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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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

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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

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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

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WHEREAS, An Illinois Department of Transportation study
12 completed by the University of Illinois found that an
13 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

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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 a Tier One Environmental Impact Statement to

1 qualify the project for federal funds; and

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

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

14 WHEREAS, Prior to the development of viable high speed rail
15 connections, there are other infrastructure investments in the
16 South Cook, Will County, and Kankakee County regions that would
17 create a new transportation network and spur economic growth;
18 nearly a million people live in South Cook, Will County, and
19 Kankakee County; the South East Service Line, the Illiana
20 Expressway, and the South Suburban Airport are important
21 transportation adjuncts which would highlight multi-modal
22 investments and increase the viability for Chicago's
23 Southland; and

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

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

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

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

1 WHEREAS, Connecting the University of Illinois at
2 Urbana-Champaign to downtown Chicago via a 50 minute high-speed
3 train ride is the best way to integrate the financial and
4 business capital of Chicago with the intellectual and
5 technological capital of Urbana-Champaign to support and
6 create new billion-dollar technology businesses in Illinois;
7 and

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

17 WHEREAS, Placing the St. Louis-area terminus at the East
18 St. Louis Metrolink station would not only save a billion
19 dollars by avoiding the need to build a new bridge over the
20 Mississippi River, as passengers could simply take the existing
21 Metrolink from East St. Louis into Missouri, it would also
22 serve as a game-changer for East St. Louis, one of the State's
23 most challenged communities; and

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

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

10 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
11 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
12 urge Governor Rauner and the Illinois Department of
13 Transportation to build upon the work of the 2013 high speed
14 rail report and immediately task their existing consultants to
15 prepare an investment-grade ridership analysis for
16 distribution to interested parties around the world; and be it
17 further

18 RESOLVED, That we urge Governor Rauner and the Illinois
19 Department of Transportation to concurrently task their
20 existing consultants to prepare as expeditiously as possible
21 the Tier One Environmental Impact Statement to qualify the high
22 speed rail project for federal funds and to seek federal
23 planning funds to help pay for this study; 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

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