



**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
BRUCE RAUNER**

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Gov. Rauner Declares I-55 Open for Business

New Resolution to Advance Managed Lanes as Possible P3

CHICAGO – Gov. Bruce Rauner today was joined by legislative leaders and local elected officials to announce a legislative resolution that would allow the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to pursue adding managed lanes to Interstate 55 under a private-public partnership. By seeking out a P3 agreement, the state could deliver the project benefits more quickly and at a reduced cost.

“By using existing resources to leverage private investment, we can build the type of infrastructure that allows Illinois to better compete in the 21st century,” Gov. Rauner said. “This is an innovative project that will create jobs, improve the region’s quality of life and show that Illinois is open for business.”

The I-55 managed lanes project would add at least one lane in each direction to a critical travel corridor between Interstate 355 (Veterans Memorial Tollway) and Interstate 90/94 (Dan Ryan Expressway). The 25-mile section accommodates 170,000 vehicles a day, but suffers from long, unreliable travel times, resulting in frustrating commutes for workers and increased costs for the delivery of goods and services.

Options for the additional lanes currently being explored include tolled and untolled carpool lanes and express tolling lanes. The state will complete the federal environmental studies later this year to identify the preferred option.

A 2011 state law allows IDOT to build, finance, operate, and maintain highway projects using public-private partnerships, as long as the General Assembly adopts a resolution in support of the project. That law is modeled on best practices from across the country and includes opportunities for public hearings and input. The resolution introduced today would allow IDOT to further explore a P3 for the I-55 project and commence the procurement process. While managed lanes have been successful in other states as P3s, the I-55 project would be a first for Illinois.

“Managed lanes are truly an expressway within an expressway – one more option that will make travel more convenient for everyone who uses I-55,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. “This project signals a new way of doing business at IDOT and a model for improvements throughout our system.”

“Regardless of the time of day, there is congestion along the Stevenson Expressway. Not only is it a source of regular frustration for drivers, including myself, it can be a dangerous situation for both motorist and passengers,” said House Republican Leader Jim Durkin. “What we are proposing today would give IDOT leeway to further explore the possibility of using private funds to keep the I-55 Congestion Relief Project alive and moving forward.”

“Relieving the congestion on this stretch of I-55 must be a priority for the state of Illinois,” said Senate Republican Leader Christine Radogno. “However, we must also recognize the state must be creative in addressing our transportation challenges. This is an innovative approach that has been successful in other states and should be explored here.”

“This region has seen explosive growth in the past decade, but that has increased traffic on the Stevenson,” said Sen. Martin Sandoval, Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee. “Allowing IDOT to explore a public-private partnership will be a win for taxpayers and drivers. I stand with Governor Rauner to find new ways to relieve congestion on this important corridor for Illinois.”

Using a P3 on this project could save taxpayers an estimated \$425 million in construction costs. Possible toll revenues from the project and P3 financing sources would be available to pay for construction, operation, and maintenance costs. Construction could start as early as next year and wrap up in 2019.

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