



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

March 5, 2015

Greenwood mayor: 'concerned' rail upgrade will leave intersections without crossing arms
WISH-TV
Bennett Haeberle
3/4/15

GREENWOOD (WISH) – A massive rail project between Indianapolis and Louisville will lead to heavier and faster trains rolling through Indiana communities, if the \$100 million project is approved by a federal agency. The Surface Transportation Board could rule at anytime. Mayor Myers is taking his concerns to Washington, DC this weekend to meet with Indiana's Congressional delegation. He's hoping his trip will help through some political weight towards encouraging the rail companies to pay for safety features. CSX has said it will help survey trouble spots but will leave payment to the state and cities like Columbus and Greenwood. "But again this should fall back to the rail companies, if they are going to increase their traffic load, if they are going to increase their speed, they should upgrade the crossing too," said Mayor Myers. CSX considers crossing arms to be "traffic control devices" and told I-Team 8 in January that it would be up to cities and towns to secure funding for them. "State and local governments decide which type of signal is appropriate at each public crossing and obtain necessary funding. CSX and LIRC will then install and/or maintain the devices," according to a January statement provided to I-Team 8. When asked for comment for today's report, CSX spokeswoman Kristin Seay sent an updated statement, that read in part: "If the project is approved, CSX and LIRC will assist the appropriate state and local agencies in a survey of rail at-grade crossings to determine the adequacy of existing grade crossing signal systems and signage, and sources of funding for the projects.

[Greenwood mayor: 'concerned' rail upgrade will leave intersections without crossing arms | WISH-TV](#)

EDITORIAL: Indiana, Illinois need to boost transportation spending
Indiana Economic Digest
Times of Northwest Indiana
3/3/15

Transportation infrastructure is the lifeblood of commerce. In Indiana and Illinois, that infrastructure needs a cash infusion. That's not just because the cost grows every year. It's worsened by a shrinking pool of available dollars. Federal gasoline tax revenue has grown little since 2007 as increasing fuel economy and alternative fuels become more widely available and more popular. State gas tax revenues, including in Indiana, are also declining. In fiscal year 2014, Indiana collected nearly \$527.3 million in gas tax receipts, compared to \$540.3 million in fiscal year 2010. And yet the Indiana Department of Transportation warned last year that the agency needs nearly \$260 million more than it is receiving just to maintain existing bridges and highways. The dwindling road funding dollars take their toll on drivers and vehicles. Across Illinois, poor road

conditions cost drivers an extra \$3.7 billion in repairs annually, according to TRIP, a transportation advocacy group. And the Chicago area is home of the nation's worst highway bottleneck, at the Jane Byrne Interchange. Congestion in the Chicago area, fueled by the lack of funding for new transportation projects, increases pollution and decreases productivity, along with feeding road rage. Asphalt roads are good for only about 12 years, and concrete roadways last only three or four decades before they have to be rebuilt. And that work costs money, more than states and local government currently have. To meet future infrastructure needs, Indiana and Illinois must retool their transportation funding mechanism. As vehicles get more fuel-efficient, road funding gets slighted. One obvious change should be to make all users pay. No more free rides for vehicles that use alternative fuels and currently don't contribute to road upkeep. That can be accomplished when those vehicles (electric and natural gas) get license plates and stickers each year.

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