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1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Compliance with the requirements of the National  
3 Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and the effects  
4 of surface discharging private sewage disposal systems on  
5 communities within the State are matters of extreme importance;  
6 and

7 WHEREAS, Illinois is mandated by the federal Clean Water  
8 Act to adhere to and enforce the standards set forth by the  
9 NPDES to protect the waters of the United States from  
10 non-point-source discharges; and

11 WHEREAS, Failure of Illinois to enforce non-point-source  
12 NPDES standards requires the federal Environmental Protection  
13 Agency to withdraw from the Illinois Environmental Protection  
14 Agency the authority to grant NPDES permits under State and  
15 federal law; and

16 WHEREAS, Loss of NPDES permit standing could have a  
17 devastating effect on jobs and water quality in Illinois; and

18 WHEREAS, Malfunctioning or improperly operating and  
19 maintained surface discharging private sewage disposal systems  
20 can pose serious health hazards; a surface discharging system  
21 that is malfunctioning or improperly operating and maintained

1 may contain raw sewage, which is not always obvious or visible  
2 to the untrained eye and may contain disease-causing organisms,  
3 such as bacteria and viruses that come from the digestive  
4 tract, respiratory tract, and skin; diseases commonly  
5 associated with improperly treated sewage include  
6 Gastroenteritis, Shigellosis, Salmonella, Hepatitis A, and  
7 Leptospirosis; and

8 WHEREAS, It is estimated that there are approximately  
9 139,500 surface discharging systems in Illinois, with the  
10 potential of discharging nearly 70 million gallons of sewage  
11 per day; current test results suggest that between 20% and 60%  
12 of these systems are failing or have failed, indicating that  
13 between 14 million and 42 million gallons of raw sewage could  
14 be discharged daily; and

15 WHEREAS, There are geographic regions of the State in which  
16 a surface discharging system is the only viable choice due to  
17 the poor absorption qualities of the soil's high clay or rock  
18 content; approximately 6,000 new surface discharging systems  
19 are installed per year, increasing the number of additional  
20 potentially failing systems by 1,200 to 3,600 per year; and

21 WHEREAS, A failing surface discharging system has the  
22 potential to affect an entire subdivision or surrounding area;  
23 in particular the discharge may become a tempting nuisance to

1 neighborhood children and pets who may play in or around the  
2 pooling discharge and, subsequently, become directly infected  
3 or become the modes of transmission by tracking disease-causing  
4 organisms into their homes; therefore, be it

5       RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
6 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
7 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that there is created the Joint Task  
8 Force on National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System  
9 (NPDES) Compliance, which shall be charged with the following  
10 tasks:

11           (1) examining the State's current compliance with  
12 NPDES laws, rules, and guidelines, especially with respect  
13 to surface discharging private sewage disposal systems;

14           (2) forming a reasonably complete picture of where in  
15 the State surface discharging private sewage disposal  
16 systems have been permitted and where they have not been  
17 permitted;

18           (3) examining alternatives to surface discharging  
19 private sewage disposal systems;

20           (4) examining what other states are doing to prevent or  
21 phase out the allowance of surface discharging private  
22 sewage disposal systems; and

23           (5) examining how Illinois can comply with national  
24 NPDES laws, rules, and guidelines in such a way as to  
25 minimize the financial impact upon Illinois homeowners who

1           currently use surface discharging private sewage disposal  
2           systems; and be it further

3           RESOLVED, That the Joint Task Force shall consist of 8  
4           members, 2 of whom shall be appointed by the President of the  
5           Senate; 2 of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of the  
6           House of Representatives; 2 of whom shall be appointed by the  
7           Minority Leader of the Senate; and 2 of whom shall be appointed  
8           by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives; and be  
9           it further

10          RESOLVED, That the Joint Task Force shall meet initially at  
11          the call of the Speaker and the President, shall select 2  
12          members as co-chairpersons, one from each political party, at  
13          its initial meeting, and shall thereafter meet at the joint  
14          call of the co-chairpersons; and be it further

15          RESOLVED, That the Joint Task Force shall report its  
16          findings to the General Assembly by filing copies of its report  
17          with the Clerk of the House and the Secretary of the Senate no  
18          later than January 1, 2008; and that upon filing its report the  
19          Joint Task Force is dissolved.