



GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE OF ILLINOIS

August 8, 2024

Governor JB Pritzker
555 W. Monroe St., 16th Floor
Chicago, IL 60661

Mayor Brandon Johnson
121 N LaSalle Street
Chicago City Hall 4th Floor
Chicago, IL 60602

Secretary Omar Osman
Illinois Department of Transportation
Hanley Building
2300 S. Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, IL 62764

Commissioner Tom Carney
2 N. LaSalle Street
Suite 1110
Chicago, IL 60602

As elected representatives of Chicago's lakefront communities, the future of North DuSable Lake Shore Drive (NDLSD) is of paramount concern to us and our residents, and we must be sure that their voices are heard when it comes to any plan to transform the Drive.

In the 2024 Spring session, the Illinois House and Senate each passed resolutions urging IDOT and CDOT to transform the Drive into a true boulevard and be creative and forward-thinking in the redesign of NDLSD. The resolutions urged the agencies to incorporate safe and efficient multi-modal transportation, to look at the changes as part of a comprehensive long-term plan, to create more green

space and recreational opportunities. Residents of the lakefront communities embraced the concepts in these resolutions and were hopeful that Redefine the Drive would incorporate these principles.

But the recently released plan fails to sufficiently incorporate these concepts, and we have been flooded with calls and emails from constituents imploring us to pause Redefine the Drive. Residents have cited concerns about roadway safety, access to the lakefront, and ensuring a reliable, clean, and safe public transportation system. Constituents have expressed that their input has been disregarded and ignored and that communication regarding this massive project has been inconsistent.

Any plan to Redefine the Drive must prioritize traffic and pedestrian safety improvements. Between 2019 and 2023, 64 percent of traffic fatalities in the 6th Senate district occurred on NDLS. Despite this sobering fact, the most recent plan does not appear to provide sufficient additional safety features. We feel strongly that any new roadway design should encourage adherence to safe speed limits and minimize opportunities for collisions.

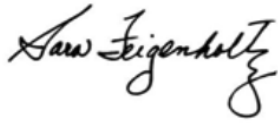
In January 2023, Senator Feigenholtz contacted Secretary Osman about the high frequency of injuries and deaths due to collisions at the LaSalle Drive junction southbound on-ramp. Secretary Osman noted that Redefine the Drive would “reduce curvature and improve driver sight distances” at the junction. However, it is unclear how reducing curvature would improve safety at this specific interchange and there remains concerns about the safety of the Drive under the recently released proposal. Unchecked speeding will heighten the chance of traffic fatalities, increase toxic sound pollution, and prematurely degrade the new road due to increased wear and tear. Traffic safety updates are not one-size-fits-all, and we expect long-term changes to NDLS to contain carefully engineered solutions that will make the drive safer for generations to come.

In addition to safety improvements, a successful Redefine the Drive plan must have the foresight to integrate public transportation solutions. A holistic view of our city’s current and potential future transit options is the logical starting point for a long-lasting, transformative project like Redefine the Drive. No efforts to streamline NDLS will be effective without public transportation improvements.

We call upon IDOT and CDOT to broaden their vision of what North Dusable Lake Shore Drive has the potential to be and listen to those most impacted by this transformational project. Your unremarkable proposal disregards the importance of sustainable infrastructure that stands the test of time. The decisions made today will live with the people for the next century. It’s time to create a visionary transportation system for future generations. Until our constituents’ voices are heard we will be hard-pressed to support any state funding for this project to move forward.

We, the undersigned (in formation), stand ready to collaborate in good faith on a new plan that puts the people of Chicago first.

Sincerely,



State Senator Sara Feigenholtz, 6th District



State Senator Robert Peters, 13th District



State Representative Kam Buckner, 26th District



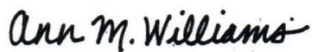
State Representative Kelly Cassidy, 14th District



State Representative Margaret Croke, 12th District



State Representative Lindsey LaPointe, 19th District



State Representative Ann Williams, 11th District