

**2007-427**

**Special Session**

WHEREAS, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) is the financial oversight and regional planning body for the three public transit operators in northeastern Illinois: the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra commuter rail, and Pace suburban bus; and

WHEREAS, the RTA is an important public asset that, according to the RTA, generates an annual economic impact of more than \$12 billion to the State of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, approximately two million riders per day use the CTA, Metra commuter rail, or Pace suburban bus; and

WHEREAS, strengthening Illinois' transit system will enhance residents' quality of life by reducing pollution as well as traffic congestion; and

WHEREAS, according to the CTA, revenues to support transit are not keeping up with increased maintenance, repair and transit costs potentially necessitating additional state funding; and

WHEREAS, the CTA asserts that without additional funding by January 20, 2008, it is prepared to raise cash fares as high as \$3.25 for rail passengers who pay cash, cut 81 bus routes, and layoff 2,400 employees; and

WHEREAS, Metra officials have warned riders to expect fares to increase up to 30 % if additional funding is not received by the State of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, according to the RTA, without additional funding, Metra will face a \$40 million deficit in 2008;

WHEREAS, although the Senate passed a bill that provides for approximately \$200 million in interim relief for mass transit; that Bill has yet to be considered by the House; and, the Legislature has been unable to reach a funding solution that is acceptable to its membership; and

WHEREAS, the House of Representatives cancelled a previously scheduled session to address the asserted mass transit shortfall;

THEREFORE, pursuant to Article IV, Section 5 (b) of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby call and convene the 95<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, in duly constituted quorums capable of conducting business, in a special session to commence on January 2, 2008, at 5:00 p.m., to consider any and all funding options for the RTA, CTA, Metra, and Pace including but not limited to HB 4161 and/or SB 307 as amended.

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ROD BLAGOJEVICH

Governor

Dated: December 26, 2007