



Visit Lake County
5465 West Grand Avenue, Suite 100
Gurnee, Illinois 60031
847-662-2700

June 24, 2016

The Honorable Joe Boardman
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Railroad Passenger Corporation, dba Amtrak
60 Massachusetts Avenue NE
Washington, DC 20002

The Honorable Randy Blankenhorn
Secretary
Illinois Department of Transportation
2300 S. Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, Illinois 62764

The Honorable Mark Gottlieb
Secretary
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
4802 Sheboygan Avenue
Madison, WI 53705

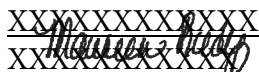
Dear Mr. Boardman, Secretary Blankenhorn, and Secretary Gottlieb,

As the official tourism agency for Lake County, Illinois, I am writing in support of the addition of an Amtrak stop in Lake Forest, Illinois. Lake County's convenient location between Chicago and Milwaukee makes it perfect for Amtrak service and would deliver economic benefits to both Illinois and Wisconsin and offer ease of access to visitors to Lake County as well as residents.

Lake County, with a population of 700,000, is a vibrant economic region. Over 30,000 businesses are located here including eleven Fortune 500 company headquarters. The county is also a popular tourism destination with 60 hotels and resorts, and is home to Six Flags Great America drawing nearly 3 million visitors annually. Additionally Naval Station Great Lakes, which serves as the Navy's sole basic training base, is located here. Each year 150,000 family members from across the county travel to the base to attend graduation ceremonies held nearly every week. Some of these families take Amtrak to Chicago and would be delighted to have a more convenient stop in Lake County. An Amtrak stop in Lake County would also boost business to Milwaukee's General Mitchell Airport as many visitors and residents prefer the convenience of flying in and out of Milwaukee.

Visitors to Lake County spend over \$1 billion annually which places us as the third highest county in Illinois for travel expenditures. The hospitality industry is a vital and thriving part of Lake County's economy generating over 10,000 jobs. An Amtrak stop in Lake Forest opens up many exciting business and tourism opportunities and would have a very positive economic impact on the economies of both the states of Illinois and Wisconsin as well as Lake County.

Sincerely,

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Maureen Riedy
President