

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2007**

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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1928**

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Sponsors: Representatives Pate, Rapp, Dickson, Carney (Primary Sponsors); Luebke and Saunders.

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Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

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May 7, 2007

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION SUPPORTING ENACTMENT OF THE PASSENGER RAIL  
2 INVESTMENT AND IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007 (SENATE BILL 294) AND  
3 OTHER PUBLIC PRIVATE INVESTMENTS IN RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE TO  
4 BE CONSIDERED BY THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

5 Whereas, Senators Lott, Lautenberg, Burr, and others have introduced Senate  
6 Bill 294, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2007, in the Congress  
7 of the United States; and

8 Whereas, the legislation would reauthorize and reform Amtrak, provide for  
9 enhanced accountability, reduce operating subsidies by forty percent, make  
10 infrastructure investments which will improve both freight and passenger services,  
11 create a new capital program totaling \$1.4 billion over six years for states to improve  
12 and start new conventional and high-speed intercity passenger rail services, facilitate  
13 competitive service provisions, set standards for on-time performance, and provide  
14 remedies for chronic service delays; and

15 Whereas, the Congress will consider programs of tax credits that promote  
16 investments in rail infrastructure to improve network capacity and reliability; and

17 Whereas, the North Carolina House Interim Committee on Expanding Rail  
18 Service has reported to the North Carolina General Assembly that expansion of rail  
19 freight and passenger services can help promote economic development and mobility  
20 for our citizens; that improved freight and intermodal services can help integrate North  
21 Carolina into the global economy; that the General Assembly should consider  
22 mechanisms to join with local governments, the federal government, and the private  
23 sector to provide funding for improved freight, intermodal, and passenger services; and

24 Whereas, Amtrak's national passenger rail system currently serves 16 cities  
25 and towns in North Carolina with six daily trains, two in partnership with North  
26 Carolina, providing safe, efficient, and affordable intercity mobility for hundreds of  
27 thousands of North Carolinians annually; and

1           Whereas, North Carolina and its cities and towns have partnered for two  
2 decades with Amtrak to provide its citizens with higher levels of service and continues  
3 to do so; and

4           Whereas, the North Carolina General Assembly, acting in concert with the  
5 Virginia General Assembly and pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 24101, has authorized creation  
6 of the Virginia-North Carolina Interstate High Speed Rail Compact to develop  
7 high-speed rail transportation in Virginia and North Carolina, advocate for development  
8 of a federal funding partner, and provide State funds to support this development; and

9           Whereas, 16 chambers of commerce in six states, including those serving  
10 Raleigh, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, and Charlotte, have created the Southeastern  
11 Economic Alliance to promote development of improved intercity and high-speed rail  
12 services across the Southeastern United States; and

13           Whereas, the North Carolina Department of Transportation has analyzed and  
14 recommended extension of passenger service to connect Western North Carolina via  
15 Salisbury to Asheville and Southeastern North Carolina via Raleigh, Fayetteville, and  
16 Goldsboro to Wilmington; and

17           Whereas, 27 cities, 30 towns and villages, 17 counties, 18 transportation  
18 planning organizations and councils of government, 17 chambers of commerce, and 10  
19 other State and local organizations have endorsed a resolution supporting creation of a  
20 comprehensive passenger rail system to serve the State of North Carolina; and

21           Whereas, the Research Triangle, Triad, and Charlotte Metropolitan areas are  
22 all developing plans for Regional Rail Transit Systems; and

23           Whereas, Charlotte-Mecklenburg has created a Metropolitan Transit  
24 Commission and is currently utilizing local, State, federal, and private financing to  
25 construct a multimodal five corridor rapid transit system and a new multimodal  
26 Charlotte Gateway Station providing access to intercity and regional rail and bus  
27 services; and

28           Whereas, the North Carolina Secretary's Rail Advisory Committee, acting  
29 through the Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Transportation, has asked  
30 the United States Secretary of Transportation to provide for stability in our nation's  
31 intercity passenger rail program and provide for a program of federal, State, and private  
32 investment in our freight and passenger railroad system; and

33           Whereas, North Carolina has over 3,500 miles of railroad and is served by  
34 two Class I and 24 short-line railroads; and

35           Whereas, the capacity of the rail network serving North Carolina is strained  
36 which impacts our consumers, producers, shippers, communities, and citizens; and

37           Whereas, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation  
38 Officials (AASHTO) in its Freight Rail Bottom Line Report recommended the Congress  
39 an enhanced program of investment in the rail network; and

40           Whereas, North Carolina requires a predictable program of federal funding to  
41 help implement these improvements to the rail freight and passenger network; and

42           Whereas, the Congress, through enactment of PL 109-59, SAFTEA-A Legacy  
43 for Users (SAFETEA-LU) authorized a new title defining multiple programs that  
44 promote public and private investment in rail infrastructure; and

1           Whereas, the Congress did not appropriate funds for these programs although  
2 they would benefit numerous communities across North Carolina as well as corporate  
3 and private citizens alike; and

4           Whereas, North Carolina has heretofore invested State funds in excess of  
5 those required to match a program of federal funds; Now, therefore,

6 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

7           **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly urges Congress to enact the Passenger  
8 Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2007 (Senate Bill 294).

9           **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly endorses Public Law 109-59  
10 (SAFETEA-LU) and urges Congress to appropriate funds to implement the rail  
11 infrastructure investment programs authorized thereunder.

12           **SECTION 3.** The General Assembly supports federal-state and public  
13 private investment in rail infrastructure and encourages Congress to enact such  
14 legislation.

15           **SECTION 4.** The General Assembly encourages the North Carolina  
16 delegation to the United States Congress to cosponsor this program of legislation and  
17 work industriously for its enactment.

18           **SECTION 5.** The General Assembly encourages the railroad industry to  
19 work cooperatively with State and local officials to achieve these public policy  
20 objectives.

21           **SECTION 6.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.