



HR0707

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1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Illinois' economy depends on a robust and  
3 efficient transportation network; and

4 WHEREAS, The sheer size of our State, with automobile  
5 travel from the south to the north taking as much as 6 hours,  
6 leaves our cities and regions relatively disconnected from each  
7 other, slowing our economic growth; and

8 WHEREAS, One major transportation project can unite the  
9 entire State's economy, linking together business centers and  
10 generating efficiencies and economic growth; and

11 WHEREAS, An Illinois Department of Transportation study  
12 completed by the University of Illinois at Chicago found that  
13 an O'Hare-Union Station-Champaign-Springfield-St. Louis with a  
14 Champaign-Indianapolis branch high speed rail line would  
15 generate an operating surplus that would require no annual  
16 subsidy; and

17 WHEREAS, The next steps in the planning process for a  
18 statewide high speed rail line are an investment grade  
19 ridership analysis to allow potential private financing  
20 entities to assess the suitability of the high speed rail line  
21 for investment, as well as a clear Alternative Analysis that

1 considers other potential routes to connect O'Hare, downtown  
2 Chicago, and the central and southern parts of the State,  
3 including but not limited to an upgrade to 220 mile per hour  
4 service of the existing Amtrak service between Chicago Union  
5 Station, Joliet Union Station, Normal, Springfield, Alton, and  
6 St. Louis; and

7 WHEREAS, The extension of the Metra Electric line south  
8 from University Park through Will County to Kankakee has long  
9 been a transportation objective for the south suburbs; this  
10 high speed rail line would serve that market, bringing Kankakee  
11 County, Will County, and southern Cook County modern  
12 transportation access to Chicago and the southern part of the  
13 State; and

14 WHEREAS, The State-owned land for the planned South  
15 Suburban Airport becomes far more valuable if a high speed  
16 train station is built on that site and was incorporated with  
17 any future airport to be developed there, leveraging the  
18 State's existing investment in the South Suburban Airport; and

19 WHEREAS, Prior to the development of viable high speed rail  
20 connections, there are other infrastructure investments in the  
21 South Cook, Will County, and Kankakee County regions that would  
22 create a new transportation network and spur economic growth;  
23 nearly a million people live in South Cook, Will County, and

1 Kankakee County; the South East Service Line, the Illiana  
2 Expressway, and the South Suburban Airport are important  
3 transportation adjuncts which would highlight multi-modal  
4 investments and increase the viability for Chicago's  
5 Southland; and

6 WHEREAS, The convention business is a major industry for  
7 Illinois' economy; any way that could improve the  
8 attractiveness of our convention spaces like McCormick Place to  
9 major shows is a key component to Illinois' prosperity; and

10 WHEREAS, Connecting McCormick Place, the continent's  
11 largest exhibition venue, directly to O'Hare International  
12 Airport, the nation's busiest airport, significantly enhances  
13 the attractiveness of Chicago to trade shows, as it allows  
14 visitors to avoid the chronically congested Kennedy Expressway  
15 with a direct train ride to the existing Metra station in  
16 McCormick Place; and

17 WHEREAS, O'Hare International Airport to downtown Chicago  
18 would serve as the key anchor in a statewide high speed rail  
19 line; and

20 WHEREAS, Finding a way to connect the business traveler  
21 nodes of Aurora and Naperville with the high speed rail line to  
22 feed the network with the residents and business travelers

1 around the I-88 corridor would be extremely helpful to creating  
2 a financially viable high speed line; and

3 WHEREAS, While there may not be any obvious right-of-way  
4 available since the Canadian National acquisition of the EJ&E  
5 line in the western suburbs, perhaps there may be right-of-way  
6 owned by utilities that could be used to connect the western  
7 suburbs with the high speed rail line and this should be  
8 studied and considered as part of any statewide high speed rail  
9 line; and

10 WHEREAS, Supporting and building new technology companies  
11 is a key goal for creating more Illinois jobs; one of the  
12 world's greatest centers for cutting-edge research in  
13 technology and software is the University of Illinois at  
14 Urbana-Champaign, but Illinois has lost thousands of graduates  
15 to other states, which have created new technology companies  
16 worth tens of billions of dollars; and

17 WHEREAS, Connecting the University of Illinois at  
18 Urbana-Champaign to downtown Chicago via a 50 minute high-speed  
19 train ride is the best way to integrate the financial and  
20 business capital of Chicago with the intellectual and  
21 technological capital of Urbana-Champaign to support and  
22 create new billion-dollar technology businesses in Illinois;  
23 and

1           WHEREAS, Three Fortune 500 companies are in Downstate  
2 Illinois, Archer Daniels Midland in Decatur, Caterpillar, Inc.  
3 in Peoria, and State Farm Insurance Companies in Bloomington;  
4 providing a world-class high speed rail line from O'Hare to  
5 downstate Illinois with an eventual connecting train service to  
6 other communities would significantly improve the entire  
7 State's business climate, particularly for high-level  
8 corporate executives who require convenient access to  
9 international flights; and

10           WHEREAS, Placing the St. Louis-area terminus at the East  
11 St. Louis Metrolink station would not only save a billion  
12 dollars by avoiding the need to build a new bridge over the  
13 Mississippi River, as passengers could simply take the existing  
14 Metrolink from East St. Louis into Missouri, it would also  
15 serve as a game-changer for East St. Louis, one of the State's  
16 most economically challenged communities; and

17           WHEREAS, Several nations have sent trade delegations to  
18 Illinois expressing sincere interest in exporting their high  
19 speed train systems to our State; several nations have also  
20 offered to help finance a portion of the capital construction  
21 costs, including France, China, and Japan; and

22           WHEREAS, To date, Illinois has been unable to take

1 advantage of the interest from other nations in partially  
2 financing and constructing a high speed rail line, mainly due  
3 to a lack of planning; therefore, be it

4       RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
5 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
6 rescind the requests and statements made in House Resolution  
7 548 of the 99th General Assembly and urge the Governor, the  
8 Illinois Department of Transportation, the City of Chicago, and  
9 the members of the Illinois congressional delegation to accept  
10 in its place the statements and requests contained herein; and  
11 be it further

12       RESOLVED, That we urge Governor Rauner and the Illinois  
13 Department of Transportation to build upon the work of the 2013  
14 high speed rail report and immediately task their existing  
15 consultants to prepare an investment-grade ridership analysis  
16 for distribution to interested parties around the world; and be  
17 it further

18       RESOLVED, That we urge Governor Rauner and the Illinois  
19 Department of Transportation to seek federal planning funds to  
20 help pay for this study and to consider all potential  
21 alternatives for a true high speed rail line that would  
22 complement all existing Amtrak services; and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That we urge all State agencies to provide any  
2 and all assistance to the City of Chicago in implementing this  
3 crucial transportation project; and be it further

4           RESOLVED, That we commend Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel for  
5 his commitment to building high speed train service between  
6 O'Hare International Airport and downtown Chicago and urge all  
7 State agencies to provide any and all assistance to the City of  
8 Chicago in implementing this crucial transportation project;  
9 and be it further

10          RESOLVED, That we commend the Mayors and Village  
11 Presidents, Council of Governments, Chambers of Commerce, and  
12 south suburban legislators for their planning and foresight  
13 with projects like the proposed SouthEast Service Line and  
14 their commitment to high speed rail as a necessary part of  
15 their regional development plan; and be it further

16          RESOLVED, That we call upon Congress to return to their  
17 previous practice in Fiscal Year 2010 of appropriating \$2.5  
18 billion in the annual federal budget for capital grants to  
19 states for high speed rail projects in order to help fund this  
20 high speed rail project; and be it further

21          RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
22 delivered to the Governor, the Illinois Secretary of

1 Transportation, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, and the members of  
2 the Illinois congressional delegation.