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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Amtrak is a vital part of the Illinois economy and the Bush Administration's recent proposal to eliminate federal operating dollars for Amtrak is a threat to the State of Illinois; and

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WHEREAS, The Administration's expectation that the State of Illinois can find additional dollars to replace disappearing federal dollars is short-sighted and unrealistic, as the burden on the State of Illinois would be severe and well beyond the means of State government to meet; and

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WHEREAS, Every developed nation in the world invests in a national passenger rail system and the perpetual lack of funding from the United States Congress has left our passenger rail system far behind what our citizens deserve; and

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WHEREAS, The purpose of a federal government is to fund and implement those interstate programs that state governments are not equipped to administer well, and interstate passenger rail is a proper program for the federal government to administer; and

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WHEREAS, Amtrak is a major Illinois employer with more than 2000 employees earning in the aggregate more than \$83 million in FY 2004; and

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WHEREAS, Over 2.3 million riders traveled through Chicago's Union Station on Amtrak in FY 2004, with more than 1.9 million riders from outside of Illinois arriving in Chicago; and

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WHEREAS, These 1.9 million out-of-state Amtrak riders arriving into Union Station every year inject much-needed tourism dollars into our State's economy; and

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1           WHEREAS, The opening of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential  
2 Library in April of 2005, four blocks from the Amtrak station,  
3 will be another prime opportunity to bring tourism dollars into  
4 Illinois; and

5           WHEREAS, The total Illinois Amtrak ridership in FY 2004 was  
6 over 3,000,000, breaking all previous records and rising  
7 rapidly; and

8           WHEREAS, Amtrak currently serves Illinois with 50 daily  
9 trains, with daily long distance service from Chicago to  
10 Oakland, Denver, Salt Lake City, Cleveland, Pittsburgh,  
11 Washington D.C., Memphis, New Orleans, St. Paul, Seattle,  
12 Portland, Buffalo, Boston, Kansas City, Los Angeles, St. Louis,  
13 Dallas, San Antonio, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, and New York  
14 City; and

15           WHEREAS, Amtrak currently serves almost 30 communities in  
16 Illinois (Alton, Bloomington-Normal, Carbondale, Carlinville,  
17 Centralia, Champaign-Urbana, Chicago, Du Quoin, Dwight,  
18 Effingham, Galesburg, Gilman, Glenview, Homewood, Joliet,  
19 Kankakee, Kewanee, Lincoln, Macomb, Mattoon, Mendota,  
20 Naperville, Plano, Pontiac, Princeton, Quincy, Rantoul,  
21 Springfield, and Summit), all of which would be at major risk  
22 of losing passenger rail service should the President's  
23 proposal be implemented by the Congress; and

24           WHEREAS, The State of Illinois has provided financial  
25 support for a number of years to maintain Amtrak service to its  
26 citizens and has continued its strong support for in-state  
27 passenger rail service by budgeting \$12.4 million in the  
28 current State Fiscal Year 2005 to continue existing levels of  
29 service; and

30           WHEREAS, The State of Illinois currently receives far fewer

1 spending dollars from the federal government than our taxpayers  
2 send to Washington, making Illinois a donor state; and

3 WHEREAS, Amtrak is one of the relatively few federal  
4 programs that disproportionately benefits Illinois, making  
5 Amtrak a great investment for the State of Illinois; therefore,  
6 be it

7 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL  
8 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we call on the United  
9 States Congress to invest, not divest, in a national passenger  
10 rail system with Chicago's Union Station as a major hub; and be  
11 it further

12 RESOLVED, That we call on the Illinois congressional  
13 delegation to lead the effort in a bipartisan manner to protect  
14 Illinois' unequivocal interest in strong, fully-funded  
15 passenger rail service; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That we call upon the Department of  
17 Transportation to report to the General Assembly by November 1,  
18 2005, on the implications to State support for continued  
19 passenger rail service within Illinois should federal  
20 operating support for Amtrak ultimately be eliminated or  
21 significantly reduced in the federal budget; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That copies of this preamble and resolution be  
23 sent to each member of the Illinois congressional delegation  
24 and to the Secretary of the Department of Transportation.