

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE
NINETEENTH SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

1/2/2008

Speaker Turner: "The hour of 5:00 having come, it's finally here. The House will be convened. The Nineteenth Session.. Special Session of the Illinois House of Representatives shall come to order. Members will be in their seats. Members and guests are asked to refrain from starting their laptops, turn off all cell phones and pagers and rise for the invocation and for the Pledge of Allegiance. We shall be led in the prayer today by Wayne Padget, the assistant doorkeeper, in Springfield, Illinois."

Doorkeeper Padget: "Let us pray. Dear Lord, we come before You today in sound body and mind, praying that on this day You grant us wisdom and guidance. We pray that everyone can come together on one common ground and resolve the issues for the people of Illinois. We pray for the men and women in the Armed Services, both here and abroad, provide them with Your protection and give them the strength to make it through these tough times. These things we ask in Your Son's name. Amen."

Speaker Turner: "We shall be led in the Pledges... of Allegiances today by Representative Tryon."

Tryon: - et al: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Speaker Turner: "I would like to advise the Members, please hit your own switch. And we will do a Roll Call for Attendance. Representative Currie."

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Currie: "Thank you, Speaker. Please let the record reflect the excused absences, of Representatives Acevedo, Berrios, Davis, W., Ford, Franks, Hannig, Howard, Jakobsson, Mendoza, Molaro, Patterson, Soto, Yarbrough and John Bradley."

Speaker Turner: "The Gentleman from Jackson, Representative Bost."

Bost: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let the rec... record reflect that Representative Biggins, Black, Brauer, Cole, Coulson, Cross, Dunn, Durkin, Krause, Mathias, McAuliffe, Mulligan, Pihos, Poe, Pritchard, Ramey, Rose, Schmitz, Sullivan, and Wait are excused on the Republican side of the aisle today."

Speaker Turner: "Mr. Clerk, take the roll. There's 70 Members answering the Roll Call. A quorum of the House is present... is present. Mr. Clerk, read the Governor's proclamation."

Clerk Bolin: "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

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WHEREAS, strengthening Illinois's 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 95th General Assembly, in duly constituted quorums capable of conducting business, in a special session to

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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. Signed, Rod Blagojevich, Governor, dated December 26, 2007."

Speaker Turner: "Mr. Clerk, introductions of Resolutions."

Clerk Bolin: "Nineteenth Special Session Resolutions 1 and 2 are offered by Representative Currie. These Resolutions are referred to the Rules Committee."

Speaker Hannig: "The Chair recognizes the Lady from Cook, Representative Cook (sic-Currie)."

Currie: "Thank you, Speaker. I move for the immediate consideration and the suspension of all applicable House Rules so that we may adopt Nineteenth Special Session House Resolutions 1 and 2."

Speaker Hannig: "You've heard the Motion. All those in favor signify by saying 'aye'; all those opposed say 'no'. In the opinion of the Chair, the 'ayes' have it. And the Motion is adopted. The Chair recognizes the Lady from Cook, Representative Currie."

Currie: "Thank you, Speaker. Would the Clerk please read Nineteenth Special Session House Resolutions 1 and 2."

Clerk Bolin: "Nineteenth Special Session House Resolution #1
RESOLVED, that the Rules of the House of Representatives of the Ninety-Fifth General Assembly be adopted as the Rules of this Nineteenth Special Session, so far as the same may be applicable, and that the Committees of the House of Representatives of the Ninety-Fifth General Assembly, shall

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constitute the Committees of the House during the Nineteenth Special Session. Nineteenth Special Session House Resolution #2:

RESOLVED, that the Clerk inform the Senate that a majority of the House has assembled, pursuant to the proclamation of the Governor, convening a Nineteenth Special Session of the General Assembly, and are now ready for the transaction of business."

Speaker Turner: "Representative Currie moves for the adoptions of the Nineteenth Special Session's Resolutions 1 and 2. All those in favor shall signify by saying 'aye'; all those opposed say 'no'. In the opinion of the Chair, the 'ayes' have it. And the Resolutions are adopted. The Lady from Cook, Representative Nekritz."

Nekritz: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not going to speak to the Resolution. I think there are others that are going to do that. I just wanted to announce that there's going to be... since we're here and we are having a Passenger Rail Caucus meeting with Director Filan, tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m., on the 2nd floor in the Governor's Office to talk about capital needs for Passenger Rail. So, all the Members of the Passenger Rail Caucus are welcome. And that's 9:00 a.m., on the 2nd floor. If you're going home, I'm not making judgments about that, I do have a call-in number 866-394-4146 and the code is 1115623. Anybody interested in Passenger Rail can call. Thank you."

Speaker Turner: "So the Lady from Cook, Representative Currie, moves that the House stands adjourned... that we adjourn the

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Nineteenth Special Session to Perfunctory Session, Thursday, January 3. All those in favor should say, 'aye'; all those opposed say, 'no'. The 'ayes' have it. And the Nineteenth Special Session of the Illinois House of Representatives stands adjourned."