

Senators Basham, Gilbert, Anderson, Schauer, Birkholz, Gleason, Hardiman, Allen, Scott, Olshove, Cropsey, Brater and Clark-Coleman offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 34.

A resolution to express the Senate's opposition to Norfolk Southern Corporation's proposed sale of its rail lines from Ypsilanti to Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids to Kalamazoo and continuing to the Indiana border.

Whereas, The Norfolk Southern Corporation is considering the sale of its Michigan lines from Grand Rapids to Kalamazoo and from Ypsilanti to Kalamazoo. The Ypsilanti to Kalamazoo line carries the state's busiest high-speed AMTRAK train, the Wolverine, which travels from Detroit to Chicago. The Wolverine travels on the Norfolk Southern Railroad's rail corridor from Ypsilanti to Kalamazoo until it connects with AMTRAK's own line. Ridership on this line increased six percent in 2006 to 142,185 passengers; and

Whereas, The Ypsilanti to Kalamazoo portion of the Norfolk Southern line is a vital link between Detroit and Chicago. Expanding the high-speed rail capacity on this line is vital to the future development of this area. New industry, including coal energy, biodiesel, and ethanol fuel plants are proposed for Michigan and specifically along the I-94 corridor located near the Ypsilanti to Kalamazoo rail line. Continued operation of this line by Norfolk Southern is essential to expansion of new industry in this area. Over 150 railroad employees' jobs are associated with the rail traffic along this line; and

Whereas, Norfolk Southern is a Class One railroad operator, earning revenue in excess of \$250 million annually. As a Class One operator, Norfolk Southern has the capacity to maintain and promote the use of these lines. The proposed sale of the Ypsilanti to Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids to Kalamazoo lines will almost certainly place the lines under the management of a Class Three operator, a rail company earning revenue of \$20 million or less annually. A Class Three operator will be far less likely to have the means to maintain the lines, thus increasing the chance of accidents. Class Three operators also rely on federal grants for line and equipment maintenance, grants that are not always guaranteed; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we express opposition to Norfolk Southern's proposed sale of its rail lines from Ypsilanti to Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids to Kalamazoo and continuing to the Indiana border; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate; the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives; members of the Michigan congressional delegation; the United States Department of Transportation, Surface Transportation Board; the Norfolk Southern Corporation; AMTRAK; and the Michigan Department of Transportation.