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YOU ARE HERE: LATEST > SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL > DURBIN: FEDERAL INVESTMENT WILL HELP METRA REDUCE EMISSIONS

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Durbin: Federal Investment Will Help Metra Reduce Emissions

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\$5.2 Million In Funding Will Benefit Three Metra Routes

WASHINGTON, D.C.—(ENEWSPF)—October 12, 2011. U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) today said that a \$5,288,000 investment from the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program will help Metra reduce emissions and improve air quality in and around their trains.

Story continues below:

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"Reducing the cloud of smoke from METRA locomotives will save fuel and help limit exposure to harmful air pollution," said Durbin. "This \$5.2 million investment will help pay for this important clean-up."

In February, Durbin met with newly appointed Metra CEO Alex Clifford to discuss Metra's ongoing review of diesel locomotive emissions. Metra, which is currently using funding from the Department of Transportation's TIGGER II program to retrofit locomotives operating in their train yards, estimates that by shutting down instead of idling the locomotives, the automatic systems could save an estimated 800,000 gallons of diesel fuel and reduce CO₂ emissions by an estimated 80,000 tons per year. In November of last year, Durbin asked several federal agencies to work with Metra looking into the results of a Chicago Tribune report that discovered the high level of diesel soot and air pollution in commuter rail cars.

Today's funding was approved by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and awarded to three projects along the following Metra routes:

- Milwaukee District Service (North and West lines): \$4,000,000 in funding to repower two locomotives used to provide commuter rail service to the Chicago area. The repowering will consist of a new diesel engine and control package. Estimates indicate that a repowered locomotive equipped for commuter application would generate approximately 18% to 20% in fuel consumption savings and a reduction of approximately 33,250 gallons of diesel fuel and 600 metric tons of greenhouse gases per locomotive annually;
- Union Pacific Service (North, Northwest and West lines): \$368,000 in funding to incorporate automatic engine shut-down/start-up technology on 24 locomotives to save fuel and reduce emissions by reducing idling time for these locomotives. By shutting down locomotives instead of idling, an estimated 609,190 gallons of fuel can be saved per year and CO₂ can be reduced by 81,598.7 tons per year; and
- BNSF Service: \$920,000 in funding to replace the main engine driven generator-inverter combinations – which provide various amenities to people on board trains, ranging from electric lights to heating – on 5 passenger locomotives to save fuel and reduce emissions.

The CMAQ program was created in 1991 as part of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act and

has been continued by the successor transportation bills including the current Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) enacted in August 2005.

CMAP is the comprehensive regional planning organization for the northeastern Illinois counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will. The agency's innovative GO TO 2040 planning campaign develops and implements strategies to shape the region's transportation system and development patterns, while also addressing the natural environment, economic development, housing, education, human services, and other quality-of-life factors.

Source: durbin.senate.gov