

DRAFT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Laurent Pernot Rick Harnish
773-865-5381 773-334-6758



Editors: See p. 2 for local numbers for Kankakee, Champaign, Decatur, Springfield, St. Louis, Chicago

**Chicago-St. Louis 220-mph trains would create more than
40,000 jobs,
reduce harmful CO2 emissions by nearly 200 million
pounds: new study**

CHICAGO, Ill. – Proposed 220-mph high speed rail to cut the Chicago-St. Louis trip to less than two hours would also provide a major boost to the economy and efforts to reduce harmful emissions, according to a study released today by the Midwest High Speed Rail Association (MHSRA).

The line examined in the MHSRA study would serve Downtown Chicago, O'Hare Airport, Kankakee, Champaign, Decatur, Springfield, Edwardsville and St. Louis. In his January 13 State of the State speech, Gov. Pat Quinn called for "super fast" trains between Chicago and Champaign.

"With our budget crisis and the loss of the Olympics, high speed rail is the project to secure our state's economic future," said Rick Harnish, executive director of MHSRA. "It's time for America and Illinois to think big again. Illinois has the potential to become first in the nation with a bullet train high speed rail link thanks to Governor Quinn's leadership."

The study estimates the Chicago-St. Louis via Champaign line would create 26,000 jobs during the seven years of construction, plus another 16,000 new jobs once the service is in operation. The study, conducted by TranSystems and ESH Consult on behalf of the MHSRA, estimates the new line would grow local economies between Chicago and St. Louis by one to three percent annually.

"Few other projects could claim such far-reaching and long-lasting impacts on the economy," said Bruce Horowitz, Principal of ESH Consult. "220-mph service not only makes business and personal travel by train much more attractive, it energizes the economy and helps the environment in ways unachievable with other technology."

Each year, the 220-mph energy-efficient electric trains would avoid 3 million trips now taken by air, bus, car or conventional diesel trains, resulting in a net savings of 187 million pounds in CO2 emissions, the same environmental benefit as adding nearly 1 million fully mature trees along the route each year.

"Transportation is the largest source of domestic CO2 emissions, and 99 percent of the energy needed comes from burning fossil fuels," said Horowitz. "Because nearly three quarters of Illinois' electricity comes from nuclear plants, electric 220-mph trains would

have an extremely small carbon footprint.”

The 220-mph line proposed by MHSRA would be the first leg of its proposed Midwest HSR 220 network, which by 2030 could link Chicago, St. Louis, the Twin Cities, Milwaukee, Detroit, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus and Pittsburgh, putting more than 25 million people within a three-hour train ride of Chicago.

Value of time saved by travelers thanks to the new 220-mph service would add up to \$35 million annually, and train riders would save \$40 million in actual travel costs every year. The study also estimated the reduction in car travel and elimination of selected grade crossings would produce \$56 million annually in reduced accident-related costs. The full economic and environmental study is available at www.midwesthsr.org.

A MHSRA study earlier this year estimated the fixed-facility infrastructure cost of 220 MPH service between Chicago and St. Louis at \$12 billion, while the full Midwestern network is estimated to cost \$70 billion (for reference, the complete U.S. Interstate system cost \$450 billion).

“We must invest in truly world-class high speed now if we are to revolutionize travel in the U.S., lay the foundation for a green economy and lessen our dependence on harmful energy sources,” said Harnish.

The State of Illinois has requested \$5 million in planning funds from the federal government for a 220-mph Chicago-St. Louis link. The State has committed to matching the federal funds.

KEY LOCAL FIGURES

	Travel time to Chicago	Jobs created	Added annual economic growth
Chicago metro		14,718	+0.3%
Kankakee area	0:24	8,590	+3%
Champaign area	0:43	4,789	+1.5%
Decatur area	1:05	4,123	+1.5%
Springfield area	1:23	5,680	+1%
St. Louis metro	1:52	4,715	+0.5%

About the Midwest High Speed Rail Association

We primarily advocate for world-class 220-mph high-speed trains linking major Midwestern cities. We support fast, frequent and dependable trains on other routes that connect with 220-mph corridors to form a true modern regional and national rail network. We believe that a strong network of fast trains will make the Midwest a more attractive place to live and do business while slowing the growth of auto congestion and its related energy and pollution impacts. Visit us at www.midwesthsr.org.

About TranSystems

TranSystems’ approximately 1,100 professionals in 45 offices throughout the U.S. provide architecture, engineering and planning; management and supply chain consulting; real estate consulting; and security to all sectors of the transportation industry. Our ability to meet the continuum of transportation challenges facing our clients

anywhere in the world rests firmly on the range of modal expertise, technical disciplines and consulting services we have gathered into one integrated business entity. To access current and historical information, visit TranSystems' Web site at www.transystems.com.

About ESH Consult

ESH Consult is a transportation economics firm with extensive expertise in high speed rail, airport-rail access, Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU), Shared-use and commuter rail studies. Principal and owner Bruce Horowitz has 34 years of passenger rail and urban transportation economics experience, and most recently led the mid-Atlantic Rail Transit Practice of TranSystems. Mr. Horowitz has performed transportation economic analysis for a wide range of organizations; has served multiple terms as Chair of TRB's Commuter Rail and Intercity Rail Committees; is a TRB Lifetime Emeritus Member and a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of University of California at Berkeley. Visit www.eshconsult.com for more information.