

1 WHEREAS, It is in the interest of the entire State of
2 Illinois to help reach that goal of 50 million annual visitors
3 to Chicago by 2020; and

4 WHEREAS, Increasing visitors to Chicago has a secondary
5 benefit of exposing those visitors to potential trips
6 throughout Illinois; and

7 WHEREAS, Most tourists to Illinois come from the midwest as
8 the top 5 states providing visitors to Illinois in 2011 were
9 Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Missouri,
10 according to the Department of Commerce and Economic
11 Opportunity's 2011 Economic Impact of Tourism report; and

12 WHEREAS, Illinois hosted 93.3 million visitors in 2011, a
13 10% increase over 2010, fueled by an 11.8% increase in leisure
14 travel according to the same report; and

15 WHEREAS, Because most of our visitors come from the midwest
16 now, the most likely source for finding additional tourists to
17 achieve the goal of 50 million annual visitors to Chicago is
18 from the states in the midwest; and

19 WHEREAS, The residents of many smaller communities in the
20 midwest who are the target market for tourists do not have
21 access to affordable, frequent, convenient flights to Chicago,

1 either because there isn't a nearby airport or because the
2 flights from their airport to Chicago are not affordable,
3 frequent, or convenient; and

4 WHEREAS, Driving more than 100 miles can be very
5 inconvenient, particularly due to the relatively high cost of
6 parking in Chicago (especially compared to the low-cost or
7 no-cost of parking in much of the midwest) and the significant
8 traffic congestion around Chicago; and

9 WHEREAS, Many downstate communities with tourist
10 attractions do not have any air service at all, requiring an
11 alternative way of bringing tourists to their communities; and

12 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois has been a leader in
13 investing in Amtrak to provide more intercity passenger train
14 service, doubling the frequency of round-trips in 2006 and
15 investing State funds in improving the infrastructure of the
16 St. Louis-Springfield-Normal-Joliet-Chicago line; and

17 WHEREAS, Ridership on Amtrak service has broken records
18 every year for the last 5 years; and

19 WHEREAS, A majority of Amtrak riders on weekends and a
20 significant amount on weekdays, are not business travelers but
21 are rather leisure travelers or traveling to visit family or

1 friends, according to a State-authorized 2011 survey of
2 passengers aboard the Milwaukee-Chicago Amtrak Hiawatha
3 service; therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
5 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
6 we fully support the goal of 50 million annual visitors to
7 Chicago by 2020; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That we recognize that the majority of these
9 additional tourists are likely to come from the midwest; and be
10 it further

11 RESOLVED, That the easiest way to get tourists from the
12 midwest to visit Chicago is to make it easier for tourists from
13 the midwest to visit Chicago; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That we calls upon all other stakeholders in the
15 tourism economy to recognize that offering more affordable,
16 frequent, convenient passenger train service, both through
17 expanding Amtrak and through new high speed rail connecting
18 midwest communities to Chicago is a crucial strategy to reach
19 our economic goal of 50 million annual visitors to Chicago by
20 2020."