



Sarah Kenney &lt;skenney@barringtonhills-il.gov&gt;

**VBH BOT FYI R&B**

2 messages

**RKosin <rkosin@barringtonhills-il.gov>****Sun, Feb 27, 2011 at 6:59 AM**

Reply-To: rkosin@barringtonhills-il.gov

To: Dolores Trandel &lt;clerk@barringtonhills-il.gov&gt;

Cc: Sarah Kenney &lt;skenney@barringtonhills-il.gov&gt;

Grant Money for Railway Grade Separation at Risk  
Senator Dick Durbin visited Barrington on Friday to announce \$2.8 million in federal funding could be eliminated.

By Morgan Delack PATCHES| February 26, 2011

Senator Dick Durbin announced that a \$2.8 million federal grant for Barrington could be at risk.

Durbin told Barrington officials Friday that a TIGER II grant to help design a grade separation at the U.S. 14 and Eastern Joliet & Elgin (EJ&E) crossing could be eliminated. The funding for the project was cut in the House of Representatives spending bill for 2011.

"Just five months ago, the City of Barrington was awarded \$2.8 million funding through the Department of Transportation's TIGER II program to begin addressing the vital safety and quality-of-life concerns that had arisen in the community since the CN merger. Today, I am here to tell you that the House Republicans wants it back," Durbin said.

Due to the expected increase in freight traffic through town, the Village of Barrington has been fighting Canadian National's acquisition of EJ&E railway since 2007. Opponents say this increase in freight traffic will cause gridlock at rail crossings, added air and noise pollution and delay in emergency vehicle response times.

Building an underpass at the intersection would alleviate many of the traffic concerns expected as a result of the merger. The price tag for the project could reach \$70 million.

Durbin said he plans on fighting to get Barrington the money they were promised.

"This funding was a commitment to the residents of this community that their safety is the primary focus. But, if the House has its way, Congress would go back on that commitment," Durbin said. "This mindless cut is a clear signal that the House bill is not the product of a thoughtful effort. Yes, we need to cut spending, but we need to do so in a responsible manner."

TIGER II awarded \$22.8 million in funding to three Illinois transportation projects last year. Barrington was one of them.

###

Sent via BlackBerry by AT&amp;T

To ensure compliance of the Open Meetings Act, recipients of this message should not forward it to other members of the public body. Members of the public body may reply to this message, but they should not send a copy of the reply to other members.

**Robert Kosin <rkosin@barringtonhills-il.gov>**  
To: Dolores Trandel <clerk@barringtonhills-il.gov>  
Cc: Sarah Kenney <skenney@barringtonhills-il.gov>**Sun, Feb 27, 2011 at 8:26 AM**

Railway underpass funds at risk

By Carolyn Rusin  
Chicago TribLocal reporter  
Friday February 25, 2011 at 5:15 p.m.

U.S. Senator Richard Durbin met with Barrington Village President Karen Darch and other area village leaders Friday at the site of a rail crossing on U.S. Highway 14. Durbin will fight to get back federal funds promised to the village for the planning of an underpass at the rail crossing.

The \$2.8 million federal grant for the planning of an underpass at a railroad crossing in Barrington is in danger of being cut, U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin told village officials Friday.

He said he'd fight for the money through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Tiger II program, but that it was eliminated in the latest House of Representatives' spending bill.

"Starting next week, we will try to restore the money for his project. We don't want to loose this money," said Durbin as he stood with village leaders at the site of the crossing at U.S. Highway 14, near Lake Zurich Road. "I think it's unfortunate. I think it's a mistake. The House should have been more thoughtful. I hope we can reach an agreement."

The bill cuts more than \$6.8 billion in transportation spending to states and communities. The legislation now heads to the Senate.

Federal officials had announced in October that the grant had been awarded to start planning for an underpass, estimated to cost \$70 million, if it's even deemed possible. The village wants to explore the idea since this soon will be the only place where a federal highway intersects the EJ&E tracks without a grade separation, according to village officials.

Village President Karen Darch is a leader of TRAC, a coalition of suburbs opposed to the 2007 purchase of EJ&E by Canadian National. The purchase allows CN to increase freight traffic on the line from five to 20 trains per day.

Darch says additional freight trains can immobilize a village like Barrington where the tracks criss-cross numerous main streets. She also maintains the federal grant recognizes that an environmental impact study of the purchase before it was approved failed to note that U.S. Highway 14 should have received a grade separation.

Village Manager Jeff Lawler has said the village asked for about \$50 million, but that competition was fierce, with about \$19 billion in projects vying for about \$600 million in grants.

Before going to the rail crossing, Durbin met in a closed session with local officials, at which Darch apparently stressed the need for federal funding.

"We applaud the efforts of this Congress to address the budget deficit facing our nation. It is imperative, however, that projects consistent with the federal government's constitutional mandate, which includes public support for transportation projects deemed significant to this country's free flow of commerce, are funded," she said in a prepared

statement.

The grant, she said, recognized "that major arterials such as this are essential to national commerce and a necessary foundation for growth and economic development in the region. The Barrington communities have warned that the federal approval of the transaction would ultimately require significant investment of dollars along the line to minimize harms being created to business interest and public safety in the collar counties."

She also urged Congress to enact laws to make railroads bear more of the cost for such projects.

Durbin said the money was to begin addressing "the vital safety and quality of life concerns that had arisen in the community since the CN merger."

"This funding was a commitment to the residents of this community that their safety is the primary focus. But, if the House has its way, Congress would go back on that commitment. This mindless cut is a clear signal that the House bill is not the product of a thoughtful effort. Yes, we need to cut spending, but we need to do so in a responsible manner," Durbin said.

He said the crossing is one of the most trafficked intersections along the EJ & E Railway with around 34,000 motorists traveling the federal road daily. The number is expected to hit around 40,000 a day in 2015, while the number and length of trains going through Barrington will increase, "raising serious safety concerns."

"On Oct. 15, these commuters lived through a train stuck on tracks for hours," said Durbin, referring to when a CN freight train broke down during rush hour, causing gridlock throughout the village.

Such an incident is a safety hazard if police and fire officials or an ambulance were blocked.

"We're heading for a disaster. All it is going to take is for one or two people to die," Deer Park Village Trustee Keith Olson said after the briefing.

Other officials at the meeting were Cuba Township Supervisor David Nelson, Barrington Township Supervisor Eugene Dawson, Barrington Hills Village President Robert Abboud, and Tower Lakes Village President Kathleen Leitner.

"Even though this (rail) line runs through Barrington, it affects all of us," Leitner said. "It's a rippling effect."

Darch and others were thankful for Durbin's help.

"We thank Sen. Durbin for coming out here. We appreciate the support for the money. We hope that he can restore the funds," she said. "We accepted it. We needed it. We think it's an appropriate use of the money.

"We hope to get it back and that we can actually get the rest of the money. It's a project that needs to get done."

###

---