



HJ0016

LRB104 12413 MST 22695 r

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois is often regarded as having
3 two distinct regions, the urban Cook County area and downstate
4 Illinois; and

5 WHEREAS, Even communities north of Chicago are considered
6 "downstate" because their needs, interests, economies, and
7 cultures have more in common with rural southern and central
8 Illinois counties than they do with urban Cook County; and

9 WHEREAS, The majority of residents in downstate Illinois
10 disagree with urban Cook County on key policy issues; for
11 example, 61 downstate Illinois counties, from the Wisconsin
12 state line to the Kentucky state line, have approved
13 resolutions to become sanctuary counties for gun owners, while
14 the City of Chicago has some of the strictest gun laws in the
15 country, and 100 of Illinois' 102 state's attorneys opposed
16 the 2021 SAFE-T Act; and

17 WHEREAS, The divide between urban Cook County and the rest
18 of Illinois is frequently manifested in electoral results,
19 such as the 2010 gubernatorial election in which the winning
20 candidate carried only four out of 102 counties and, in fact,
21 did not need to carry any other counties to win because of the
22 margin of victory in urban Cook County; and

1 WHEREAS, The U.S. Supreme Court ruling Reynolds v. Sims
2 (1964) removed any geographic element from districting for the
3 state senate, and as Illinois' U.S. Senator Everett Dirksen
4 warned, this caused power to be concentrated in Chicago and
5 resulted in rural areas losing their voice in State
6 government; and

7 WHEREAS, Article IV Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution
8 guarantees a republican form of government, meaning government
9 of the people, by the people, and for the people, but the
10 people of rural, small town and suburban downstate Illinois do
11 not experience this and instead experience a grossly
12 disproportionate lack of power; and

13 WHEREAS, This concentration of power in Illinois' largest
14 urban area opened the door to extreme gerrymandering and
15 further decreased the voice of downstate Illinoisans, and
16 gerrymandering has enabled one county, with 40% of the state's
17 population, to dominate the other 60%; and

18 WHEREAS, Article IV, Section 3(a) of the Illinois
19 Constitution requires districts to be compact, but both state
20 and federal districts have shapes resembling snakes,
21 dinosaurs, gloves, jaws, and a lightning bolt, earning these
22 maps a grade of "F" from the Princeton Gerrymandering Project

1 with The Economist called one Chicago area district one of the
2 most strangely drawn and gerrymandered congressional districts
3 in the country; and

4 WHEREAS, Article I, Section 1 of the Illinois Constitution
5 Bill of Rights declares that all men are by nature free and
6 independent and have certain inherent and inalienable rights
7 among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;
8 to secure these rights and the protection of property,
9 governments are instituted among men; and

10 WHEREAS, The Declaration of Independence says that
11 government derives its just powers from the consent of the
12 governed; and

13 WHEREAS, The General Assembly is dominated by one county,
14 and the people of downstate Illinois have experienced
15 legislation, taxation, and regulation without representation,
16 and without representative government, there is no consent of
17 the governed; and

18 WHEREAS, The lack of representative government has
19 decreased accountability, allowed corruption to flourish, and
20 has led to Illinois being rated the third most corrupt state
21 and Chicago the most corrupt city in the nation; and

1 WHEREAS, This lack of accountability has led to Illinois
2 ranking among the worst of the states in financial health and
3 debt, having the worst credit rating and ranking 50th in
4 fiscal stability, while giving the people of Illinois one of
5 the greatest collective state and local tax burdens of the 50
6 states; and

7 WHEREAS, Amendment XIV of the U.S. Constitution guarantees
8 equal protection under the law; and

9 WHEREAS, The City of Chicago is frequently treated as a
10 separate region of the state and has often been exempted from
11 major legislative initiatives the General Assembly enacts into
12 law because of this fact; and

13 WHEREAS, Laws are passed that are in the best interests of
14 urban Cook County but not rural, small town, and suburban
15 downstate Illinois; for example, the \$15 minimum wage signed
16 into law in 2019, and the gas tax was doubled in 2019, making
17 it one of the highest in the country, and disproportionately
18 impacting downstate residents; and

19 WHEREAS, The divide between rural, small town, and
20 suburban Illinois and the City of Chicago spans the 200-year
21 history of the state, and there have been several attempts in
22 the past to split Illinois into two states; and

1 WHEREAS, The City of Chicago passed a resolution in 1925
2 to form the State of Chicago; and

3 WHEREAS, In 1971, west central Illinoisans declared their
4 region the Republic of Forgottonia; and

5 WHEREAS, In 1981, Democrat State Senator Howard Carroll of
6 Chicago filed a Cook County state split bill, which passed in
7 the state senate; and

8 WHEREAS, Organizations such as New Illinois, Illinois
9 Separation, and The State of Southern Illinois continue
10 pushing for the formation of a new state truly representing
11 the rural, small town, and suburban residents of Illinois; and

12 WHEREAS, From 2020 to 2024, an advisory referendum for the
13 creation of a new state appeared on the ballots in 33 counties
14 and in each county won by a substantial margin, averaging a
15 landslide of 74%; and

16 WHEREAS, Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution of the
17 United States provides in part: New States may be admitted by
18 Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or
19 erected within the Jurisdiction of any other state; nor any
20 State be formed by the Junction of two or more States, or Parts

1 of States, without the consent of the Legislatures of the
2 States concerned as well as of the Congress, and that five
3 states in the Union have been formed by separating from other
4 states, most recently West Virginia; therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
6 HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
7 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we urge the United States
8 Congress to take action to declare the 101 counties of
9 downstate Illinois, along with outlying areas of Cook County
10 wishing to be included, the 51st state of the United States of
11 America and separate it from the rest of Illinois; and be it
12 further

13 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
14 delivered to all Illinois Constitutional Officers, the Speaker
15 and Minority Leader of the Illinois House of Representatives,
16 and the President and Minority Leader of the Illinois Senate.