the joint-lead state agency for the environmental review process.

IDOT proposes to improve high speed passenger rail service between Chicago, Illinois and St. Louis, Missouri, including the rail lines through Springfield, Illinois. The proposal includes the development of double track along the railroad corridor to improve high-speed passenger service reliability and safety, and to increase the number of trips between Chicago and St. Louis, as well as improvements to railroad crossings, signals, and stations.

The Final EIS presents the Program's purpose and need, identifies all reasonable alternatives, describes the affected environment, analyzes the potential environmental impacts of all the reasonable alternatives and the No-Build Alternative, and identifies the Preferred Alternative and appropriate mitigation measures to minimize the potential environmental impacts.

DATES: FRA will issue a final decision on the proposal after the 30 day wait period which concludes on December 10, 2012, established by Environmental Protection Agency's publication of the notice of availability of the EIS in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the Final EIS have been sent to affected Federal, State, and local government agencies, stakeholders, and are also available for public review at IDOT, 505 North MacArthur Boulevard, Springfield, Illinois 62702 and online at FRA's Web site: *http://www.fra.dot.gov* and IDOT's Web site: *http://www.idothsr.org.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Andrea E. Martin, Environmental Protection Specialist, Office of Railroad Policy and Development, Federal Railroad Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., MS–20, Washington, DC 20590; email: *andrea.martin@dot.gov;* telephone: 202–493–6201 or Joseph E. Shacter, Director, Division of Public and Intermodal Transportation, Illinois Department of Transportation, 100 West Randolph Street, Suite 6–600, Chicago, Illinois 60601; email: *Joseph.Shacter@Illinois.gov;* telephone: 312–793–2116.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed Program would include the development of a double track and railroad crossings, signals, and stations along a preferred route of existing railroad corridors between Chicago, Illinois and St. Louis, Missouri, to improve high-speed passenger service reliability and safety, and increase the number of trips. This Program of improvements would be in addition to those associated with FRA studies within the Chicago to St. Louis Corridor previously conducted from 2004 and 2011 and being implemented by IDOT.

The Final EIS identifies and evaluates the environmental and transportation impacts for corridor capacity enhancements, including double track. The current Chicago to St. Louis Corridor operates predominantly on a single track that is shared by both traditional freight and Amtrak passenger rail service.

A tiered environmental process was used to evaluate the proposed Program. A tiered environmental process is a phased environmental review used in the development of complex projects. Under this process, the Tier 1 EIS addresses broad, corridor issues and alternatives. Tier 2 environmental documents address individual component projects of the Selected Alternative carried forward from the Tier 1 environmental process. Concurrently with this Tier 1 study of the full Chicago to St. Louis Corridor, IDOT and FRA conducted a Tier 2 evaluation for the portion of the High-Speed Rail Corridor in Springfield, IL.

In June 2012, IDOT circulated the Draft Tier 1 EIS for a 45-day public and agency review and comment period pursuant to 40 CFR 1502.9(b). The Draft Tier 1 EIS analyzed a No-Build Alternative and various Build Alternatives. IDOT and FRA convened public hearings in August 2012 in Chicago, Joliet, Springfield, Bloomington, and Alton, Illinois.

The IDOT and FRA considered the entire record and compared the potential environmental impacts of the Tier 1 Build Alternatives, as well as impacts of the No-Build Alternative, in order to select the Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative follows the existing Amtrak passenger corridor, except through Springfield and north of Joliet. Between Chicago and Joliet, the Preferred Alternative follows the Metra Rock Island District line from Joliet Union Station to the Norfolk Southern (NS) line near 40th Street in Chicago, the NS to Amtrak south of Union Station, and Amtrak owned tracks to Union Station. The Preferred Alternative allows for eight daily round trips at 110 miles per hour (mph) on two tracks.

Other improvements also identified in the Final EIS include sidings, pedestrian grade separations at the stations, and grade separations along major roadways. Individual component projects along the corridor would be advanced and studied in greater detail as future Tier 2 project-level evaluations, as part of the tiered environmental review process.

A Tier 2 project-level evaluation for improvements in Springfield is also included within the Final EIS. The Springfield Rail Improvements Project has been advanced concurrently as a component of the overall corridor program. The Tier 2 evaluation further considers the environmental and transportation impacts of alternatives following different rail routes through the City of Springfield, Illinois. The evaluation addresses safety, noise, and traffic delays that would result from increased volumes of both passenger and freight rail traffic on the three north-south rail corridors that pass through the City of Springfield. In Springfield (as identified in the Tier 2 project-level evaluation), the Preferred Alternative is to shift Union Pacific (UP) freight as well as new and existing Amtrak passenger trains to an expanded NS corridor along Tenth Street.

This Final EIS has been prepared in compliance with the provisions of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR part 1500 *et seq.*), and FRA's Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts (64 FR 28545; May 26, 1999).

Issued in Washington, DC, on November 15, 2012.

Corey W. Hill,

Director, Office of Passenger and Freight Programs.

[FR Doc. 2012–28301 Filed 11–20–12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

[Docket Number FRA–2002–13398]

Petition for Waiver of Compliance

In accordance with Parts 240 and 242 of Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), this document provides the public notice that by a document dated August 16, 2012, the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART) has petitioned the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for a waiver of compliance from certain provisions of the Federal railroad safety regulations contained at 49 CFR part 240—Qualification and Certification of Locomotive Engineers and 49 CFR part 242—Qualification and Certification of Conductors for continued operation of its TECO Line Streetcar System at a ''limited connection'' with a railroad operated by CSX Transportation (CSX).

In its petition, HART seeks to extend the terms and conditions of its Shared Use waiver (originally granted by FRA's Railroad Safety Board (Board) on October 18, 2002, and extended on July 14, 2006) for operation of its TECO Trolley across the 14th Street automatic interlocking at-grade rail-rail diamond crossing with CSX in Tampa, FL.

On January 11, 2011, HART requested an extension of the terms and conditions of its Shared Use waiver for operation of its TECO Trolley. The Board granted HART's request for an extension of the relief for a period of only 18 months, citing deficiencies found during recent FRA inspections. FRA granted the 18-month extension on the condition that HART remedies the deficiencies and conducts, at the least, quarterly meetings to review operations at this crossing with CSX and the Florida Department of Transportation. FRA would continue to review its operation, and HART could apply for another extension prior to the end of that time period. HART states in its current petition letter that during two FRA inspections, no deficiencies in its operation were found, and requests a 5-year extension of the original waiver.

For the reasons stated above, HART explained that its request is consistent with the waiver process for shared use. See Statement of Agency Policy Concerning Jurisdiction Over the Safety of Railroad Passenger Operations and Waivers Related to Shared Use of the Tracks of the General Railroad System by Light Rail and Conventional Equipment, 65 FR 42529 (July 10, 2000); see also Joint Statement of Agency Policy Concerning Shared Use of the Tracks of the General Railroad System by Conventional Railroads and Light Rail Transit Systems, 65 FR 42626 (July 10, 2000).

A copy of the petition, as well as any written communications concerning the petition, is available for review online at *www.regulations.gov* and in person at the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Docket Operations Facility, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., W12–140, Washington, DC 20590. The Docket Operations Facility is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

Interested parties are invited to participate in these proceedings by submitting written views, data, or comments. FRA does not anticipate scheduling a public hearing in connection with these proceedings since the facts do not appear to warrant a hearing. If any interested party desires an opportunity for oral comment, they should notify FRA, in writing, before the end of the comment period and specify the basis for their request.

All communications concerning these proceedings should identify the appropriate docket number and may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- *Web site: http://www.regulations.gov/.* Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* 202–493–2251.
- *Mail:* Docket Operations Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., W12–140, Washington, DC 20590.
- *Hand Delivery:* 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Room W12–140, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

Communications received by January 7, 2013 will be considered by FRA before final action is taken. Comments received after that date will be considered as far as practicable.

Anyone is able to search the electronic form of any written communications and comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (Volume 65, Number 70; Pages 19477–78), or online at *http://www.dot.gov/privacy.html*.

Issued in Washington, DC, on November 15, 2012.

Robert C. Lauby,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Regulatory and Legislative Operations.

[FR Doc. 2012–28351 Filed 11–20–12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

[Docket Number FRA–2012–0083]

Petition for Waiver of Compliance

In accordance with Part 211 of Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), this document provides the public notice that by a document dated October 5, 2012, New Jersey Transit (NJ Transit) has petitioned the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for a waiver of compliance from certain provisions of the Federal railroad safety regulations at 49 CFR part 218, Railroad Operating Practices. FRA assigned the petition Docket Number FRA–2012–0083.

NJ Transit owns and operates service on the Pascack Valley Line, which runs from Spring Valley, NY to Hoboken, NJ. Commuter rail service for the three stations in New York State (Spring Valley, Pearl River, and Nanuet) is provided under contract with Metro-North Railroad. Woodbine Yard, located in Spring Valley, NY, has been in service long before NJ Transit became operational on January 1, 1983. The yard consists of three tracks terminating at the end of the 31-mile Pascack Valley Line. In 2003, the yard was expanded and updated to make room for additional commuter rail service on the line. All three tracks were extended to the maximum distance allowed by the available land for train storage and use by mechanical personnel for inspection, servicing, and repairs that require Blue Signal Protection.

The current Mechanical Department workforce at this facility includes approximately 24 employees inspecting, servicing, and repairing approximately 10 trains per day. The allotted times for servicing equipment are restricted due to train availability, time of day, and train scheduling requirements. Currently, all three tracks are used for inspection, servicing, and repairs that require Blue Signal Protection. The maximum track space on each track is being used to accommodate the current length of the train consists. However, complying with the current regulations requiring derails to be placed 150 feet away from equipment requiring Blue Signal Protection will restrict the train lengths that can be placed on a given track. In addition, lining and locking a track switch away from the track being protected will restrict the amount of equipment that can be simultaneously inspected, serviced, or repaired.

Based on the situation described above, NJ Transit seeks a waiver from 49 CFR Section 218.29(c)(1) for Woodbine Yard in Spring Valley, NY. This section requires that derails protecting tracks under Blue Signal Protection be placed ''no less than 150 feet'' from equipment and locked ''with an effective locking device.'' The combination of the yard layout at Spring Valley and equipment track occupancy is such that meeting this requirement is impractical. In addition, the layout of switches to individual tracks is such that the use of the method of lining switches against movement as provided by Section 218.27(b) is also impractical due to track configuration and the necessity to inspect, service, and repair equipment on the adjacent tracks simultaneously. In lieu of Section 218.29(c)(1), NJ Transit requests that FRA grant permission to NJ Transit to use Section 218.29(a)(4) that permits the placement of derails at least 50 feet from the end