



State of Illinois  
Bruce Rauner, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation  
Randall S. Blankenhorn, Secretary

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## Federal Grant Awarded to Widen I-57 Near Carbondale

*TIGER funding to add lanes, safety improvements to key stretch for freight*

**CARBONDALE** – The state of Illinois is receiving a \$7.6 million grant to add lanes and help ease the flow of traffic in an often-congested, 5-mile stretch of Interstate 57 between Johnston City and Pond Creek. The Illinois Department of Transportation and U.S. Rep. Mike Bost announced the award today.

“These improvements will have a huge impact on the safety, reliability and efficiency on a key segment of I-57,” said Gov. Bruce Rauner. “Working with our federal and local partners, we are making travel safer and creating economic development in southern Illinois.”

“Interstate 57 is critical to the economy of our state and a major reason why Illinois is the freight capital of the Midwest,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. “We are pleased that this overdue project can proceed.”

The funds will be used to add a new lane in each direction, resurface existing lanes and install new pavement markings, rumble strips, guardrails and median barriers to prevent crossover crashes.

“This grant is truly a win-win,” said Bost. “It not only will improve safety along a dangerous stretch of highway between Marion and Mount Vernon, but also has the potential to lead to economic development around Benton and other points in between.”

The interstate is vital to the nation’s freight network. Approximately 39,300 vehicles travel I-57 through Williamson and Franklin counties each day, nearly a third of which is truck traffic. That number can surge to more than 65,000 vehicles a day during high-travel periods in the summer, causing traffic backups that spill onto surrounding local roads and creating gridlock throughout the region.

Improving this stretch of I-57 will greatly boost safety while enhancing the flow of commerce.

The grant is being funded through the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program. The total estimated cost of construction is \$12.7 million. Construction is to begin in Spring 2019 and end in late 2020.