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1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The towns of Centralia and Mt. Vernon are home to
3 more than 30,000 Illinois citizens who have been plagued with
4 an ever-increasing number of traffic delays caused by railroad
5 trains that block traffic crossings; and

6 WHEREAS, Both towns have numerous street-level grade
7 crossings that are regularly blocked by trains; there are also
8 2 State of Illinois highway crossings in Centralia and 6
9 highway crossings in Mt. Vernon, which have created large-scale
10 delays for a higher number of commuters; and

11 WHEREAS, These delays could have profound public health and
12 safety aspects, should a person requiring urgent health care be
13 confined to an emergency response vehicle that is tied up at a
14 street-level railroad grade crossing; and

15 WHEREAS, A sharp, curving section of railroad right-of-way
16 leading into Centralia from the south causes some of the most
17 extreme delays, where the maximum speed allowed on the rails is
18 only 10 miles per hour; the grade crossings for these tracks
19 are frequented by both motor vehicle commuters and
20 approximately 40 freight trains a day; with some railroad
21 trains being almost one mile long, motorists must wait for many
22 minutes to cross the tracks; and

1 WHEREAS, The residents of the affected towns have spoken
2 out against these aforementioned delays for over a decade in
3 city council meetings and town forums alike and have called for
4 rerouting of rail lines to reduce these delays and health
5 hazards in their daily lives; the municipalities of Centralia
6 and Wamac have both passed resolutions to support this route
7 change; and

8 WHEREAS, Two potential routes have been identified for the
9 potential route relocation; both routes involve an investment
10 in new track and are promising to unclog the bottleneck areas
11 located in the towns of Centralia and Mt. Vernon; therefore, be
12 it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
14 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
15 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we recognize and offer our
16 support for the citizens of Clinton County, Jefferson County,
17 Marion County, and Washington County, in and around the
18 municipalities of Centralia and Mount Vernon, in their ongoing
19 effort to develop a plan to reroute train traffic and prevent
20 delays due to train crossings in and around the towns of
21 Centralia and Mt. Vernon; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That we encourage the Illinois Department of

1 Transportation, the Illinois Commerce Commission, and the
2 affected railroads to work with the citizens of these
3 communities to find a timely solution to this issue; and be it
4 further

5 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
6 presented to the Illinois Department of Transportation, the
7 Illinois Commerce Commission, U.S. Congressman John Shimkus,
8 U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, State Representative John Cavaletto,
9 State Senator John O. Jones, Mayor Becky Ault of Centralia, and
10 Mayor Mary Jane Chesley of Mt. Vernon.