

**STATEMENT OF MR. TOM CARPER,
NOMINEE FOR MEMBER, AMTRAK REFORM BOARD
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE,
SCIENCE AND TRANSPORTATION
DECEMBER 18, 2007**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today and I am honored that Senator Durbin recommended me and that President Bush has nominated me to be a member of the Amtrak Reform Board. You can be assured that I consider this a great responsibility as well as an opportunity.

I would also like to thank my wife, Gayle, who is here with me today.

The responsibility, of course, is to serve the Board and to assist Amtrak in its mission to provide a quality national passenger rail service. My background as a small business owner, Mayor of a small Midwestern college town, that happens to be an Amtrak community and my involvement in Illinois passenger rail issues for the past sixteen years give me a broad base of experience that will be helpful to the Board. Be assured, Mr. Chairman, I will take this responsibility seriously.

Since 1991, I have worked on many levels in Illinois to successfully preserve, stabilize and increase ridership, revenues and frequencies on the Illinois corridor routes. Illinois' recent success is a tribute to many fine and dedicated people and organizations. It has taken broad support and action from individual Amtrak passengers, organized labor, State and local leaders, Senator Durbin and the Illinois Congressional delegation to bring the Illinois service to what it is today. One important component of the success in Illinois, is the belief that passenger rail service is not only a transportation issue, but a community development, environmental, tourism and economic development issue as well. I believe it is my responsibility to bring that experience of success to the Amtrak Board.

This country deserves a top quality national passenger rail system and I can assure this Committee and Members of Congress, the employees of Amtrak and the citizens of America that, if confirmed, I am committed to working toward this goal.

I look forward to working with staff, Members of this Committee as well as the Congress in the future. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you and I welcome any questions the Committee may have.