

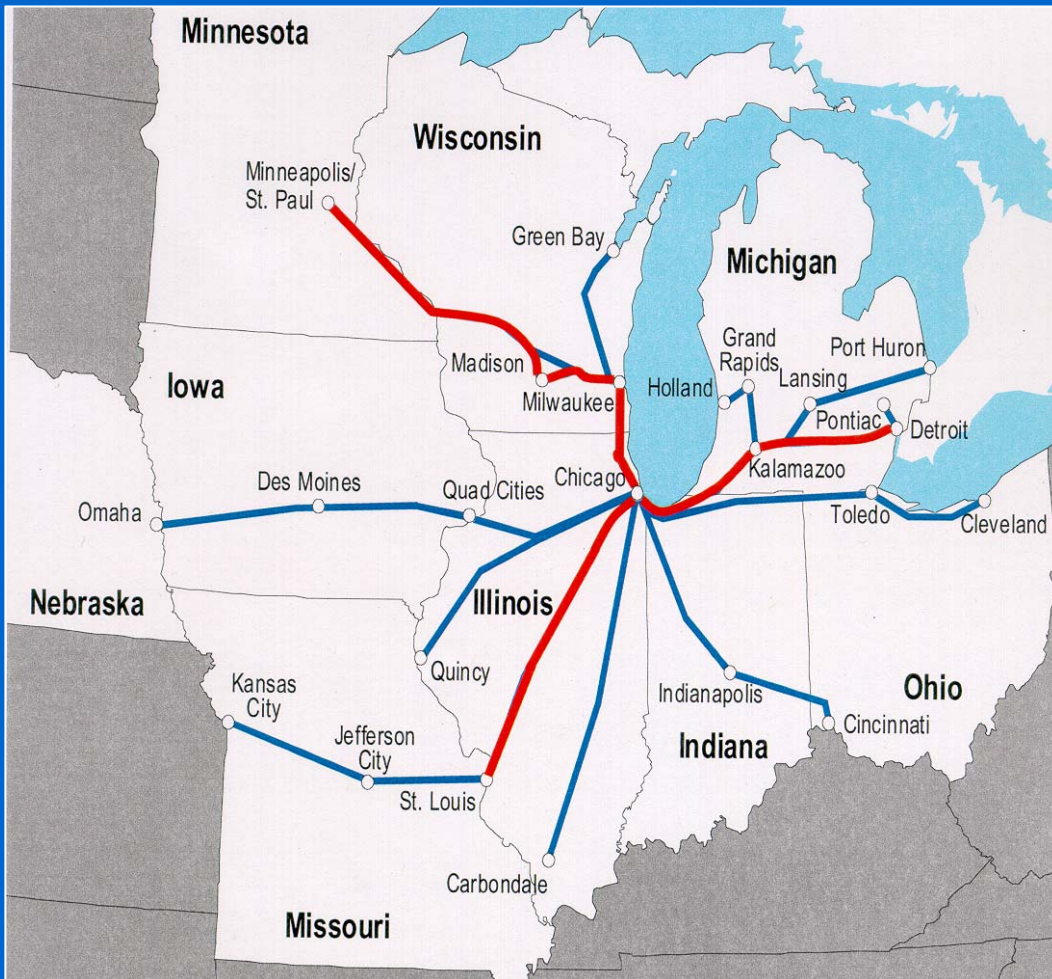
# **Midwest High-Speed Rail Network**

**Howard A. Learner  
Executive Director  
Environmental Law & Policy Center**

**Building Inter-Metropolitan Rail Corridors  
University of Delaware  
February 21, 2006**

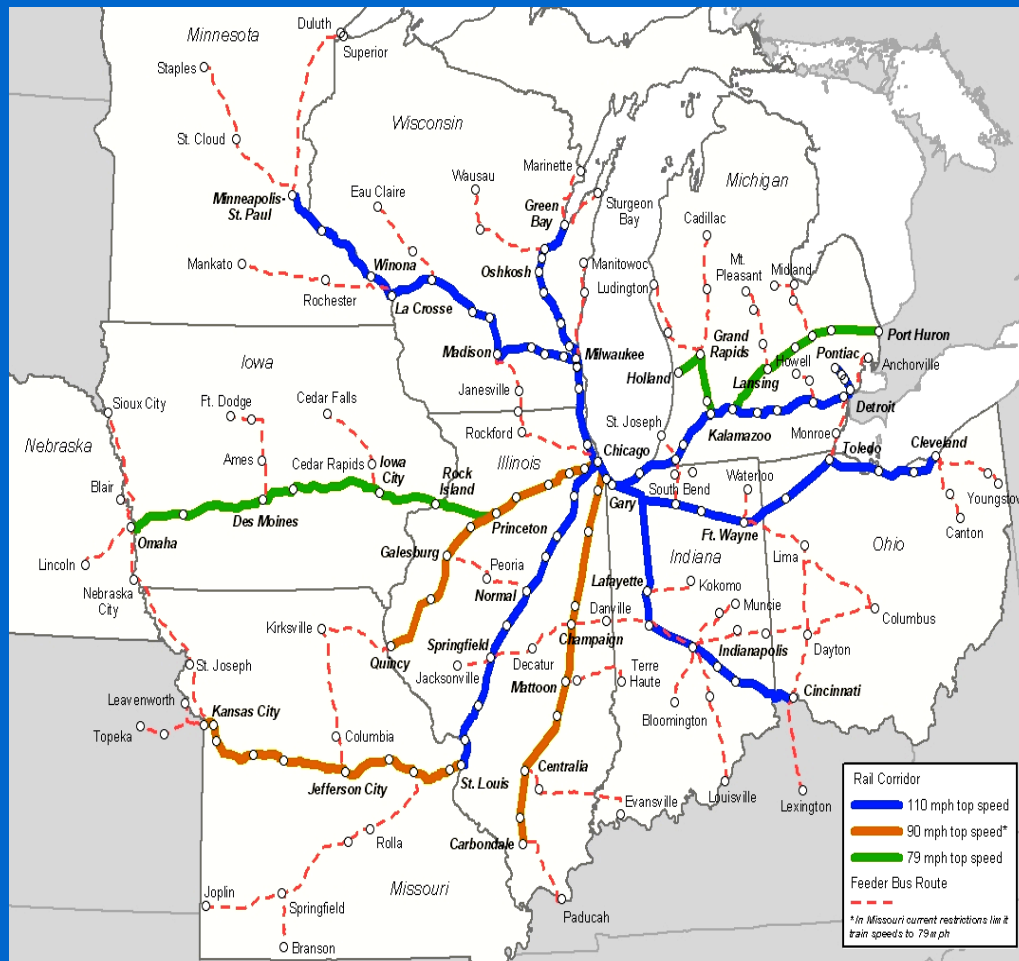


# Midwest High-Speed Rail



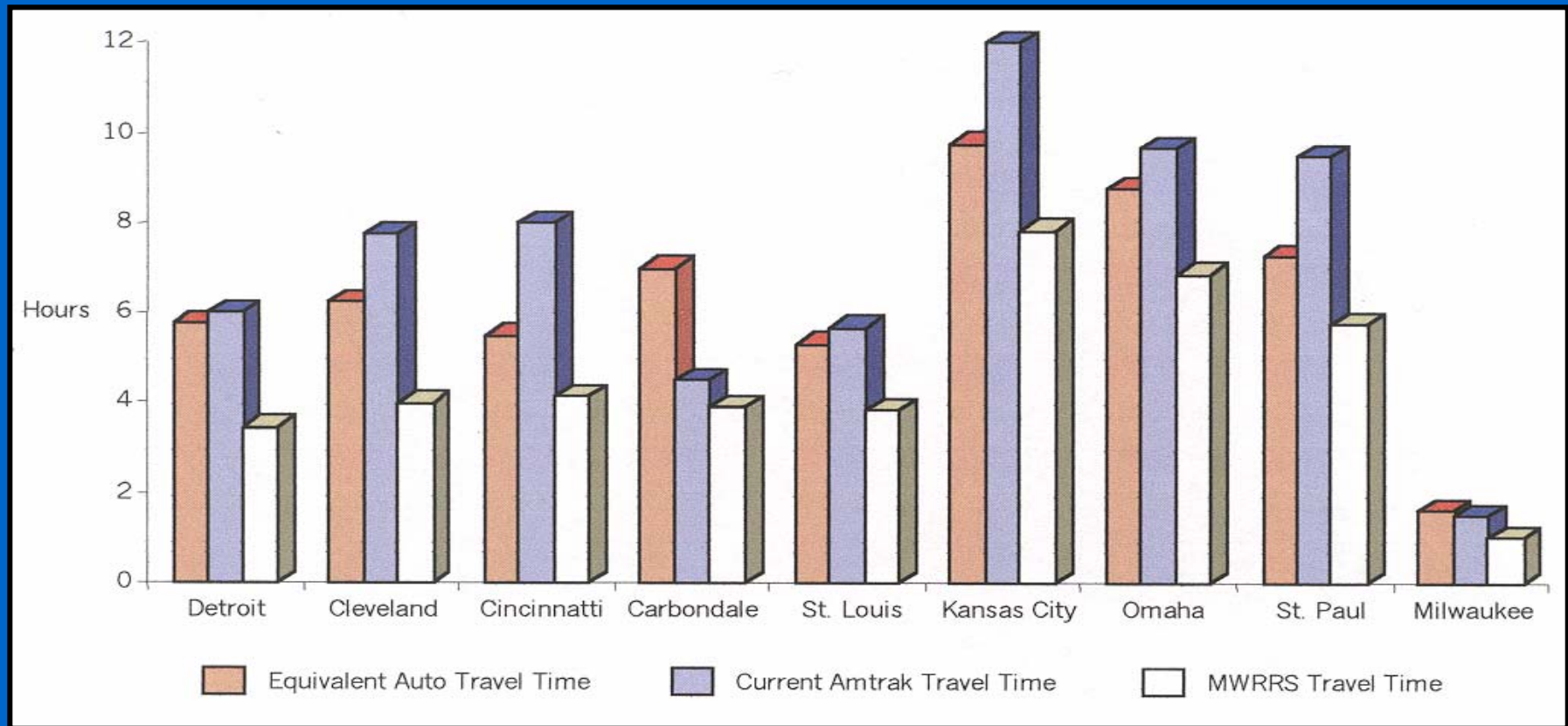
- **Upgraded Existing Infrastructure**
- **Higher-Speed: 90-110 mph Service**
- **High-Frequency**
- **High-Reliability**
- **High-Quality**

# Midwest Regional Rail Initiative

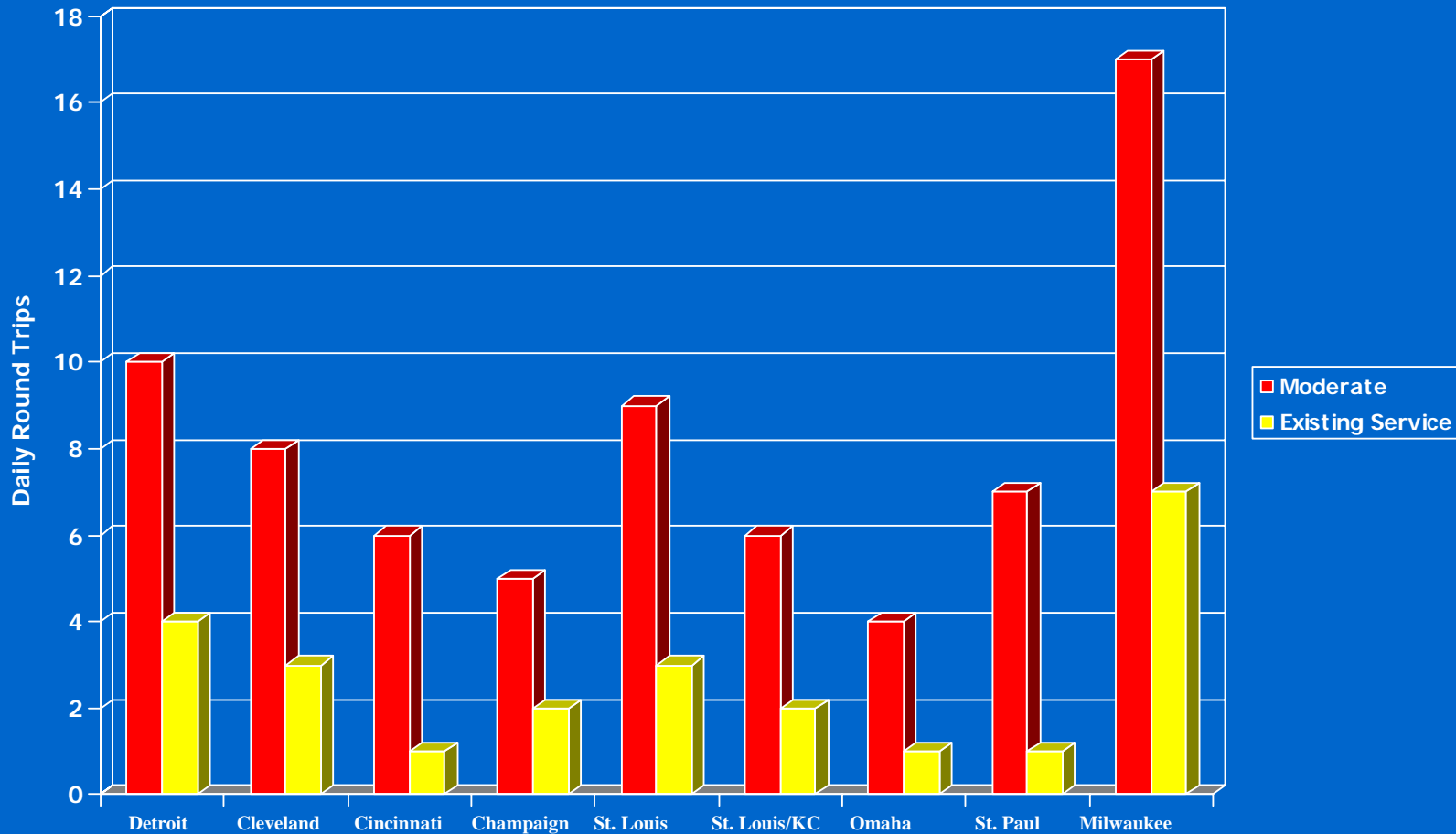


- 9 State Departments of Transportation
- Phase I: \$450 million
- Final goal: 3,000 miles for \$4.1 billion
- No operating subsidies

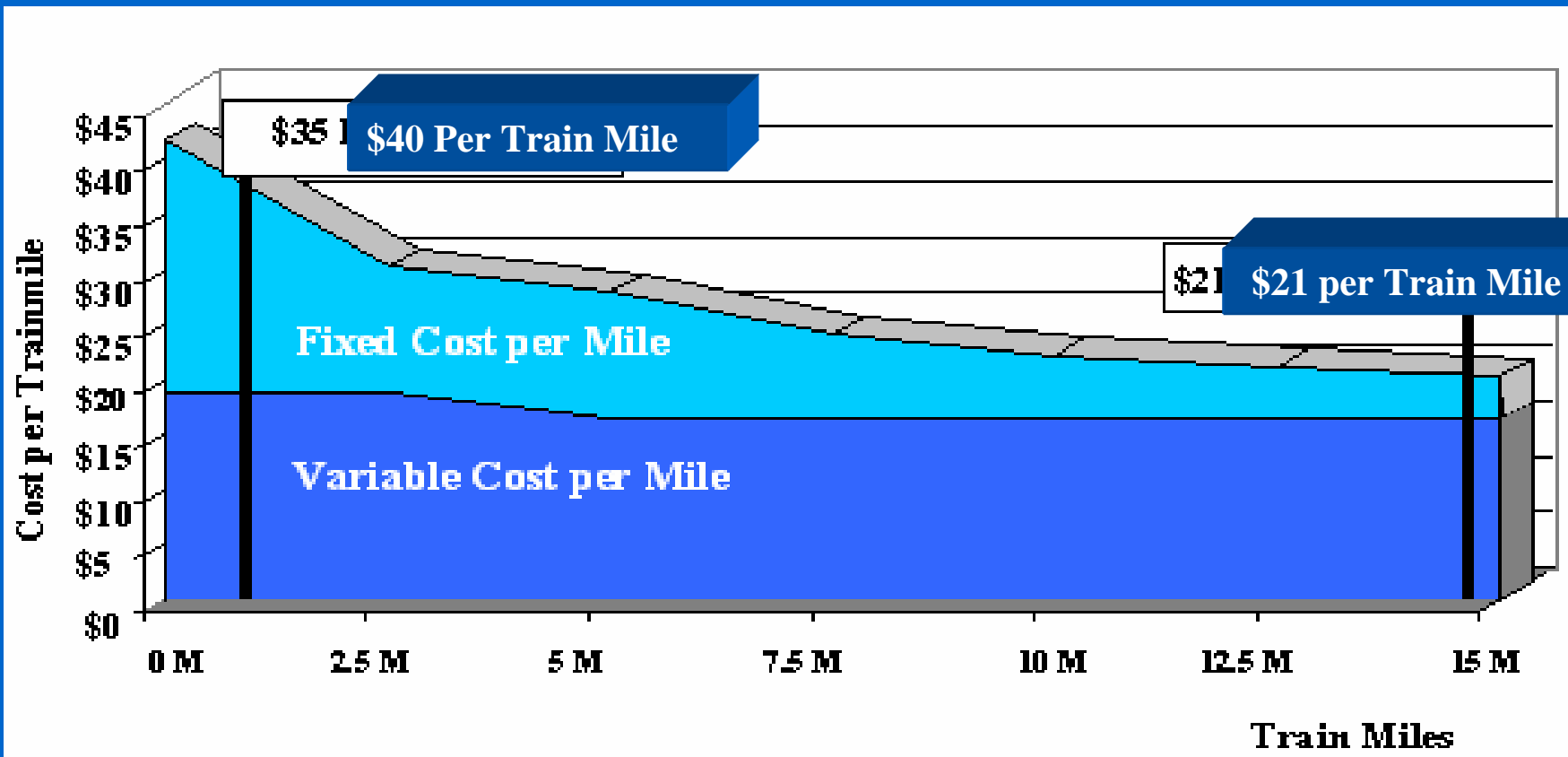
# Reduced Travel Times



# Greatly Increased Frequencies



# Economies of Scale



•  
•  
•

# State Rail Development Efforts

- Wisconsin
- Michigan
- Ohio
- Illinois

# States Are Paying Their Share

- MI: \$56 million in state funds has leveraged \$48 million in other investments
- WI: \$50 million available in state bond funds to Madison-Milwaukee HSR; \$8.8 million to rehab Milwaukee Amtrak Station
- IL: Committed/spent \$104 million, leveraging \$55 million federal, \$42 million private funds. In addition, Illinois has \$150 million for grade crossings



# WI: Opened Air-Rail Station in 2005

## ARRIVAL WITHOUT DELAY.



Now with brand new direct service to Milwaukee's Mitchell International Airport and up to 7-ROUND TRIPS DAILY, you can relax and get to your flight on time with Amtrak<sup>®</sup> Hiawatha<sup>™</sup> service from Chicago Union Station and Glenview. So go ahead, take the train and avoid the hassle of traffic, parking and O'Hare. Plus, with the new Amtrak station at Mitchell International Airport, you'll have easy access to Milwaukee's world class airport and its hometown airline, Midwest Airlines. Call 1-800-USA-RAIL or visit [AMTRAKHIAWATHA.COM](http://AMTRAKHIAWATHA.COM) to book today.

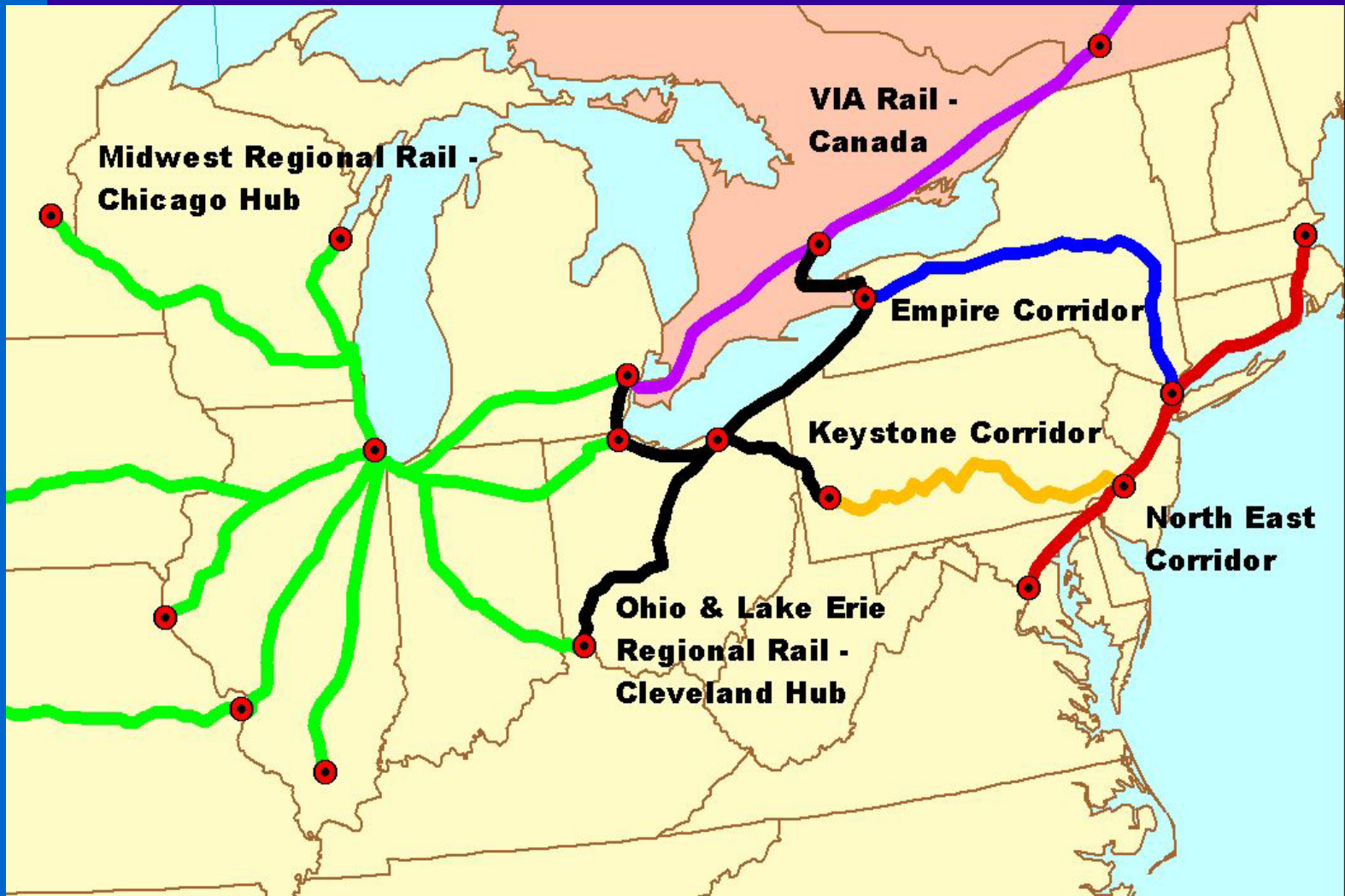


# OH: Completing Ohio Rail Plan...

- 860 miles - 32 stations
- 4 States and Southern Ontario
- 11 major metro areas
- 22 million population



# ...Connecting Midwest to East Coast



# IL: 125 Miles of Class VI Track...

Springfield - Mazonia



•  
•  
•

## ... With State-of-the-Art Signaling ...

- Lockheed-Martin installing along 125 miles of track
- Joint program with railroads, Illinois and federal government
- \$65 million investment

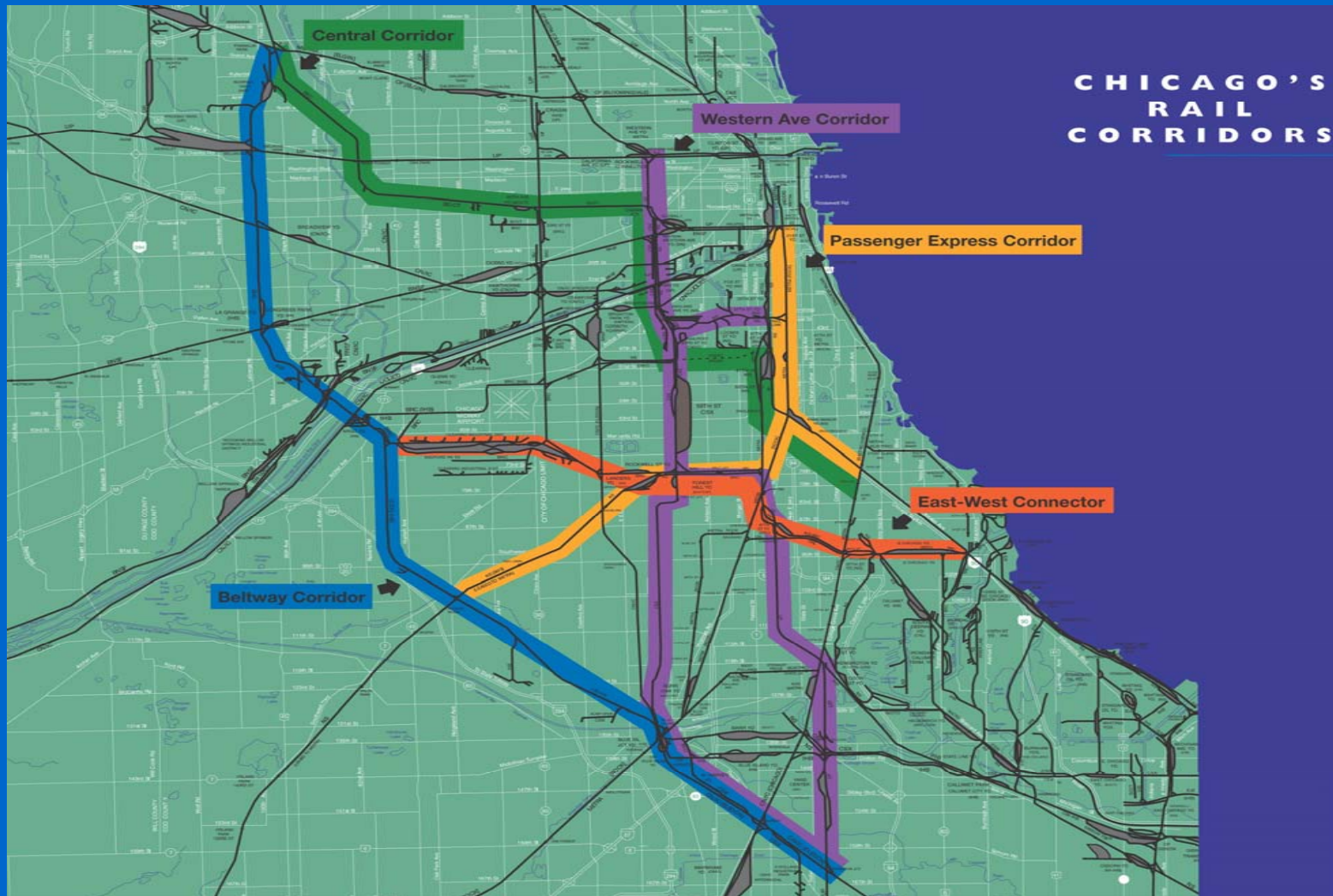


# ...and Upgraded Grade Crossings

- Every crossing between Mazonia & Springfield fully protected
- Fully funded by Illinois



# CREATE: Untangling Chicago's Rail Gridlock



# What The Midwest Needs:

- Federal partnership!
  - Stable policy
  - Real money



# 1. Federal Rail Policy

*" The corridors are the sources of the greatest potential passenger benefits. They will go largely undeveloped as a viable alternative to congested roads and airports until a consensus is reached on Amtrak's role and on the direction of the nation's future passenger rail system, as well as the means to achieve them."*

- US DOT's Inspector General

# What About Amtrak?

- Reality in Midwest:
  - No matter who runs the trains, still need to improve the track
- Reality in Washington D.C.:
  - No consensus on Amtrak, therefore no money for rail



## 2. Real Federal Money

- No state is willing/able to make HSR the only transportation investment without federal help.
- Tax Credit Bond Financing
  - Favored mechanism on Capital Hill for HSR funding since 2000.
  - Consistently opposed by OMB as bad fiscal policy
  - CREBs – a useful precedent?

# CREBs

- Clean Renewable Energy Bonds
- \$800 million in federal tax credit bond financing for renewable energy development
- Signed into law by President Bush as part of the Energy Policy Act of 2005
- See [www.CleanEnergyBonds.org](http://www.CleanEnergyBonds.org)

# Conclusion

- Passenger rail is alive and well in the Midwest.
- States are doing what they can, but...
- ...We need a federal partnership with real \$.





## **ENVIRONMENTAL LAW & POLICY CENTER**

Illinois    Indiana    Michigan    Minnesota    Ohio    Wisconsin

**The Environmental Law & Policy Center is the  
Midwest's leading environmental legal advocacy and  
eco-business innovation organization.**

**[www.elpc.org](http://www.elpc.org)**