH

AT&T Network Procurement, L.P. - Kankakee, IL

The company is a subsidiary of AT&T, the largest telecommunications company in the U.S. AT&T reported \$124 billion in consolidated revenues in 2010. In 2011, AT&T paid \$10.2 billion in dividends.

Communications Supply Corporation, Inc. - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL

CSC distributes a wide range of data communications and security solutions and is a subsidiary of WESCO. The company has an office in Carol Stream.

WESCO Distribution, Inc. - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL

Is a publicly traded Fortune 500 holding company. The company is a provider of electrical, industrial, and communications maintenance, repair and operating and original equipment manufacturers products, construction materials and advanced supply chain management and logistics services.

Forsythe Technology, Inc. - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL

Forsythe Technology is an information technology consulting firm with approximately 900 employees worldwide. In 2006, Forsythe became one of the largest, privately-held, 100-percent ESOP-owned companies in the U.S. Its share price on December 31, 2010 was \$52.87.

Gateway, Inc. - Kankakee, IL

Gateway is a leading, global technology brand. In 2007, Gateway was acquired by Acer, Inc.

Hartford Computer Group, Inc. - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL

Hartford Computer Group, Inc. provides technology solutions and support services to government, education, and health care institutions. It offers products in the areas of audio-visual and surveillance, cloud computing, server and storage, virtualization, and computers and printers.

Compaq Financial Services (Illinois) LLC - 388 Court Street, Kankakee, IL

The company provides products, technologies, software and services to consumers and business worldwide. Compaq was acquired by HP in 2002. Hewlett-Packard has approximately 331,800 employees worldwide. HP is the world's leading PC manufacturer and has been since 2007.

Melrose Equipment LLC - 150 N. Schuyler, Kankakee, IL 60901

Melrose is an affiliate of LaSalle Systems Leasing. LaSalle provides financial and equipment solutions designed to assist customers in managing their technology equipment needs. Today, LaSalle offers an array of life-cycle management tools and services including lease financing, asset and maintenance contracts management through LAMP (an asset management software with new applications for Android and Apple devices) and equipment disposition. As of August 2002, LaSalle Systems Leasing, Inc. operates as a subsidiary of MB Financial Inc.

Verizon Wireless Network Procurement LP - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL

A subsidiary of Verizon Wireless, the company has the largest nationwide wireless voice and data network and 31.5 million customers. Verizon also serves more than 98 million retail customers nationwide, provides converged communications, information and entertainment services over America's most advanced fiber-optic network, and delivers integrated business solutions to customers in more than 150 countries, including all of the Fortune 500.

CONSTRUCTION**Blue Marble Supply LLC - 1475 Harvard Drive, Kankakee, IL 60901**

Was a procurement company for the construction industry.

Cerami Concrete Construction Company, INC. - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL

Commercial concrete contractors located in Melrose Park.

Hill Mechanical Logistics, LLC - 150 N. Schuyler, Kankakee, IL 60901

The company is part of The Hill Group, a large mechanical construction, design, service and operations organization, based in the Chicago area. Hill has been in business for 75 years. It's headquartered in Franklin Park.

JL Sales & Manufacturing, Inc. - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL

It is a subsidiary of Edwards Engineering also headquartered in Elk Grove, Illinois.

Maron Procurement Company LLC - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL

Headquartered in Skokie, the company is an affiliate of Maron Electric Company. Since 1916, the Maron Electric Company has become one of the leading electrical contractors and design/builders in the Midwest and nationally.

VCNA Prairie Inc. - 388 E. Court Street, Kankakee, IL 60901

Prairie Material owns and operates a network of ready-mix concrete plants and aggregate facilities in four Midwest states – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin. Today, Prairie employs 1,800 professionals in nearly 100 locations in the four state area. Prairie's materials form the core of major structures throughout the Midwest, including Trump Tower Chicago, the Milwaukee Art Museum addition and the Indianapolis International Airport.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Henry Schein Inc. - 150 N. Schuyler, Kankakee, IL 60901

Henry Schein, Inc., a fortune 500 company and a member of the NASDAQ 100 Index It is the world's largest provider of health care products and services to medical, dental, and veterinary office-based practitioners.

MedCal Sales LLC - 388 E. Court Street, Kankakee, IL 60901

MedCal Sales LLC is a subsidiary of Medline Industries, Inc. the largest privately-held medical supplier in the U.S. Medline manufactures and distributes over 125,000 medical and surgical products to healthcare institutions and retail markets.

PSS World Medical, Inc. - 27754 West Blue Grass Drive, Channahon, IL 60410

PSS World Medical, Inc. is a leading national marketer and distributor of medical supplies and equipment to physicians, elder care and healthcare providers in the U.S. The company also operates the largest distributor of medical supplies to the long-term healthcare and elder care industry.

VHS Chicago Market Procurement LLC - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL

It is a company headquartered in Berwyn, Illinois that operates as a subsidiary of Vanguard Health Systems Inc., and acts as its procurement arm for facilities in the Chicago area operated by Vanguard including MacNeal Hospital, Weiss Memorial Hospital, Westlake Hospital and West Suburban Hospital.

UTILITIES

Avalon Petroleum Company - 200 E. Court Street Suite 720 Kankakee, IL 60901

Established in 1925, Avalon Petroleum Company has grown into one of the Midwest's largest independent petroleum distributors. Avalon has supply relationships with every major manufacturer, including BP Amoco, Shell, ExxonMobil, Marathon, and Citgo.

Midwest Generation Procurement Services LLC - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL

Midwest Generation (MWG) operates six electric power generating plants in Illinois.

LSP-Kendall Energy, LLC - 150 N. Schuyler, Kankakee, IL 60901

Dynegy Kendall Energy, LLC owns and operates power generation plants. The company was formerly known as LSP-Kendall Energy, LLC and changed its name in May, 2007. The company was incorporated in 1998 and is headquartered in Minooka, Illinois.

MISC.**NCR Corporation - 27734 West Bluegrass Drive, Channahon, IL**

The global leader in assisted service- and self-service machines selling products and services: ATM machines, Retail and Restaurant Point of Sale

The Reynolds & Reynolds Company - 27734 West Blugrass Drive, Channahon, IL

Reynolds and Reynolds delivers the software, business forms and supplies, and professional services that support all areas of automotive retailing for car dealers and automakers.

The Relizon Company d/b/a WorkflowOne LLC - 27734 West Blugrass Drive, Channahon, IL

The company provides a wide range of products and services including business documents, electronic print and mail solutions, branded merchandise, label solutions, sales and marketing collateral, and distribution services.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns please contact me at the information below.

Jordan Matyas

Chief of Staff

Regional Transportation Authority

175 W. Jackson o Suite 1650 o Chicago, IL 60604

Office (312) 913-3142 o Cell (312) 968-9600

E-mail: matyasi@rtachicago.org

*See below for detailed directions, by email/spam program, on how to add an email address to your contacts/address book:
Microsoft Outlook Express® (version 6 or higher)*

1. Open the email.
2. Left-click the sender icon, or right click the sender's name.
3. Click Add to contacts.
4. Click Save and close.

Microsoft Outlook® 2003 Users:

1. Open the newsletter you received from us.
2. On the toolbar click on "Actions"
3. From the drop down menu select "Junk E-mail"
4. Select "Add sender to safe senders list"
5. A dialogue box will appear with the words "The sender of the selected message has been added to your safe senders list"
6. Click the "OK" button to confirm
7. Your email message will be automatically entered into your Outlook contacts list.

AOL® Users:

1. Open the newsletter you received from us.
2. Click on the "Add Address" icon.
3. The Reed Business Information email address is automatically populated in the name and email fields in the "Add Contact" dialogue box. Verify that the information is correct.
4. Click the Save button.
5. Your email message will be automatically entered into your AOL address book.

Gmail® Users:

1. Open the newsletter you received from us.
2. Click on the "More options" link next to the date.
3. Click on "Add sender to Contacts list" in the options below the Subject line.
4. Your email message will be automatically entered into your Gmail contacts list.

Hotmail® Users:

1. Open the newsletter you received from us.
2. Click "Save Address(es)" at the top of the message.
3. Our email address is automatically populated in the email field in the "Add to Address Book" page.

4. Your email message will be automatically entered into your Hotmail address book.

Window Live® Mail Users:

1. Click Options.
2. On the left side of the page, click Mail and junk e-mail, and then click Allowed and blocked senders.
3. Click Allowed senders.
4. Type our domain (FanFoc.us) and then click Add to List.

Yahoo!® Users:

1. Open the newsletter you received from us.
2. Click "Add to Address Book" link next to the icon on the far right.
3. Our email address is automatically populated in the email field in the "Add to Address Book" page. Verify the information is correct.
4. Click "Add to Address Book."
5. Your email message will be automatically entered into your Yahoo! address book.

EarthLink® Users:

1. Open the newsletter you received from us.
2. Click your mailbox's "Message" menu and choose "Add Senders" to your address book.
3. Your email message will be automatically entered into your EarthLink address book.

Mozilla Thunderbird® Users:

Add the From address into your Personal Address Book:

1. Click the Address Book button.
2. Make sure the Personal Address Book is highlighted.
3. Click the New Card button. This will launch a New Card window that has 3 tabs: Contact, Address & Other.
4. Under the Contact tab, copy and paste our "from" address into the Email dialog box.
5. Click OK.

Norton AntiSpam

1. Start up Norton AntiSpam
2. Click the Status & Settings tab
3. Click AntiSpam
4. Click Configure
5. Click Allowed List tab
6. Click Add button
7. In the 'Email Address' box, enter our email address
8. Click OK, Click OK

McAfee Spamkiller

1. Click the Friends tab
2. Click Email Address tab
3. Click the Down Arrow to view your Personal Friends List
4. Along the Right Side choose Add A Friend

This message has been scanned for viruses by MessageLabs.

Armbrust, Jeanette

From: Matyas, Jordan [MatyasJ@RTACHICAGO.ORG]
Sent: Friday, August 23, 2013 2:39 PM
To: 'Mayor Schielke, Batavia (jds518@aol.com)'; Schielke, Jeffery
Subject: FW: companies

Exhibit A

1. Acer, Inc., as successor to Gateway, Inc.
2. Acuity Specialty Products, Inc.
3. AmerisourceBergen Drug Corp.
4. Anixter Procurement Corporation
5. Aramark Distribution Services, Inc., as successor in interest and formerly known as Linen Supply Services, Inc.
6. AT&T Network Procurement Management LLC
7. Auburn Supply Co.
8. Avalon Petroleum Company
9. Blue Marble Supply, LLC
10. Brook Electrical Supply Company d/b/a Brook Electrical Distribution Co.
11. Cabela's Retail IL, Inc.
12. Cairo Procurement Services, LLC
13. Cerami Concrete Construction Company, Inc.
14. Chi 3 Procurement
15. Cingular Supply II, LLC
16. Communications Supply Corporation
17. Compucom Systems, Inc.
18. Continental Airlines Fuel Purchasing Group, LLC
19. Dell Marketing, LP
20. Dynege Kendall Energy, LLC
21. DS Waters of America, Inc.
22. eTail Direct LLC, individually and as a subsidiary of DSW Shoe Warehouse, Inc.

23. Epsilon Trading, LLC
24. Forsythe Technology, Inc.
25. Forsythe Solutions Group, Inc.
26. Forsythe/McArthur Associates, Inc.
27. HCGI Hartford, formerly known as Hartford Computer Group, Inc.
28. Hewlett-Packard Company
29. Hewlett-Packard Financial Services Company, as successor to Compaq Financial Services Corporation
30. Hill Mechanical Logistics, LLC
31. Home Shopping Network
32. IBT Equipment Purchasing, LLC
33. IRP, LLC d/b/a Roundy's Supermarkets
34. ITC Sales and Procurement, LLC, a division of Target Corporation
35. JDM Infrastructure
36. JL Sales & Manufacturing, Inc.
37. JW Procurement, Inc.
38. Krez Group Purchasing Company LLC
39. Lands End
40. LaSalle Systems Leasing, Inc.
41. Lenovo (United States) Inc.
42. Lippert, Inc.
43. LSP-Kendall Energy, LLC
44. Manor Care Supply, LLC
45. Maron Procurement Company, LLC
46. Material Services Company Inc. d/b/a Material and Fuel Services Company
47. MedCal Sales LLC
48. Medline Industries
49. Medco Health Solutions, Inc.
50. Melrose Equipment Company, LLC

51. Midwest Generation Procurement Services LLC
52. NCR Corporation
53. NEPCO Power Procurement
54. Omnicare, Inc.
55. Owens & Minor Distribution, Inc.
56. Plass Appliance and Furniture, Inc.
57. Procure Pharmacy, LLC
58. The Relizon Company
59. The Reynolds and Reynolds Company
60. The Ryland Group, Inc. d/b/a Ryland Homes
61. Scurto Cement Purchasing Company LLC
62. Shaw Industries, Inc.
63. Southwest Jet Fuel Company, individually and as a subsidiary of Southwest Airlines Co.
64. Sears Procurement Services, Inc. d/b/a SPS, Inc.
65. Suntory Water Group, Inc
66. Tri-State Surgical West Corp.
67. Twin Med, LLC
68. US Oncology Corporate, Inc.
69. USCC Purchase, LLC
70. VCNA Prairie Inc.
71. Verizon Wireless Network Procurement, LP
72. VHS Chicago Market Procurement, LLC
73. Walsh Landscape Contractors, Inc.
74. WESCO Distribution, Inc.
75. Williams-Sonoma Stores, Inc.
76. WM. F. Meyer Company
77. Workflowone LLC

Jordan Matyas
Chief of Staff
Regional Transportation Authority
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This message has been scanned for viruses by MessageLabs.

G. Executive Director Stephen E. Schlickman, Received October 8,
2013

Urban Transportation Center (MC 357)
College of Urban Planning & Public Affairs
412 South Peoria Street, Suite 340
Chicago, Illinois 60607-7035

October 8, 2013

Hon. Anne Schneider, Secretary of the Illinois Department of Transportation
Mr. George Ranney, President and CEO of Metropolis Strategies
Co-Chairs
Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force

Dear Secretary Schneider & Mr. Ranney,

Having closely observed the creation of the Regional Transportation Authority in the mid-1970s, and having been directly involved in the reform of the RTA in 1983 and 2008, it is my strong belief that if there is an opportunity to improve the RTA structure now, the best action would be to create one regional transit agency with separate operating divisions for Chicago bus and rapid transit, suburban bus, ADA paratransit and commuter rail services. There are a number of factors supporting this approach.

First and foremost based on public and private business administration principles, one regional transit agency makes the most sense. Despite the region's political sub-boundaries of the City of Chicago, suburban Cook County, and the five collar counties, economically it works as one integrated expanse. Thus a fully integrated Chicago regional transit system under one agency should serve it. For the same reason, many of Chicago's transit peers are organized in that manner including Boston, Philadelphia, New York, Washington DC, and Atlanta. In fact a single regional transit agency is the predominate approach throughout most US metropolitan areas. Organizing in a different manner is to suit political interests not the best interest of mobility. The current four transit agency structure with four governing boards and 47 board members is just not a good business model.

The second case for one agency is the need for clear accountability. I have been involved in numerous transit controversies during my career, including working seven years each for the CTA, the City of Chicago, and the RTA. What is very apparent from that experience is that under the current organizational structure, it is often very hard to determine which transit agency should take the lead responsibility to achieve a solution. The complexities of the governance structures, service overlap, capital project planning and implementation, equities in the allocation of funding, etc., frequently results in two or more of the transit agencies pointing

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the finger of blame at each other. For example it has been debated as to why the region does not have we have a universal transit card. Anti-RTA advocates will say RTA failed to coordinate. RTA will say it doesn't have the power to coordinate. Metra, a universal card naysayer, is accused of putting its head in the sand. Metra will argue that technological and cost difficulties for its distance based fare structure are hard to overcome. The same critique could be leveled at other matters such as an unjustified expenditure of \$220 million on the incomplete Block 37 subway superstation, squabbles over the burgeoning cost of ADA paratransit service operated by Pace, the lack of coordinated purchases for major procurements such as fare collection equipment, and the ethical and criminal scandals at Metra. If we had one regional transit agency, it would be eminently clear who to hold accountable. In many cases, such a structure very likely would have prevented the failures, saved the taxpayers millions of dollars and provided better service.

Third, the current structure is preventing us from having the world class transit system that the region deserves. Our system is currently not world class in a number of ways. An obvious factor is that it is in serious state of disrepair with a backlog of over \$19 billion in unfunded facility and vehicular improvements. Some may say this is not an issue of organizational structure, but rather a funding issue. However, the management of this very serious shortcoming is hamstrung by political funding allocation deals that were made in the 1980s. It is organizationally and politically impossible to deploy existing infrastructure resources in the most effective manner for the riders. Lack of coordination in services is another factor. There have been significant instances where one service board has failed to coordinate with another service board about major service changes, which has resulted in disruptions for the riders, redoing logistical plans that were botched, and wasteful duplicative service. This is not how one runs a world class regional transit system.

Under the current structure, proposals to weaken or do away with the RTA are non-starters. In 1974, the RTA was created to provide a regional tax scheme to stabilize the finances of the multitude of transit operators including the CTA. At that time and since, suburban tax revenue has gone to the CTA to support its operations. There is no way that would have happened without an RTA overseeing the CTA to ensure regional tax revenue was being well spent. The proposal to merge RTA into the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) will not simplify the organizational structure and may in fact complicate CMAP's primary mission to be an effective general planning agency for the region.

A political counter to the one agency approach is that the Mayor of the City of Chicago would lose control of the CTA. I think this concern can be mitigated to a significant degree by retaining the RTA Board of Directors' supermajority voting requirement. Since 1983, a group of five RTA board members voting in unison can effectively veto all major actions of the RTA Board

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of Directors. The Mayor's five appointments to the RTA Board have used this quite well in protecting the City of Chicago's interests. Since 2008, there is an equal balance of five members from Suburban Cook County and another five from the Collar Counties, giving each of these regional subgroups the veto option as well. Under a one agency approach, the supermajority voting requirement should be retained. This ensures a level playing field for the major sub-regional interests.

In summary, I strongly recommend a regional transit organizational structure where there is one board of directors and one chief executive officer, to whom the heads of each of the operating divisions for Chicago, suburban bus, ADA paratransit and commuter rail would report, with clear and direct lines of authority and responsibility. This would provide the best integration of services; the elimination of administrative duplication; additional spin-off cost efficiencies that are desperately needed; clear accountability for achieving, or failing to achieve, priority goals and objectives; and the best allocation of scarce resources.

Three separate times, the State has tried to create or reform the RTA to make a multi-agency structure work. The next evolution is to merge them all into one agency.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen E. Schlickman", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Stephen E. Schlickman
Executive Director

cc: Ashish Sen, Chair of the Governance Working Group
Marsha Campos, Chief Operating Officer for IDOT
Joseph Shacter, Director of the Division of Public and Intermodal Transportation, IDOT
Frank Beal, Executive Director, Metropolis Strategies

H. County Executives letter, Received October 29, 2013



October 29, 2013

Dear Secretary Schneider and Chairman Ranney:

Mass transit is a critically important issue for the taxpayers and transit riders of Cook and the Collar Counties. We appreciate the creation of the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force, and on behalf of the six counties that represent two-thirds of the state's population, we would like to share with you our vision for mass transit reform that benefits the entire region.

We stand ready to assist the task force in accomplishing our shared goals of operating an accountable, efficient, and equitable mass transit system that serves all residents of Northeastern Illinois. In particular, we respectfully ask that the Task Force schedule a hearing to allow us to formally join your dialogue and share the perspective of those taxpayers we represent who actually fund the system you are charged with reviewing. We ask that this occur before any final action is taken by the Task Force.

We trust the Governor's Task Force will issue strong recommendations designed to restore public confidence in the mass transit agencies that service Northeastern Illinois. We respectfully request that any mass transit reform package offered as part of the Task Force's final report include the following guiding principles and proposals:

Ethics

- One clear and transparent ethics standard to which the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra, and Pace are all held to ensure public confidence and trust in those making decisions affecting our mass transit system. There should be no deviation or the appearance of different standards based upon the board on which an appointee serves.

Expanded Oversight

- While the RTA's statutory duties are numerous, the Illinois General Assembly needs to provide the enforcement mechanisms necessary for the RTA to more effectively discharge the responsibilities assigned to the agency per state statute.
- By strengthening the RTA's financial oversight authority, the Illinois General Assembly would better equip the RTA to deliver true regional coordination and accountability in line with the intent of the 2008 reform legislation that declared the



“powers and duties of the RTA” needed to “be enhanced to improve overall planning and coordination, to achieve an integrated and efficient regional transit system, to advance the mobility of transit users, and to increase financial transparency of the RTA and Service Boards.”

- Greater financial and audit controls would provide the RTA with the tools necessary to address specific issues, thus avoiding the “nuclear option” of either approving or denying funding to an agency that risks the potential shutdown of the transit system. This annual brinkmanship does not serve the region, our riders or the taxpayers.
- The local appointing authorities need the ability to remove an appointee from a service board for cause to ensure appropriate representation of the residents we serve.

Board Membership

- A revised governance structure that is not based on outdated information or tradition, but rather a structure that accurately represents current population and revenue sources.
- Regional cooperation, compromise, and discussion must be retained as part of any governance structure by requiring a supermajority vote for approval of all major actions, including approval of the annual budget, distribution of discretionary transit dollars to our service boards and other related issues as is currently required.

Funding Allocation

- A fair, equitable, and consistent allocation of funding throughout the public transit system. While sales tax revenue is distributed through a set funding formula, funding from the RTA discretionary fund does not follow a formula. Moving forward, the present allocation of discretionary funds and any growth should be distributed through a funding formula.

Consolidation

- We understand there are competing proposals that address potential mergers and consolidations. One such proposal is Senate Bill 1594 which recommends merging the RTA with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). We believe



this legislation is not the right approach to remedy our mass transit issues. Consolidation should not be considered for the sake of consolidation, but to strengthen and centralize expertise and operations. While we are open to the concept of merging transit planning functions into a single agency, we believe the senate bill does not address enhancing fiscal and audit oversight tools. The importance of maintaining a world class mass transit system would be diluted and marginalized if added to an already full plate of other equally important responsibilities at CMAP.

- Should the Task Force conclude that consolidation is necessary in order to reform our mass transit system, we would urge you to consider a proposal that follows a governance structure similar to the MTA in New York. Under this model, each mode of public transit (rail, bus, ferry) is a separate department under the governance and responsibility of one transit agency. Such a structure could eliminate the three boards currently governing the CTA, Pace and Metra. Again, any such structure would need to adhere to the previously expressed principle that regional consensus be attained through a balanced super majority voting structure.

We believe these guiding principles can serve as the lens through which your Task Force looks to reform and strengthen our mass transit system. We stand ready to assist you in your work and look forward to presenting our initiatives to the members of the Task Force.

Sincerely,

Toni Preckwinkle
President
Cook County Board

Dan Cronin
Chairman
DuPage County Board

Chris Lauzen
Chairman
Kane County Board

Aaron Lawlor
Chairman
Lake County Board

Tina Hill
Chairman
McHenry County Board

Larry Walsh
Executive
Will County

2. Articles and Editorials:

A. Governor Quinn Appoints Independent Task Force, Illinois
Governor News, August 15, 2013

August 15, 2013

Governor Quinn Appoints Independent Task Force to Restore Trust in Northeastern Illinois Public Transit
Task Force Will Issue Recommendations to Root Out Waste, Fraud and Abuse, and Overhaul Structure to Better Serve Transit Riders

CHICAGO – Governor Pat Quinn today issued an [Executive Order](#) creating the [Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force](#), an independent panel of transit, finance and good government leaders who will issue recommendations to reform the mass transit system in northeastern Illinois. The 15-member, blue-ribbon task force is charged with developing ways to eliminate waste, fraud and abuse and streamline operations to ensure improved transit service for the millions of users each year.

The task force will issue recommendations to be considered by the General Assembly and Governor Quinn for both the veto and spring sessions.

Today’s Executive Order is part of Governor Quinn’s agenda to strengthen oversight of mass transit in northeastern Illinois and restore commuters’ confidence. The Governor’s move comes in the wake of recurring scandals at Metra and ongoing accountability problems over the last decade.

“It’s clear that the mass transit system in northeastern Illinois is not working for taxpayers,” Governor Quinn said. “This task force is a step forward to make our transit system worthy of the public’s trust. Their recommendations will be valuable as we work in both the veto and spring sessions to reform mass transit in northeastern Illinois.”

The task force will develop recommendations to revamp the oversight of mass transit in northeastern Illinois. The task force will work to provide initial recommendations to the Governor and the Illinois General Assembly prior to the fall veto session, and they will issue a final report by January 31, 2014.

The members of the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force include:

Co-Chair George Ranney Jr. is President and CEO of Metropolis Strategies. A graduate of Harvard College and the University of Chicago Law School, he served as Deputy State Budget Director under Governor Richard B. Ogilvie and was the chairman of the task force which led to the creation of the Regional Transportation Authority. A trustee of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation from 1991 to 2005 and an emeritus trustee at the University of Chicago, George Ranney is the former Chair and Chief Executive of Prairie Holdings Corporation, the firm which developed Prairie Crossing, a nationally recognized conservation community in north suburban Grayslake. He has served in various capacities for Inland Steel Industries, include Vice President for Raw Materials and General Counsel. In addition, Mr. Ranney is senior counsel to Mayer Brown LLP. He has worked for a number of civic and non-profit organizations including Chicago Public Television (WTTW) and the Field Foundation of Illinois and lives in Grayslake.

Co-Chair Ann L. Schneider is Secretary of the Illinois Department of Transportation. She has more than 25 years of service with the State of Illinois, including nearly eight with the Illinois Department of Transportation as its Chief Fiscal Officer and Chief Operating Officer. She is the chair of AASHTO’s Standing Committee on Rail Transportation (SCORT) and CMAP’s Policy Committee. She is a member of the AASHTO Sustainable Transportation: Energy, Infrastructure and Climate Solutions (STEICS) Steering Committee, and as Secretary, she sits on AASHTO’s Board of Directors. In June 2013, she was named chair of the U.S. Department of Transportation National Freight Advisory Committee. Secretary Schneider has a Master’s of Public Administration and has completed her coursework, all but dissertation, for a Doctorate of Public

Administration from the University of Illinois at Springfield. She lives in Springfield.

Carole L. Brown is currently a Managing Director at Barclay's Capital. For more than six years, Brown served as Chairman of the Chicago Transit Authority Board, a position she held through September 2009. A native of Baltimore and a 1986 graduate of Harvard University, she went on to attend Northwestern University's Kellogg Graduate School of Management, where she received a Master's in Management in 1989. She lives in Chicago.

Patrick Fitzgerald is the former United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois whose impressive work prosecuting governmental corruption has protected the public interest. As a partner at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP and Affiliates, he serves as an experienced investigator whose practice focuses on internal investigations, government enforcement matters and civil litigation. Fitzgerald has received numerous honors for his more than 20 years in public service including the Justice John Paul Stevens Award from the Chicago Bar Association. He was previously named "Lawyer of the Year" by The National Law Journal. A graduate of Amherst College, he holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School. He lives in Chicago.

Robert W. Guy is the Illinois State Legislative Director for the United Transportation Union (UTU). Guy graduated from Western Illinois University in 1991 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in broadcast journalism. In 1996 he was elected UTU #234's Local Legislative Representative and was reelected in 1999 and 2003, becoming State Director in 2009, where he has focused on expanding Amtrak service, working on safety legislation, and other issues. He lives in Springfield.

Adrienne M. Holloway is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at DePaul University's School of Public Service. She has more than 10 years of experience in the housing and community development industries. Dr. Holloway received her Ph.D. from Northern Illinois University, her Master's in Public Administration from Baruch College, City University of New York and her B.S. in Psychology from Fordham University. She serves on the Aurora Hispanic Heritage Board. She lives in Aurora.

Sylvia Jenkins is President of Moraine Valley Community College, the second largest community college in Illinois. She earned a Ph.D. in Education and Human Resource Studies specializing in Community College Leadership from Colorado State University, a Master's of Library Science from State University of New York at Albany and a B.S. in English Education from Grambling State University. She lives in Chicago.

Nick Palmer is the Chief of Staff for Will County Executive Larry Walsh and oversees all the departments under the Executive branch of county government. In one of the fastest growing counties in the state, Palmer has pushed for greater transparency of county government and greater accountability of taxpayer dollars. Palmer serves as chairman of the Will County Integrated Criminal Justice Ad-Hoc Committee and initiated a Coordinated Paratransit effort in eastern Will County. He has advocated for expansion of transit services to underserved areas of Will County. He lives in Bolingbrook.

Tony Paulauski is the Executive Director of The Arc of Illinois, a grassroots organization that advocates on behalf of individuals with disabilities and their families. Paulauski, a native Chicagoan, also serves on numerous boards and committees including the Governor's Disability Services Committee. He was appointed Chairman of the Pace Blue Ribbon Committee on Paratransit. He is a graduate of Northern Illinois University, where he majored in Special Education. He lives in Tinley Park.

Raul Raymundo is the Executive Director of the Resurrection Project, an organization dedicated to creating healthy communities through organizing, education and community development. He is currently a member of the Executive Council of Chicago's Metropolis 2020. Raymundo also serves on several boards, including Chicago Metropolitan Development Association and WBEZ 91.5 FM Public Radio. He is a resident of

Chicago.

Robert G. Reiter, Jr. is the Secretary-Treasurer of the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL). He is a third-generation member of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 150 and previously served as an organizer, business representative and field attorney responsible for negotiating collective bargaining agreements. He holds a juris doctor from the Chicago-Kent College of Law. He is a resident of Orland Park.

Ashish Sen is a member of the Chicago Transit Authority Board of Directors and served as Director of the Bureau of Transportation Statistics for the U.S. Department of Transportation. He served as Director of the Urban Transportation Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he also held positions as Professor of Urban Planning, Professor of Mathematics, Professor of Statistics, and Professor of Computer Science. He is a resident of Chicago.

Don Tantillo is a retired high school teacher and debate coach who worked at Wheeling High School in Northwest Suburban District 214 for 30 years. He grew up in Chicago and earned an undergraduate degree from Northern Illinois University and a Master's degree from Northeastern Illinois University. Tantillo was honored in 1992 at the White House as one of two outstanding teachers from Illinois. Tantillo drove a CTA bus while earning his college education. He lives in McHenry.

Kathryn Tholin is CEO of Center for Neighborhood Technology, where she directs and oversees CNT's research, demonstration and policy development. Tholin has more than 25 years of experience in program management, policy development, and research on a wide range of community development, environmental and energy issues. She is also a founder and board member of the Chicago Community Loan Fund. She lives in Chicago.

Sonia Walwyn is a Vice President of Duff & Phelps, LLC, and a member of the tax services group with over 25 years' experience assisting clients in maximizing their overall savings and business efficiency across all industry sectors. She earned an LLM in taxation from Villanova School of Law in 2000 and a J.D. from Dickinson School of Law in 1988, and holds a B.S. in accounting from Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania. She lives in Naperville.

B. Gov. Quinn creates Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force,
89 WLS Chicago's Talk Leader, August 15, 2013

Gov. Quinn creates Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force

89 WLS Chicago's Talk Leader

Governor Pat Quinn issued an Executive Order Thursday, creating the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force. The independent panel of transit, finance and good government leaders will issue recommendations to reform the mass transit system in northeastern Illinois.

The 15-member, blue-ribbon task force is charged with developing ways to eliminate waste, fraud and abuse and streamline operations to ensure improved transit service for the millions of users each year.

The task force will issue recommendations to be considered by the General Assembly and Governor Quinn for both the veto and spring sessions.

The Executive Order is part of Quinn's agenda to strengthen oversight of mass transit in northeastern Illinois and restore commuter confidence.

The governor's move comes in the wake of recurring scandals at Metra and ongoing accountability problems over the last decade.

"It's clear that the mass transit system in northeastern Illinois is not working for taxpayers," Quinn said. "This task force is a step forward to make our transit system worthy of the public's trust. Their recommendations will be valuable as we work in both the veto and spring sessions to reform mass transit in northeastern Illinois."

The task force will work to provide initial recommendations to the Governor and the Illinois General Assembly prior to the fall veto session, and they will issue a final report by January 31, 2014.

C. Gov. Quinn appoints task force to overhaul transit in Northeastern Illinois, *Progressive Railroading*, August 23, 2013

Gov. Quinn appoints task force to overhaul transit in northeastern Illinois

Rail News: Passenger Rail 8-23-13

Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn ordered last week that the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force be formed to overhaul the region's transit system to better serve riders.

The task force will be an independent panel of transit, finance and "good government" leaders who will issue recommendations to reform the region's mass transit system, Quinn administration officials said in a press release. The 15-member panel has been charged with developing ways to eliminate waste, fraud and abuse, and streamline operations to ensure improved service.

"It's clear that the mass transit system in northeastern Illinois is not working for taxpayers," said Quinn. "This task force is a step forward to make our transit system worthy of the public's trust."

The panel's members include Co-chair George Ranney Jr., president and chief executive officer of Metropolis Strategies; Co-chair Ann Schneider, secretary of the [Illinois Department of Transportation](#); Carole Brown, managing director at Barclay's Capital; former U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald; Robert Guy, Illinois state legislative director for the [United Transportation Union](#); Adrienne Holloway, assistant professor at DePaul University; Sylvia Jenkins, president of Moraine Valley Community College; Nick Palmer, chief of staff for the Will County executive; and Tony Paulauski, executive director of The Arc of Illinois.

Other members include Raul Raymundo, executive director of the Resurrection Project; Robert Reiter Jr., secretary-treasurer of the Chicago Federation of Labor; Ashish Sen, a member of the [Chicago Transit Authority](#)'s board; retired teacher Don Tantillo; Kathryn Tholin, CEO of Center for Neighborhood Technology; and Sonia Walwyn, vice president of Duff & Phelps L.L.C

D. RTA Proposes Merging CTA, Metra, Pace Planners, *NBC Chicago*,
September 3, 2013

RTA Proposes Merging CTA, Metra, Pace Planners

NBC 5 Chicago: 9/3/2013

The Regional Transit Authority wants to combine the planning departments of Metra, the Chicago Transit Authority and Pace to potentially save the agencies a lot of money.

The reported proposal comes as Gov. Pat Quinn meets for the first time Tuesday with the [Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force](#), a panel that includes former U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald and aims at reforming the area's transit system management amid recent scandal.

Metra has been embroiled in legal problems since ousted CEO Alex Clifford left in June with a \$718,000 separation agreement. Clifford said he was forced out of the agency for resisting pressure from House Speaker Michael Madigan and others over jobs and construction contracts.

Metra's board has since lost several other members this year, including Larry Huggins, Chairman Brad O'Halloran, Paul Darley, Mike McCoy, and Stanley Rakestraw, who resigned over a residency issue just hours after Fitzgerald's appointment.

CTA board member Frank Zuccarelli resigned from his position in August after he was accused of double-dipping because he received \$128,000 a year as supervisor of Thornton Township along with \$25,000 from the CTA.

The Chicago Sun-Times reports a merge of all transit agencies could save big money. Though it's not known just how much could be saved, the 100 planners currently cost the agencies about \$20 million.

"It's clear that the mass transit system in northeastern Illinois is not working for taxpayers," Quinn said last month. "This task force is a step forward to make our transit system worthy of the public's trust. Their recommendations will be valuable as we work in both the veto and spring sessions to reform mass transit in northeastern Illinois."

E. Quinn: Metra panel will help public transportation, *The Southern Illinoisan*, September 3, 2013

Quinn: Metra task force will help public transportation

Tuesday, September 03, 2013

[Karen Jordan](#)

ABC 7 Chicago

September 3, 2013 (CHICAGO) (WLS) -- Gov. Pat Quinn says scandals may have prompted a task force to look at Metra, but it's a chance to improve public transportation in northeastern Illinois.

The 15-member panel of the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force has their work cut out for them. They have been charged by Quinn to eliminate waste, fraud and abuse at transit agencies. They met Tuesday for the first time, assembled last month in the wake of the controversy at Metra over the more than \$800,000 severance package awarded to ousted CEO Alex Clifford.

"There's a lack of oversight, lack of accountability, an inability to remove directors when needed," said Quinn.

Quinn said he wants the transit system, which is the third largest in the nation, to be the envy of the world, goals that were echoed by the panel co-chair.

"We want to make sure the system is accessible, safe, respects the environment, advances quality of life and provides equal access to opportunity for all residents in the region," said Ann Schneider, task force co-chair.

Task force members say they have an aggressive agenda to deal with reforming the transit system and will divide the panel into four committees dealing with ethics, system performance, finance and governance. Former U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald is on the task force and has an interest in ethics.

"There's certainly a very strong appearance that if I were a rider or taxpayer, I would not have confidence that people are doing things with the interest of riders and taxpayers coming first always," said Fitzgerald.

Task force members say transit system ridership has stagnated in recent years and that improving the system from the top down can lure customers back.

"Northeastern Illinois residents and visitors deserve a transit system that efficiently meets public needs and holds leadership accountable," said Schneider.

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F. Transit Task Force meets for first time; RTA overhaul planned,
Julie Unruh *WGN*, September 3, 2013

Transit task force meets for first time; RTA overhaul planned

WGN: 9/3/2013

Today, the panel appointed by Governor Quinn to overhaul the RTA met for the first time.

The panel, called the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force, plans to reorganize a system that not only suffers from bad public relations, but also from poor ridership. They have a 4 point plan in place and hope it can all get addressed with a very tight deadline.

Quinn also hopes they can get Metra, the CTA and Pace back on track.

Metra has been operating under a cloud of suspicion after its CEO got a buyout worth hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars. Since then, multiple board members have resigned. Failed leadership at Metra is forcing the agency to review and perhaps reinvent the way it runs transportation on our rails and our roads.

The panel suggests former U.S attorney Patrick Fitzgerald will head the ethics committee.

Others will lead the finance committee, the governance committee and system performance.

While ethics remains the priority, the panel makes it clear performance is also a major problem. Ridership is up just 1% says the board. Other cities like New York are seeing it grow by 50%. Chicago's growth is stagnant.

October 18 is the deadline for the first report due to the governor.

January 31 deadline is when the final report is due and the panel dissolves.

G. Quinn Urges Task Force to Fix Metra, Phil Rogers *NBC Chicago*,
September 3, 2013

Quinn Urges Task Force to Fix Metra

Commission ordered to have recommendations to governor by Oct. 18

By [Phil Rogers NBC Chicago](#)

| Tuesday, Sep 3, 2013 |

The commission may be biting off more than it can chew. While Metra's tribulations caused the committee to be formed, the co-chairman says she wants to reorganize, as she put it, the way mass transit is delivered in Chicago. Phil Rogers reports.

Decrying the fact that [scandals had been plaguing Metra and its board of directors](#) in recent weeks, Gov. Pat Quinn on Tuesday challenged his handpicked transit task force to come up with quick solutions, even as Metra's new executive director defended his employees.

"We've had embarrassments in recent times," Quinn told members of the group, dubbed the Northeast Illinois Public Transit Task Force. "There's a lack of oversight. A lack of accountability. An inability to remove directors when needed."

The governor said the problems on the Metra board, sparked by the ouster of Executive Director Alex Clifford, had led to a "complete paralysis of governance."

[Briefing Report Blasts Chicago-Area Transit Systems](#)

Clifford was removed from his job after complaining of political meddling in Metra's inner workings. But the agency's board agreed to pay him a lavish severance package worth well over \$800,000 rather than face a potential lawsuit. Critics complained the deal reeked of hush money, and Regional Transportation Authority auditors said the move was foolhardy because Metra had insurance which would have more than covered the cost of any litigation.

"There's certainly a very strong appearance that, if I were a rider or a taxpayer, I would not have confidence that people are doing things with the interests of riders and taxpayers coming first," said former U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald, [a task force member](#). "It would be nice to do something to prevent the next scandal, rather than read about it."

Still, as the group spoke of its agenda, it sounded at times as if they were preparing to bite off far more than they could chew. Co-chairman Ann Schneider, the secretary of the Illinois Department of Transportation, said the commission would take a holistic approach to transit in general in Chicago, not just Metra. Schneider noted that while other big cities have seen massive growth in their transit systems, ridership in the Chicago area had stagnated.

"Reorganizing and revitalizing the way transit is delivered could start northeastern Illinois down the path of helping to reverse that trend," she said.

The meeting was awkward because the elephant in the room was not in the room at all. Metra officials were not invited to attend, and Acting Executive Director Don Orseno spent most of the session standing in a hallway outside. When he finally entered and took a seat in the back, no one on the commission took public note that anyone from Metra was even in attendance.

"We stand ready to help provide any information that's needed and we're going to be a partner in this," Orseno said afterward, declaring the lion's share of Metra employees were hard working people who tried only to deliver a quality product.

"I think we're being painted with a bad brush," he said. "As Metra as a whole. I don't think the employees deserve that."

The commission is to come up with a preliminary set of recommendations for the governor by October 18th.

H. Public transit task force begins in wake of Metra scandal, Richard Wronski *Chicago Tribune*, September 3, 2013

Public transit task force begins in wake of Metra scandal

September 03, 2013 | By Richard Wronski | Tribune reporter

A task force appointed to reform the Chicago area's troubled mass transit network and transform it into a "world-class system" embarked Tuesday on what members called a daunting task aimed at ending turf wars and finding qualified people.

Gov. Pat Quinn appointed the 15-member group after weeks of controversy at Metra over the \$871,000 severance package awarded to ousted CEO Alex Clifford and the allegations Clifford raised of political interference at the agency.

Patrick Fitzgerald, a former U.S. attorney in Chicago named to the panel, said he "raised his hand" to participate because "the transit system is pretty important and it would be nice to try to do something to prevent the next scandal rather than read about it."

Quinn asked the group to develop ways to eliminate waste, fraud and abuse at the CTA, Metra and Pace, as well as the oversight agency, the Regional Transportation Authority, and to streamline overall system operations.

Meeting for their first session, the members acknowledged they face a challenge making an Oct. 18 deadline for an interim report on their findings to be submitted to the General Assembly. A final set of recommendations is due Jan. 31.

"The scandals that have been plaguing Metra and its board of directors have brought us here today," Quinn said.

But task force members said their broader goal is to find ways to overhaul the entire system. Critics say there is too little RTA oversight, and that the three separate transit agencies battle each other for an ever-dwindling share of state and federal dollars and jealously guard their political turf.

Task force co-chair Ann Schneider, Illinois Department of Transportation secretary, said the panelists will form working groups to tackle four areas for reforms: ethics, system performance, finance and governance.

"We do have a big task in front of us, but I do think, given the membership of this task force, that they're up to it and I look forward to preparing those recommendations and moving them along," Schneider said.

Echoing Quinn, Schneider said Chicagoans are entitled to have a "world-class" transit system.

The panel will hold public sessions and encourage comments via a website <http://www.dot.il.gov/nepublictransit.html>, officials said.

Co-chair George Ranney, CEO of the civic group Metropolis Strategies, said oversight of the transit agencies was ripe for change. The RTA and the three transit boards have a total of 47 board members appointed by 16 public officials, mainly county board chairmen and the mayor of Chicago.

"The problem is, we haven't been asking our public officials who appoint the people to these jobs to name people who are up to the task," Ranney said. "We're saying, 'Change that. ... Let's get good people into those jobs.'"

The task force members come from a variety of backgrounds, including education, labor and transportation. The marquee name on the panel is Fitzgerald's. Schneider said she hoped Fitzgerald would oversee the working group on ethics.

"If you're a rider or taxpayer, I don't think you can read the headlines and feel comfortable" with the transit system, Fitzgerald said.

- I. Another task force that goes in circles won't straighten out region's transit, *Chicago Sun-Times*, September 3, 2013

[Another task force that goes in circles won't straighten out region's transit.](#)

Editorials

Last Modified: Oct 5, 2013 06:21AM

The Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force, which met for the first time Tuesday, has two big jobs and too little time to complete them. But the panel's 15 members should do all they can not to squander this chance to get things right.

One job is to upgrade oversight and ethical standards for the six-country transit system, especially at Metra, which has had a sorry string of scandals, lacks a permanent chief executive and has barely enough board members to function. The meltdown at Metra is what triggered revived interest in improving transit governance. The task force has its plate full, so officials with the power to appoint a new Metra board should do so immediately.

The task force's other job is to recommend ways to restructure transit governance to give it a more regional focus and improve transit for as many people as possible. Chicago area public transit has been mired in squabbling over resources since the Regional Transportation Authority was created four decades ago, and creating separate boards in 1983 to run commuter trains and suburban buses didn't help.

The task force's deadline for initial recommendations is before the Oct. 22 fall Legislature' session , with a final report due Jan. 31. Finding a politically viable solution that's eluded us until now is tall order for a panel just beginning its work.

Reform proposals already are floating around. An RTA-commissioned study is due in October on new ways to divvy up transit dollars. RTA Chairman John S. Gates on Tuesday proposed consolidating the planning efforts of the RTA, the CTA, Metra and Pace into a single department. Meanwhile, others are supporting a bill to merge the RTA with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning.

Clearly, four boards are more than we need, and the task force should consider merging Metra and Pace.

On Tuesday, Gov. Pat Quinn set a goal of creating "a world-class system that doesn't have the scandals we are all tired of."

The last thing we need is another task force that doesn't amount to anything.

J. Task Force Gets To Work To Fix Illinois Public Transit Problems,
CBS Chicago, September 3, 2013

Task Force Gets To Work To Fix Illinois Public Transit Problems

CBS Chicago: 9/3/2013

CHICAGO (CBS) — Governor Pat Quinn’s transit task force has morphed from checking up on Metra to designing a transit system that’s the envy of the world after a few local issues are settled. John Cody reports on day one.

Governor Quinn says the RTA is the world’s third largest public transit system but with the real specific problems.

“There is a lack of oversight, a lack of accountability and inability to remove directors when needed. There is a lack of ethical standards that are applied and really in the case of Metra a complete paralysis of governance,” said Quinn.

Quinn said grid lock is never good, as he tasked the task force with reorganizing Illinois transit and studying ridership enhancements like WiFi, universal fares and fuel-efficient buses.

Former U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald, a task force member, said he’d never tell another prosecutor who to investigate but did say he could understand why Metra Riders might feel their interests may not come first.

And State Representative Al Riley, not a task force member, spoke during the meeting to recommend that his south suburban constituents – who have the longest commutes to work – should get a rail system to help them get to their jobs.

The task force issues its first report next month, final report January first.

K. Quinn: Metra task force will help public transportation, Karen Jordan *ABC Chicago*, September 3, 2013

Quinn: Metra panel will help public transportation

SEPTEMBER 03, 2013 6:00 PM

CHICAGO (AP) — Gov. Pat Quinn says scandals may have prompted a task force to look at Metra, but it's a chance to improve public transportation in northeastern Illinois.

The task force he formed to suggest reforms held its first meeting Tuesday. Members of the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force include former U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald.

He says it's a good chance to ensure hiring and work practices at the agencies are not based on patronage or personal decisions.

The panel was formed in the wake of allegations of political hiring at Metra.

The group will make recommendations to lawmakers by the end of January.

- L. CTA, Metra could save millions if they buy together, RTA chief says, *Crain's Chicago Business*, September 16, 2013

CTA, Metra could save millions if they buy together, RTA chief says

Crain's Chicago Business: 9/16/2013

[As Gov. Pat Quinn's transit commission gets down to work](#), here's a suggestion that could save the area's public transportation operators millions of dollars a year: joint purchasing of everything from diesel fuel for buses to insurance benefits for workers.

The idea doesn't start with me. It comes from Regional Transportation Authority Chairman John Gates. And while the RTA once again is being torn apart by [one of its patented budget battles](#), Mr. Gates is absolutely on target with his procurement idea.

Under current circumstances, the RTA's three operating units — the Chicago Transit Authority, Metra and Pace — often buy goods and services independently, even when they are buying exactly the same stuff, Mr. Gates wrote last week in a memo to government leaders who select members of transit boards. (Read his memo at the end of this post.)

"The (three) service boards operate in silos and are unaware of what the others currently are purchasing," Mr. Gates says. As a result, "the transit system has failed to take advantage of our scale in order to secure the best price."

It's too bad, he adds, that the three often competing agencies don't even have clauses in their contracts allowing the other transit agencies to get the same price for the same product.

This isn't exactly rocket science, is it? Any corporate procurement officer can tell you about the advantage of economies of scale — or warn you about how intra-office competition can be highly inefficient.

Anyhow, Mr. Gates suggests several solutions.

For one, the RTA ought to create a single website for all publicly solicited bids issued by the RTA and the three operating units so vendors can more easily find out who's in the market and the units can more easily shop. He also proposes that the Legislature order the creation of a joint procurement team so buyers at the RTA and each of the operating units can be informed of what the others are up to and consider collaborating.

I can already hear the howls about that. But Mr. Gates notes that one widely used line of fare-card reading machines normally costs \$115,281 per machine. Since Pace and the CTA got together and negotiated a joint deal, though, the price will be as low as \$49,803. This is a rare example of what can be gained when the agencies actually work together.

Not everyone likes the RTA. In fact, the Quinn commission is expected to recommend that it be abolished. But centralized purchasing makes all the sense in the world, particularly with politically connected contractors trying to pull strings in the shadows.

So, George Ranney, Pat Fitzgerald and other members of the Quinn panel: Don't throw the baby out with the bath water, OK?

M.Transit Task Force Hit for Banning public at "Working Group"
Meetings, Rosalind Rossi *Chicago Sun-Times*, September 18, 2013

[Transit task force hit for banning public from 'working group' meetings](#)

BY ROSALIND ROSSI

Education Reporter

Last Modified: Oct 20, 2013 07:44AM

A gubernatorial task force charged with straightening out the Metra mess and other transit problems found itself facing its own brouhaha Wednesday over whether it should be holding closed-door meetings of its "working groups."

A lawmaker and a transit official complained about the closed sessions Wednesday, and at least two attorneys said the meetings — including one chaired by former U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald — legally should have been open.

A spokeswoman for Gov. Pat Quinn insisted otherwise but by the end of the day promised that all future meetings of the "working groups" of the governor's Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force will be open to the public and the media.

The sessions of three to four task force members each, focused on one of four areas of transit reform, were merely "organizational" meetings of "working groups" and as such were not subject to the Open Meetings Act, said Quinn spokeswoman Brooke Anderson. But, she added, "We're happy to ensure that those organizational meetings are also open to the public in the future."

The decision came hours after state Rep. Jack Franks (D-Marengo) said he had complained to one task force co-chair about the closed sessions. The task force was formed in the tumult that followed the Metra board's closed-door wranglings over an \$871,000 buyout of its CEO.

Given the Metra fiasco, "How can you have any credibility if you are not open and transparent?" Franks said. "Now they are probably in CYA [cover your a--] mode. When they got called on it, they had to backtrack, but at least they backtracked."

Also adding pressure was Joseph Costello, executive director of the Regional Transportation Authority, one of four transit agencies in the task force's crosshairs. Invited to speak Thursday to one working group, Costello wrote a letter Wednesday urging that "all meetings involving the Governor's task force be open to the public," including any working group meetings.

Attorney Esther Seitz of the Illinois Press Association said a public body can't invent a name for a subcommittee and suddenly become exempt from the Open Meetings Act.

"Just because you call yourself a 'working group' doesn't mean you can skirt the Open Meetings Act," Seitz said Wednesday.

Both Seitz and John Myers, a Downstate attorney for various municipalities, said “working groups” would constitute an “advisory” or “subsidiary body” of the task force and thus be subject to open meetings.

Even a spokeswoman for Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan seemed to agree.

“Generally speaking, it is usually our view that subcommittees of public bodies — whether they are called subcommittees or working group(s) — are subject to the requirements of the Open Meetings Act,” said Madigan spokeswoman Natalie Bauer. However, Bauer cautioned that the agency would need more facts to issue a formal opinion.

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N. Metra task force holds second public hearing, *Northwest Herald*,
September 25, 2013

Metra task force holds second public hearing

Published: Wednesday, Sept. 25, 2013 7:31 a.m. CST • Updated: Wednesday, Sept. 25, 2013 2:10 p.m. CST

[By The Associated Press](#)

CHICAGO — A state panel charged with coming up with reforms for Metra and other Illinois public transit agencies is set to have a second public hearing.

The Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force meets Wednesday in downtown Chicago.

Gov. Pat Quinn formed the group in August after allegations about political hiring at Metra. He's called for an overhaul of the commuter rail agency, PACE and other transit agencies.

Appointed members of the task force include former U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald and Illinois Department of Transportation Secretary Ann Schneider. They're expected to send a first batch of suggested reforms to Quinn by Oct. 18. Lawmakers are set to meet in Springfield days later, and could take up legislation based on the suggestions.

The group will submit a final report in January.

- O. Fitzgerald questions transit agencies' training on taking politics out of hiring , Rosalind Rossi *Chicago Sun-Times*, September 25, 2013

[Fitzgerald questions transit agencies' training on taking politics out of hiring](#)

BY ROSALIND ROSSI

Transportation Reporter

Last Modified: Oct 28, 2013 07:13AM

Corruption-busting former U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald Wednesday voiced concern that the region's four transit agencies seem to have dropped the ball on adequately training staff on how to remove politics from hiring.

Fitzgerald's comments came during the second meeting of a transit task force formed in the wake of allegations by ex-Metra CEO Alex Clifford that two Metra Board members conspired to dump him because he would not "play ball" on patronage requests — two of them supposedly originating with Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan (D-Chicago).

Fitzgerald said his observations were based on the written responses of all four transit agencies to 25 detailed questions he had posed involving ethics issues.

The answers of the Regional Transportation Authority and the three agencies it oversees — Metra, the Chicago Transit Authority and Pace — indicate that the agencies provide "lots of training" on avoiding discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, national origin or a disability, Fitzgerald said.

Some agencies reported training about gift-giving, ethics and avoiding nepotism, he said.

But, Fitzgerald said, he didn't see a lot of training based on "removing politics from hiring."

"There's not a lot of training on whether people can be hired based on political affiliation," Fitzgerald said during the meeting of Gov. Pat Quinn's Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force. "I have concerns about that."

During the first requested appearance of all four transit agencies before the task force, Fitzgerald questioned whether there should be a "firewall" between elected officials and the hiring process.

In an exchange with RTA executive director Joseph Costello, Fitzgerald asked whether the RTA keeps any record of politicians who call the RTA to say they'd like someone hired.

Costello said no such record is kept because all such callers are referred to the agency's website for directions on how to apply for jobs.

During questioning by task force member Ashish Sen, leaders of the RTA and Pace conceded their agencies have doled out severances to employees who were not under contract.

Pace executive director Thomas Ross said Pace has awarded “maybe one week’s pay for every year of service” to a departing employee, but such deals were “nothing of the magnitude” of the up to \$871,000, 26-month separation agreement given Clifford. Clifford’s deal, and the circumstances surrounding it, spawned investigations by two inspectors general and the formation of Quinn’s task force.

Also Wednesday, RTA Chairman John Gates Jr. charged that the RTA was being “required to provide oversight without the tools.” RTA officials have said they did not know about Clifford’s buyout deal until after it occurred, and under current rules, Metra was not required to run hiring or separation decisions past the RTA.

Gates recommended that the RTA be given more power over Metra, the CTA and Pace or, as an alternative, all four agencies should be consolidated into one that would set policy and revenue for the region. Such an agency could be divided into a light rail, heavy rail and bus division, he said.

The concept didn’t sit well with Ross, executive director of Pace, which provides suburban bus service. Ross said Pace has bus contracts with 90 different communities, and “they expect to control how the service looks if they are paying for it.” For example, he said, changes are currently being made in Lake County based on its requests.

“You get everything in one location in some ivory tower, and all you’re going to get is criticism,” Ross said.

Under an executive order signed in August by Quinn, the task force has been asked to consider streamlining or restructuring the four agencies, to address patronage and ethics issues raised by the Clifford case, and to create a blueprint for a “world class” transit system. Its initial recommendation are due in mid-October.

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P. Can Task Force Solve Feud Between Metra, Pace, CTA?, Marni Pyke *Daily Herald*, October 2, 2013

Article updated: 10/3/2013 7:06 AM

Can task force solve feud between Metra, Pace, CTA?

By Marni Pyke

Members of a state task force got an earful from transit leaders about funding dysfunction and rivalries over a shrinking revenue pie Wednesday.

Gov. Pat Quinn's panel is supposed to study how to eliminate waste, fraud and abuses and streamline any administrative redundancies at Metra, Pace, the CTA and Regional Transportation Authority.

Dominating discussion by the group's finance committee was an ongoing controversy — how to divide about \$189 million in so-called RTA discretionary funds. Along with fares, transit agencies receive revenues from sales taxes that's mostly allocated by a set formula.

But plans by the RTA to give the CTA about \$185 million of the discretionary funds and Pace \$3.8 million while leaving out Metra have created heartburn this year. At the RTA's September meeting, a vote establishing revenues for the three transit agencies failed for lack of consensus.

The money is actually “not discretionary, we've been getting it for 30 years ... it's part of our budget,” CTA Chief Financial Officer Ron DeNard said. The Chicago Transit Authority favors formalizing the tradition to avoid “all this bickering,” DeNard explained.

But Metra argues that as the economy improves and sales taxes grow, the commuter rail agency should share in the spoils.

“If the status quo was in my favor, I also would advocate locking (discretionary funding) down,” Metra Chief Financial Officer Tom Farmer said. “We do not believe it is equitable. We believe some people in the region are being left out.”

Meanwhile, Pace Deputy Executive Director Terry Brennan testified that although the suburbs comprise two-thirds of the region's jobs and two-thirds of the population, the bus service “can't effectively serve that market,” because of systemic underfunding.

Quinn called the task force together following a scandal at Metra this summer over an up-to \$718,000 separation package given to ex-CEO Alex Clifford. Clifford has accused two former directors of misconduct.

A preliminary report by the task force is expected before the General Assembly's fall veto session.

The group's members include former U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald, IDOT Secretary Ann Schneider and Metropolis Strategies CEO George Ranney of Grayslake.

Q. Consultant: Area transit agencies should unify, Richard Wronski
Chicago Tribune, October 16, 2013

Consultant: Area transit agencies should unify Advice agrees with early report from governor's transit task force

October 16, 2013 | By Richard Wronski, Chicago Tribune reporter

The Chicago area should consider folding its separate transit boards into a strong, unified agency to escape the often contentious rivalry that exists between the CTA, Metra and Pace, a consultant said Wednesday.

Such a superagency would be similar to transportation agencies in New York City and Philadelphia, said the consultant, who presented his findings to the Regional Transportation Authority and to a task force charged with reforming the transit system after this summer's controversy at Metra.

The main problem with the RTA, the oversight agency for the CTA, Metra and Pace, is that it lacks the power to support the planning and decision-making process that state law intended, said Richard Mudge, vice president for the Vienna, Va.-based transportation consultant Delcan Corp.

"There is a mismatch between the RTA's tools and what the legislature asked the agency to do," Mudge told the agency.

Although the study was paid for by the RTA, Mudge also was invited to address the transit task force created by Gov. Pat Quinn after Metra's board was rocked by the controversy over the awarding of ousted CEO Alex Clifford a severance package potentially worth \$817,000.

The task force Wednesday issued an interim report which did not make any recommendations but listed six findings, including that "portions of the transit system have been plagued by scandal and corruption, to the detriment of the system as a whole."

The report also found that the structure of the current transit system has led to "duplication, competition, uncoordinated service and a lack of accountability."

The RTA paid Delcan \$383,000 to come up with ways to resolve the long-standing turf wars between the transit agencies, each with its own boards of directors, core riderships and political patrons.

The battling among the agencies has taken center stage at RTA board meetings in recent months with the rivals fighting over how to divvy up state funding. The monthslong dispute was resolved Wednesday with an agreement passed by board members with the exception of DuPage County representative Patrick Durante.

Although the amount of funding was relatively small, the transit agencies and their representatives became "pretty well dug in" during protracted negotiations, according to Chairman John Gates Jr.

The stalemate put the RTA in violation of state law for failing to reach a budget deadline, and threatened to jeopardize mass transit service Dec. 31 if the dispute continued to prevent the agencies from adopting their own budgets and holding public hearings, Gates said.

The Delcan study was intended to address funding disputes among the agencies, officials said.

"The funding formulas are complex, out of date (some rules have been unchanged for 30 years) and rigid," the study found.

The study outlined eight scenarios for revising how the region's transit system is governed and funded. The best approach, Mudge suggested, would be to revise the funding formulas and award money to the transit agencies based on how well they reach performance goals.

A single umbrella agency like New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority offers the "best potential to achieve regional objectives," the study said.

Under this scenario, the CTA, Metra and Pace would become "operating arms or subsidiaries" of this umbrella organization and no longer have their own boards.

The task force report appeared to agree with the Delcan study, pointing out that there is no coordinated, regionwide plan to increase ridership. At the same time, the system of dividing up funding is outdated, and too little money is invested in keeping equipment and infrastructure in good working order, it said.

"It is evident that the northeastern Illinois public transit system is not guided by a strong, clear vision," the task force report said.

R. 4 Chicago-area transit boards should be condensed to one, similar to NYC: Rosalind Rossi *Chicago Sun-Times*, October 16

[4 Chicago-area transit boards should be condensed to one, similar to NYC: study](#)

BY ROSALIND ROSSI

Transportation Reporter

Last Modified: Nov 18, 2013 07:56AM

A consultant Wednesday recommended that the Chicago area move to a New York City-like transit structure that would replace the RTA, CTA, Metra and Pace boards with one board driven by a "regional" focus rather than parochial concerns.

The result of a \$380,000 study by Delcan, a Virginia-based independent international transportation consulting firm, was delivered to both the RTA, which commissioned the study in the first place, and a gubernatorial taskforce that released its own hard-hitting initial findings Wednesday, but no specific interim recommendations.

And, it followed the Regional Transportation Authority board's approval of next fiscal year's long-awaited funding allocations to the Chicago Transit Authority, Metra and Pace. For two months, insiders say, the allocations have been held up by the kind of Chicago vs. suburbs squabbling Delcan's recommendation was designed to avoid. A similar holdup in last year's funding allocation prompted the RTA to hire Delcan to study how other transit agencies divvy up their money and structure their boards.

Initial findings of the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force released Wednesday provided ammunition for a New York City-like solution recommended by Delcan. The taskforce found that "the present system was created to represent political and geographic constituencies rather than to provide excellent transit service for the whole region."

It lamented that "authority, responsibility and accountability for the transit system are highly dispersed." It noted that 16 elected officials appoint 47 members of four different boards.

Delcan, whose largest practice area is mass transit, instead recommended that the four transit boards be replaced with one board that would include gubernatorial appointees. The structure would reduce the number of board members selected by county or other local officials who may feel obligated to put parochial concerns above regional goals, a Delcan official said.

CTA, Pace and Metra could operate as "operating arms or subsidiaries," with their own presidents or executive directors, but no boards, Delcan Vice President Richard Mudge told transit task force members. A similar model is used in New York City and Philadelphia, he said.

The next best alternative, the Delcan report said, would be to keep the current board structure but to give the RTA the authority it needs to carry out its current legislative responsibilities.

"We like an integrated governance, with a single board of directors," Mudge said. "[It] is the easiest way to meet regional goals."

Gov. Pat Quinn formed the taskforce amid the tumult that followed the Metra board's decision to award ex-CEO Alex Clifford an up to 26-month, \$871,000 severance deal with only eight months left on his contract. Quinn had said he hoped the taskforce would issue interim recommendations by Oct. 18, in time to influence the upcoming veto session.

However, marquee taskforce member Patrick Fitzgerald, the former U.S. Attorney who prosecuted two Illinois governors, said the taskforce was tackling issues that had been "developing over years" and needed more time to get their recommendations right. Therefore, the task force only issued findings, not recommendations Wednesday.

"If we thought there were simple fixes, of course we'd be doing that," Fitzgerald said.

Meanwhile, RTA board members Wednesday finally broke through a partisan logjam that caused them, for a second year, to blow a Sept. 15 deadline for doling out funding to the three transit agencies they oversee.

The dispute was resolved by agreeing, among other things, to allow the RTA to cover the annual debt payments on a \$56 million loan it provided to the CTA in 2009. The decision cancelled a resolution passed last month with the help of non-Chicago RTA board members that ordered the CTA to repay the money.

In addition, bickering over the RTA's discretionary pot of operating funds was resolved by giving 98 percent of next fiscal year's roughly \$190 million to the CTA and 2 percent to Pace.

However, the 2015 and 2016 discretionary splits were left up for grabs. with only an agreement that whatever split is used each year would also be the basis of any surplus funding allocation in those years, RTA officials said.

"Trust me, no one got what they wanted. Everyone is slightly unhappy," one RTA source said. "Nobody went home and popped champagne."

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- S. CTA Chief calls proposal to put transit agencies under one umbrella 'crazy', Rosalind Rossi *Chicago Sun-Times*, October 21, 2013

[CTA chief calls proposal to put transit agencies under one umbrella 'crazy'](#)

BY ROSALIND ROSSI

Transportation Reporter

Last Modified: Oct 22, 2013 02:14AM

"Forget about it."

That was CTA President Forrest Claypool's assessment Monday of what to do with a consultant's recommendation that one regionally-focused transit board oversee CTA, Metra and Pace.

"I would never work for such a crazy governance structure," Claypool said of one of the key recommendations of a \$380,000 study by Delcan, a transit consulting group.

"Power flows from the ballot box," Claypool told the Chicago Sun-Times Editorial Board Monday. Voters' ability to hold Mayor Rahm Emanuel accountable at the ballot box if they don't like CTA decisions is the "model" governance structure, Claypool said.

"Any other structure [and] you're working for a committee, which — forget about it. Just forget about it," Claypool said.

An executive with Delcan, an international transit consulting group, told a gubernatorial transit task force last week that northeastern Illinois needs one regional board to oversee CTA, Metra and Pace to ensure that planning is regionally-focused and not dominated by parochial concerns.

He suggested a model similar to that used in New York City, where the governor appoints several members of a transit board that oversees subways, rail systems, buses, bridges and tunnels that service southeastern New York and parts of Connecticut.

The CTA, Metra and Pace could function as "subsidiaries" of the one regional agency, but would not have their own boards, as they do now, consultant Richard Mudge said.

However, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning currently does regional planning, so "The problem [of lack of regional planning] has been overblown," Claypool said.

"What we have works pretty well if we manage it properly, fund it properly and have leadership that's working together," he said.

Claypool also said the CTA supports a plan to bring dedicated bus lanes to Ashland Avenue but is still seeking input on the best way to do it.

"We are behind it, but the devil is in the details," Claypool said. "We are not saying, 'This is the plan, darn it.'"

The CTA is still sounding out businesses and homeowners about its initial proposal to put a dedicated bus lane down the center of Ashland for 16 miles, from Irving Park to 95th Street, and only allow left turns immediately onto expressway ramps.

Businesses have complained that the limit on left turns would lead to decreasing customers and require vans and trucks to make three right turns through residential areas to reach some businesses on Ashland.

Claypool visited the Sun-Times Editorial Board to discuss the CTA's 2014 fiscal year budget, which packs no service cuts and no fare increases.

Claypool said the spending plan represented a significant break with "doomsday" budgets of the past.

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T. It's Time to Start Over on Mass Transit, *Southtown Star editorial*,
October 23, 2013

[Our View: It's time to start over on mass transit](#)

SouthtownStar editorial

Last Modified: Oct 24, 2013 06:03PM

A new report last week on how to best reorganize the Chicago area's mass transit system seems to be on track and jives with another report last week by Gov. Pat Quinn's task force that's studying the same thing.

The task force was created by Quinn this year after the controversy over political meddling at Metra and a lucrative severance package for its chief executive. The other report is from a consultant hired by the Regional Transportation Authority to study mass transit in the region and make recommendations to the RTA Board.

The two reports essentially agree that the existing system is ineffective and wasteful — beset by continual political power plays and occasional corruption, feuding over funding and, in the words of the task force's preliminary report, "duplication, competition, uncoordinated service and a lack of accountability."

How to fix things? Quinn's task force hasn't made recommendations yet (it's still studying), but the study commissioned by the RTA concludes what seems to us to be obvious — end the independence of the three service agencies and their separate staffs and boards and consolidate everything under a unified agency to oversee all mass transit operations.

Something like the RTA itself, which now has oversight over the CTA, Metra and Pace without the power to provide real oversight. Such a superagency makes sense and exists in other major metro areas, but in Illinois we had to create a Byzantine system to ensure political fiefdoms and unnecessary jobs and board seats.

The RTA consultant found that the RTA doesn't have the authority to direct the financial and planning decisions of the CTA, Metra and Pace, as the Legislature intended when it created the RTA. We agree, so it's time for legislators to give the RTA that clout and realign the transit system to streamline it and improve service.

The RTA study and the eventual final report of the state task force will provide lawmakers with blueprints for the necessary reorganization. All they have to do is put aside political interests and take a professional approach to repairing a broken system.

That shouldn't be too hard for the Legislature, right?

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U. Are suburbs getting short end of transit stick? Marni Pyke *Daily Herald*, October 28, 2013

Article updated: 10/28/2013 7:47 AM

Are suburbs getting short end of transit stick?

By Marni Pyke

If you pay \$4.50 in tax for a sweater at Oakbrook Center, should some of that money go toward a midmorning Metra train on the BNSF? Or should a portion pay for a faster ride on the Blue Line?

That's the essence of an age-old suburban-city turf war over transit funding that recently reignited.

"Transit needs are significant here," DuPage County Chairman Dan Cronin said Friday at the John Noel Public Transit Conference in Oak Brook. "Tax dollars for transit should directly benefit those who pay them."

The argument is that while the Chicago Transit Authority reaps the lion's share of transit's sales tax dollars, most of which come from the suburbs, Pace and Metra get shafted.

The counterpoint is that the CTA provides more than 83 percent of regional transit ridership.

RTA Chairman John S. Gates, who participated in a panel discussion with Cronin, acknowledged, "there's not enough discussion about regional equity. Most of the money comes from the suburbs and most of it is spent in the city."

But CTA officials like Director of Strategic Planning Michael McLaughlin explained the agency doesn't just transport Chicagoans. "The CTA serves 35 suburbs in Cook County. It's an integrated system," he said. McLaughlin also noted that the Cook suburbs and Chicago combined bring in the most dollars, not the collar counties.

So how do the numbers break down, and how does funding work?

Metra, the CTA and Pace receive around half of their operating revenues from fares, but most of the remainder comes from sales taxes. It's calculated using unbelievably complicated state formulas that incorporate geography into divvying up the spoils. However, a 2008 state law change raising the sales tax left the disposal of some of the money up to the Regional Transportation Authority. That's meant power struggles the last two years.

A look at 2012 sales tax dollars received by the RTA shows that 27.5 percent of that revenue derives from Chicago. The biggest chunk, or 50 percent, comes from suburban Cook County. Elsewhere, DuPage County contributed 8.6 percent, Lake 5 percent, Will about 4 percent, Kane about 3 percent and McHenry not quite 2 percent.

There are two different ways to interpret those numbers. Cook County, including Chicago, delivers 77 percent of transit funding. Or — the suburbs combined provide 72 percent of transit funding compared to Chicago.

In terms of revenue going out in 2014, the CTA will get \$661 million in operating funds from the RTA, Metra

receives \$365.4 million, and Pace \$151.6 million. When you cut up that pie, it's 56 percent CTA, 31 percent Metra and 13 percent Pace.

The Noel conference occurred two weeks after the RTA, CTA, Metra and Pace finally resolved a battle royale over splitting up about \$180 million in discretionary funds. The CTA wanted and received 98 percent of the pie, something it's traditionally gotten. (Pace gets 2 percent.) Metra argued it deserved a piece of the action, given that sales tax revenues are suddenly surging after years of stagnation.

The feuding should climax in 2014 when a transit task force commissioned by Gov. Pat Quinn will recommend reforms to the General Assembly.

"The RTA Act is going to be opened up," Cronin said. "And I'm going to demand the suburbs be fairly represented."

Meanwhile, transportation sages at the Metropolitan Planning Council say the focus should be how little — not how much.

Compared to 17 similar metropolitan areas in the U.S., Canada and Europe, we're cheapskates, the MPC found. The Chicago region spends around \$250 a year per person compared to \$600 in Boston, \$800 in Washington, D.C., or about \$1,100 in New York.

"We can continue to fight over the scraps, or we can rally together to say transit is valuable to the region and we as a region need to take a serious look at how we support transit," MPC Vice President Peter Skosey said.

So what's an equitable way to pay for transit? How does our transit system compare to other cities? Drop me an email at mpyke@dailyherald.com)

One more thing

How much sales tax aimed at transit is generated by the city and the counties? In 2012, \$1.34 billion was received regionwide, according to the RTA.

Of that pot, \$369.4 million came from Chicago. \$666.3 million from suburban Cook County, \$115.7 million from DuPage, \$73.1 million from Lake, \$53.4 million from Will, \$39.8 million from Kane and \$23.8 million from McHenry.

(And just to get really wonky, those amounts also include a transfer from the state's general fund called the Public Transportation Fund that's based on a percentage of the sales tax.)

Your voice

American Airlines pilot Dwight Bouck was unimpressed by the new runway rollout at O'Hare last week and "political rhetoric" about how it will reduce delays.

He's concerned about the "amoebalike, cancerous transfer of flying from big jets to the smaller regional jets. Two-thirds of the jets at O'Hare today versus 10 years ago are now regional jets!" Bouck wrote.

"This alone has created more delays at O'Hare due to the increase of regional jet flying! Simply put, bring in 300 passengers from Atlanta on two big jets or five regional jets? Nothing is said about this transfer from big to small jets and the effects on delays at O'Hare. What happened? Why can't the politicians lay claim to O'Hare being the busiest airport in the world? Look no further than the tarmac and terminal occupancy of the regional jets. It's a shame."

Upcoming

The Illinois tollway is taking its budget show on the road to the Hinsdale Oasis. Number-crunchers can learn all about the 2014 fiscal plan during a public hearing from 3 to 6 p.m. Nov. 19 at the oasis. Another hearing starts at 6 p.m. Nov. 12 at tollway headquarters, 2700 Ogden Ave., Downers Grove.

And since we're talking tollway, you have until Nov. 1 to make a high school art student famous by voting in the annual tollway map cover contest. To check out the entries and vote, go to www.illinoistollway.com/homepage.

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V. Suburban Transit Needs Bigger Share, *Daily Herald*, October 31, 2013

Article posted: 10/31/2013 5:00 AM

Suburban transit needs bigger share

By

Who gets and who gives?

In the world of publicly funded goods and services, the two often don't match up.

Childless homeowners pay taxes so public schools can educate other peoples' kids. Illinois taxpayers pay more to the federal government than we get back from Washington, the opposite of states like New Mexico and Mississippi.

Nor should the numbers match up evenly. Government services are intended to benefit the public, not just those who can pay for them.

So what should we make of DuPage County Chairman Dan Cronin's argument that "tax dollars for transit should directly benefit those who pay them?"

Cronin made the comments last week at a transit conference in Oak Brook, repeating a common refrain in the city-vs-suburbs fight over divvying up sales tax dollars for public transportation in the metropolitan area.

But you don't have to entirely buy that refrain to agree with Cronin's larger point that the suburbs are being shortchanged. The distribution of transit funds across the region is so lopsided, and the unmet transit needs in the suburbs so large, that something needs to be done differently.

As perhaps the most egregious example, one pot of money — a \$180 million discretionary fund — recently was allocated with 98 percent going to the Chicago Transit Authority, which operates the L lines and buses in Chicago and some nearby suburbs. And not just this year. The Regional Transportation Authority promised CTA that percentage, its traditional cut, through 2016.

In case you're curious, 27 percent of 2012 sales tax money for Chicago-area transit came from Chicago, 50 percent came from suburban Cook County, 8.6 percent came from DuPage County, 5 percent came from Lake County, 4 percent came from Will County, 3 percent came from Kane County, and not quite 2 percent came from McHenry County. Of all operating funds provided by the RTA, CTA got 56 percent (\$661 million) last year, Metra commuter rail got 31 percent (\$365.4 million) and Pace suburban bus got 13 percent (\$151.6 million.)

A consultant's report earlier this month concluded the RTA needs an overhaul, and a task force appointed by Gov. Pat Quinn is considering just that. At a time when most jobs are not in downtown Chicago and when the shortage of suburb-to-suburb transit options is a growing problem, the governor's task force should make a priority of reforming how money is allocated. It's time to move away from the traditional Chicago-centric model and instead base funding on where the money is needed.

We like one idea floated by RTA consultant Delcan Corp. That proposal would reserve a portion of funds for competitive grants to the transit agencies. Awarding some of the funds for specific initiatives with well-defined goals and measured results sounds like one big improvement.

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W. DuPage committee voices concerns about RTA, Hank Beckman
for *Sun-Times Media*, November 14, 2013

DuPage committee voices concerns about RTA

By: Hank Beckman for Sun-Times Media: 11/14/2013

With Gov. Pat Quinn's task force still studying the problems of mass transit in northeast Illinois, DuPage County officials are determined to let it know about some of the county's concerns.

"We're looking for a regional plan," County Board member Tonia Khouri (R-Aurora), chairwoman of the County Board's Ad Hoc Committee on Mass Transit, said.

The governor's task force report is not due until Jan. 31. Khouri will send recommendations to the County Board's Legislative Committee concerning the situation, including:

The creation of universal ethics standards for any new entity.

Restructuring of the RTA Board to reflect the actual population of the area. Currently DuPage County has only one representative on the board.

Strategic consolidation of the regional transit system, with the system in New York City and other cities to be used as models.

Changing the governing structure of the RTA itself to give its board greater oversight authority, especially in the areas of finance and enforcement.

Rethinking allocation of discretionary funding, an issue over which several board members have recently expressed concern. The discretionary revenue going to the RTA is split between the three operating bodies of the agency, CTA, Pace Suburban Bus and Metra. The division recently has been 97 percent going to the CTA, 3 percent to Pace and nothing to Metra.

The most recent budget passed allocates discretionary revenues of \$188.1 million to the CTA and the remaining \$3.8 million to Pace, again cutting Metra completely out of the revenue.

With Metra providing commuter rail service to collar counties, and not one CTA bus to be seen operating in DuPage County, DuPage officials are naturally concerned about the imbalance.

DuPage County Board member Tony Michelassi (D-Aurora) wondered about the mentality of the RTA Board.

"Are they thinking that Metra can support itself (through ridership)," he asked.

County Board member Bob Larsen (R-Wheaton) indicated that since the discretionary revenue has always been split with the vast majority going to the CTA, the RTA Board likely will keep it that way forever.

"They think they own it," he said.

Michelassi said that if the city of Chicago dominated any newly-created RTA Board, the imbalance in discretionary funding would likely remain.

"DuPage contracts would still be at a net disadvantage," he said.

The suggestions now go to the County Board's Legislative Committee for discussion