



SR1172

LRB098 21129 GRL 58960 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, Metra's Western Avenue Crossing, known as A-2,  
3 located 2 miles west of the Loop at Western Avenue and Kinzie  
4 Street, is where Union Pacific-owned tracks from the Ogilvie  
5 Transportation Center headed west cross over Metra-owned  
6 tracks from Union Station headed northwest; and

7           WHEREAS, A-2 impacts 7 of Metra's 11 routes, as the Union  
8 Pacific West, the Milwaukee District West, the Milwaukee North,  
9 and North Central travel over A-2, while the empty trains for  
10 the Union Pacific North, Union Pacific Northwest, Southwest  
11 Service, and Heritage Corridor trains need to travel over A-2  
12 to access their maintenance shops for service; and

13           WHEREAS, 350 trains cross paths at A-2 every day and rely  
14 on A-2 working smoothly for on-time performance; and

15           WHEREAS, A-2 was designed and built in the 1930s with  
16 interlocking switching equipment powered by air compression  
17 for the 3,000 switches which are now functionally obsolete; and

18           WHEREAS, Cold weather is particularly damaging to the  
19 functionality of the A-2 air compression switching system, as  
20 the switches freeze and ice falls from trains and locks  
21 switches in place, halting the ability of trains to move

1 through the crossing; and

2 WHEREAS, Many of Metra's winter weather delays this year  
3 are attributable to A-2; and

4 WHEREAS, A-2 is like 2 interstate highways meeting at a  
5 stoplight, as trains headed in one direction must wait for  
6 trains to pass through headed in the other direction, which is  
7 inherently inefficient; and

8 WHEREAS, The best way to solve the A-2 crossing problem is  
9 a flyover bridge to permanently separate the tracks, similar to  
10 the Chicago Transit Authority's plan recently released to build  
11 a flyover bridge permanently separating the Brown Line tracks  
12 from the Red and Purple Line tracks north of Belmont; and

13 WHEREAS, Other options include updating the 1930s era  
14 switching equipment to modern standards or moving the crossing  
15 a mile east; therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL  
17 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we recognize the A-2  
18 crossing as a major bottleneck for passenger rail service, both  
19 for Metra and for Amtrak; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That we show our support for federal, State, and

1 any private investments to eliminate the delays in the A-2  
2 crossing and provide better Metra and Amtrak service for the  
3 residents of Illinois.