His Excellency Joseph Duncan
Governor Elect of the State of Illinois

Chicago Nov. 29. 1834

Sir — I take the liberty of transmitting to you a printed copy of the Memorial of the Citizens of Cook County, asking for the Construction of a Canal to unite the Illinois river with Lake Michigan by the State — The Memorial was adopted with great unanimity and speaks the sentiments of the people in this quarter of the State upon this important subject, except, that all would prefer a Steam-boat Canal to one of ordinary dimensions — We should have petitioned for one hence we supposed it possible to induce the Legislature to go for it: But believing it impossible to obtain an act to Construct a St. Boat Communication, the Citizens deemed it policy to ask for a Common Canal, well knowing that when its usefulness should be tested the wants of the State should require it, an act could be obtained to enlarge it to the requisite size for Steam Boats — Our Citizens are for a Canal of some kind, they believe that it should be undertaken by the State — Rail Roads are out of the question with us, except, in those places where Canals cannot be obtained for want of water to feed them or some other insurmountable obstacle — I doubt whether we have Twenty rail road men among us & those of them are influenced by interest — They hope to get stock & then Canal lands as a bonus — I think they will be disappointed; For one, I should regret to see the Commercial prosperity and agricultural & manufacturing interests of the people of this State subjected to the control of a rail road Monopoly

I hope I shall not be deemed guilty of impertinence when I say that, the people rely with great confidence upon your wisdom & firmness in recommending and enforcing upon the general Assembly the necessity of immediately adopting efficient measures for the opening of a Canal between the Illinois & the Lake — No improvement of the same extent of cost, can be undertaken by the State which will confer such substantial advantages or secure so large commercial facilities as this Canal — The State will incur no responsibility by the undertaking for I have not the least doubt but that the Canal lands will provide abundantly for the whole cost. This being home singular to your excellency — It is nevertheless true, they form conjecture, and this opinion is entertained by gentlemen of acknowledged competency & judgement — Let these lands be withheld until the Canal is completed and they will bring $2.500.000 — This is half a Million more than the Canal will actually cost, McBuckle's report to the contrary, notwithstanding

Upon you Sir, will devolve the arduous but noble duty of carrying into effect a System of internal improvement which will produce results, beneficial and grand, almost beyond conception — Internal Ambition could not desire a more ample theatre for its exercise than the one which is presented to the Chief Magistrate elect of this State — a liberal Canal System will meet with the support of the people in the Interior of the State

I am with great respect Your obt. Servt.
Samuel H. Collins