

Cook County Board of Commissioners
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MAGGIE TREVOR
COMMISSIONER-9TH DISTRICT
COOK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

September 10, 2026

To: Dave Lundy, CEO
O'Hare Flyer
8 S. Michigan Ave. Suite 3000
Chicago, IL 60603
Dlundy@ohareflyer.com

CC: Toni Preckwinkle, President, Cook County Board of Commissioners
Adam Bianchi, General Superintendent, Forest Preserves of Cook County

I am writing to express serious concerns about the proposed "O'Hare Flyer," a high-speed passenger rail service currently in preliminary planning stages and expected to run through several communities in western Cook County, including River Forest, Melrose Park and River Grove in the 9th district, as well as Thatcher Woods in the Forest Preserves of Cook County. The proposed train speeds and frequency pose substantial challenges for residents and businesses along the rail corridor, and for the preservation and maintenance of natural areas.

One of the most critical concerns involves potential impacts on the Forest Preserves of Cook County system. The proposed route will bisect Thatcher Woods, one of the most important natural areas in the Forest Preserve system for both its biodiversity and for the recreation of Cook County residents in the area. The construction of a high-speed rail system will involve a major disruption to the area, and maintenance of the high-speed rail will require ongoing protective security and barriers that may interfere with wildlife traversing through the preserve, with unknown impacts to the ecosystem. Any proposal of this magnitude must include a comprehensive environmental assessment to ensure long-term protection for forest preserve land.

Residents in the 9th district, particularly those in River Forest, Melrose Park, and River Grove could face increased congestion and longer travel times, as frequent rail closures on major north-south corridors disrupt daily commutes and slow emergency response. Melrose Park's commercial and industrial districts also depend on consistent traffic flow for freight and logistics

operations; added delays at at-grade crossings threaten delivery schedules, worker access, and business productivity, driving up transportation costs.

Affected municipalities, and the County, have not been provided sufficient information or complete impact analyses related to traffic impacts, public safety, emergency response, noise, vibration, or infrastructure demands. Nor have alternative proposals for faster or more frequent service to O'Hare using existing Metra and CTA corridors been evaluated in a way to provide informed, meaningful comparisons to this proposal. In the absence of these essential studies, advancing the O'Hare Flyer would be premature and potentially harmful.

Until thorough, publicly available studies are completed and fully evaluated and approved by the appropriate federal and state agencies, the project should not move forward in its current form.

Thank you for your attention to these important regional concerns. Continued transparency, collaboration, and community engagement are essential to ensure any transportation initiatives serve Cook County residents safely and responsibly.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Maggie Trevor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Maggie Trevor
9th District Cook County Commissioner