



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Metra Board picks James M. Derwinski to lead agency**

*Current Chief Mechanical Officer to be the next Executive Director/CEO*

CHICAGO (August 16, 2017) – The Metra Board of Directors has unanimously selected James M. Derwinski to be the next Executive Director/CEO of the commuter rail agency.

Mr. Derwinski, 49, has had a long career in Metra’s Mechanical Department and currently serves as its Chief Mechanical Officer. In that role he oversees 650 employees responsible for the repair, inspection, cleaning and maintenance of nearly 1,200 railcars and locomotives. He is also in charge of in-house railcar and locomotive rehabilitation programs, a contract for locomotive remanufacturing and the installation of Positive Train Control on cab cars and engines.

“In Jim Derwinski we have an inspirational leader, well known for his effective communications and ability to develop people, thus earning him great respect within Metra. Using his intelligence and skills, Jim has developed processes and procedures that make efficient use of taxpayer dollars,” said Metra Board Chairman Norman Carlson. “Prime examples are his department’s rolling stock rehabilitation, remanufacturing and maintenance programs that keep our aging cars and locomotives running – helping us to meet our on-time performance goal for 29 months and counting.”

“We interviewed many qualified candidates for this position but we feel Jim is best qualified to lead Metra,” said Board Vice Chairman Romayne C. Brown, who led the board’s search. “With our funding challenges, we need someone with his proven energy and resourcefulness to keep us on track as we face some difficult years ahead. Jim is that person. He is an innovator who is willing to try new things that have achieved very effective use of precious capital dollars.”

Mr. Derwinski will replace Don Orseno, who is retiring at the end of 2017. The Board made the selection at this time so that there will be a lengthy transition period before Mr. Orseno retires. Mr. Derwinski will be paid a salary of \$275,000 effective January 1, 2018.

“With Jim’s background, railroad knowledge and collaborative working relationship with BNSF, Union Pacific and the regulatory agencies, I am confident he will hit the ground running when he takes the helm at Metra in 2018,” Mr. Orseno said. “I will be pleased to leave the agency under Jim’s leadership.”

After a six-year stint in the U.S. Navy as an electrician on nuclear submarines, Mr. Derwinski began his railroad career as a locomotive electrician with the Chicago & North

Western Railroad in 1993. He joined Metra as an electrician in 1997 and steadily rose through the ranks serving as a foreman, general foreman, shop superintendent, director of systems maintenance, locomotive superintendent, Rock Island division director and Milwaukee division director and then senior director of mechanical operations. He was named Chief Mechanical Officer in September 2013.

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***About Metra***

*Metra is one of the largest and most complex commuter rail systems in North America, serving Cook, DuPage, Will, Lake, Kane and McHenry counties in northeastern Illinois. The agency provides service to and from downtown Chicago with 241 stations over 11 routes totaling nearly 500 route miles and approximately 1,200 miles of track. Metra operates more than 700 weekday trains, providing about 300,000 passenger trips each weekday.*

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