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1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Nearly 32,000 kindergarten through 8th grade
3 students in City of Chicago School District 299 missed 4 weeks
4 or more of class in the 2010-2011 school year; and

5 WHEREAS, Absenteeism in the elementary grades is
6 particularly severe in African-American communities on the
7 south and west sides of Chicago, which are marked by gang
8 violence, unemployment, and poverty; and

9 WHEREAS, More than 20% of black elementary school students
10 missed at least 4 weeks of school in the 2010-2011 school year,
11 compared to 7% of whites and 8% of Hispanics; and

12 WHEREAS, Forty-two percent of kindergarten through 8th
13 grade students with a disability or impairment missed 4 weeks
14 of classes in the same school year, compared to 12% of students
15 without a disability; and

16 WHEREAS, Nineteen percent of kindergarteners were
17 officially listed as chronic truants because they accumulated 9
18 or more days of unexcused absences; therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
20 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE

1 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that there is created the Truancy in
2 Chicago Public Schools Task Force, consisting of all of the
3 following members:

4 (1) The Governor or his or her designee;

5 (2) 1 member of the General Assembly, appointed by the
6 President of the Senate;

7 (3) 1 member of the General Assembly, appointed by the
8 Minority Leader of the Senate;

9 (4) 1 member of the General Assembly, appointed by the
10 Speaker of the House of Representatives;

11 (5) 1 member of the General Assembly, appointed by the
12 Minority Leader of the House of Representatives;

13 (6) 1 representative from the Department of Children
14 and Family Services, appointed by the Director of Children
15 and Family Services;

16 (7) 1 representative from the State Board of Education,
17 appointed by the Chairperson of the State Board of
18 Education;

19 (8) 1 representative from the Board of Higher
20 Education, appointed by the Chairperson of the Board of
21 Higher Education;

22 (9) 1 representative from the Department of Human
23 Services, appointed by the Secretary of Human Services;

24 (10) 1 representative from the Department of
25 Corrections, appointed by the Director of Corrections;

26 (11) 1 representative from the Department of Juvenile

1 Justice, appointed by the Director of Juvenile Justice;

2 (12) 1 representative from the Chicago Police
3 Department, appointed by the Superintendent of Police;

4 (13) the Mayor of the City of Chicago or his or her
5 designee;

6 (14) the Chief Executive Officer of City of Chicago
7 School District 299 or his or her designee;

8 (15) 1 representative from an authority on housing in
9 the City of Chicago, appointed by the head of that
10 authority;

11 (16) 1 representative from a professional teachers'
12 organization representing teachers in City of Chicago
13 School District 299, appointed by the head of that
14 organization;

15 (17) 1 representative from an organization that
16 provides the tools for each individual to overcome the root
17 causes of homelessness through a holistic, scalable model,
18 appointed by the head of that organization;

19 (18) 1 representative from a private, not-for-profit
20 organization whose mission is to stimulate and encourage
21 the growth of the area's economy and its ability to provide
22 for its people, appointed by the head of that organization;

23 (19) 1 representative from the Office of the Secretary
24 of State, appointed by the Secretary of State;

25 (20) 1 representative from an organization in the City
26 of Chicago dealing with children's disabilities,

1 impairments, and social emotional issues, appointed by the
2 head of that organization;

3 (21) 1 representative from a coalition for the homeless
4 in the City of Chicago, appointed by the head of that
5 organization;

6 (22) 1 representative from the Office of the Cook
7 County Sheriff, appointed by the Cook County Sheriff;

8 (23) 4 chiefs of City of Chicago School District 299
9 from different areas of the city, appointed by the Chief
10 Executive Office of City of Chicago School District 299;

11 (24) 4 public members, including a representative of a
12 community-based organization serving school-age children,
13 appointed by the Governor, and 3 public members
14 representing the interests of child welfare advocates,
15 education personnel, community-based organizations,
16 faith-based institutions, criminal justice advocates,
17 parents and guardians, and students (regardless of their
18 ability, disability, advanced ability, or twice
19 exceptionality), appointed by the Governor;

20 (25) 1 member from an organization representing
21 charter schools, appointed by the head of that
22 organization; and

23 (26) 1 representative of each public university in this
24 State, appointed by the president of each of those
25 universities; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the task force shall meet initially at the
2 call of the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the
3 President of the Senate and that members of the task force
4 shall select a chairperson at the initial meeting and shall
5 thereafter meet at the call of the chairperson; and be it
6 further

7 RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education shall provide
8 staff and administrative support to the Task Force; and be it
9 further

10 RESOLVED, That the members of the Task Force shall be
11 reimbursed for their travel expenses from appropriations to the
12 State Board of Education available for that purpose and subject
13 to the rules of the appropriate travel control board; and be it
14 further

15 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall examine issues and make
16 recommendations related to current State Board of Education and
17 City of Chicago School District 299 policies regarding truancy
18 and excessive absences; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall identify different
20 strategies and approaches to help educators and the City of
21 Chicago School District 299 administration address the truancy
22 and excessive absences epidemic in the City of Chicago, promote

1 ongoing professional development to equip school personnel
2 with the skills and knowledge necessary to reduce contributing
3 factors to truancy and excessive absences, and support
4 community-based organizations and parents in their ongoing
5 efforts to encourage youths to adopt and practice positive
6 social behaviors that will allow them to be successful in
7 school and in their communities; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall hold public hearings in
9 the City of Chicago and shall report its findings to the
10 General Assembly on or before December 31, 2013; and be it
11 further

12 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
13 delivered to the Governor, the Director of Children and Family
14 Services, the Chairperson of the State Board of Education, the
15 Chairperson of the Board of Higher Education, the Secretary of
16 Human Services, the Director of Corrections, the Director of
17 Juvenile Justice, the Superintendent of the Chicago Police
18 Department, the Mayor of the City of Chicago, the Chief
19 Executive Officer of City of Chicago School District 299, the
20 Secretary of State, the Cook County Sheriff, and the president
21 of each public university in this State.