



Legislation Text

File #: RES 21-24, **Version:** 1

Supporting the second daily train to Chicago.

WHEREAS, the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train Passenger Rail Study completed the alternatives analysis, modelling and environmental documentation for introducing a second daily passenger train between Saint Paul Union Depot, Milwaukee and Chicago that would serve approximately 124,000 passengers annually; and

WHEREAS, the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train would run at a top speed of 79 miles per hour and utilize the existing Amtrak Empire Builder corridor from Saint Paul, Minnesota to Chicago, Illinois with Minnesota station stops at Union Depot in Saint Paul, Red Wing and Winona; and

WHEREAS, a second round-trip passenger train from the Twin Cities to Chicago will benefit Minnesota's economy by creating new jobs and supporting existing businesses, increasing tourism, providing better access to colleges and universities, providing a more economical travel choice and reducing carbon emissions; and

WHEREAS, the capital improvements needed for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train will benefit freight railroads and the businesses they serve, and will make auto and truck travel safer; and
WHEREAS, Minnesota Department of Transportation and Wisconsin Department of Transportation have received a federal grant in the amount of \$31.8 million to construct track, signal and communication improvements in and around La Crosse, Wisconsin, La Crescent, Minnesota and Winona, Minnesota to accommodate the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin has \$6.2 million in bonding authority and Amtrak has committed \$5 million toward the local match for the federal grant; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota needs to provide \$10 million to apply as matching funds to the federal grant, making it possible to access the federal funds and begin building the improvements; and

WHEREAS, Saint Paul most recently supported the Second Daily Train to Chicago by passing Res 19-489 on March 20, 2019, Now Therefore Be It

RESOLVED, by the City Council of Saint Paul, that it hereby renews its support for funding for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train, and requests that the Minnesota Legislature and Governor Walz approve this \$10 million request during the 2021 legislative session.