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1 SENATE JOINT 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; and

1 WHEREAS, The extension of the Metra Electric line south
2 from University Park through Will County to Kankakee has long
3 been a transportation objective for the south suburbs; this
4 high speed rail line would serve that market, bringing Kankakee
5 County, Will County, and southern Cook County modern
6 transportation access to Chicago and the southern part of the
7 State; and

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

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

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

1 WHEREAS, Finding a way to connect the business traveler
2 nodes of Aurora and Naperville with the high speed rail line to
3 feed the network with the residents and business travelers
4 around the I-88 corridor would be extremely helpful to creating
5 a financially viable high speed line; and

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

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

20 WHEREAS, Three Fortune 500 companies are in Downstate
21 Illinois, Archer Daniels Midland in Decatur, Caterpillar, Inc.
22 in Peoria, and State Farm Insurance Companies in Bloomington;
23 providing a world-class high speed rail line from O'Hare to

1 downstate Illinois with an eventual connecting train service to
2 other communities would significantly improve the entire
3 State's business climate, particularly for high-level
4 corporate executives who require convenient access to
5 international flights; and

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

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

18 WHEREAS, To date, Illinois has been unable to take
19 advantage of the interest from other nations in partially
20 financing and constructing a high speed rail line, mainly due
21 to a lack of planning; therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL

1 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
2 CONCURRING HEREIN, that we urge Governor Rauner and the
3 Illinois Department of Transportation to build upon the work of
4 the 2013 high speed rail report and immediately task their
5 existing consultants to prepare an investment-grade ridership
6 analysis for distribution to interested parties around the
7 world; and be it further

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

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

16 RESOLVED, That we commend Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel for
17 his commitment to building high speed train service between
18 O'Hare International Airport and downtown Chicago and urge all
19 State agencies to provide any and all assistance to the City of
20 Chicago in implementing this crucial transportation project;
21 and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be

1 delivered to the Governor, the Illinois Secretary of
2 Transportation, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, and the members of
3 the Illinois congressional delegation.