



HR0218

LRB104 12532 MST 22961 r

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Each year, thousands of students in Illinois
3 receive tickets during school hours for conduct that violates
4 local laws; and

5 WHEREAS, Tickets are often issued for school infractions
6 that have historically been addressed by school
7 administrators, such as littering, smoking/vaping, using
8 offensive words or gestures, or getting into a hallway
9 scuffle; and

10 WHEREAS, Ticketing students in schools violates the intent
11 of Illinois Public Act 099-0456, enacted in 2016, which
12 prohibits schools from fining students as a form of discipline
13 except for restitution for lost, stolen, or damaged property;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Public Act 099-0456 also seeks to address the
16 causes and consequences of the school-to-prison pipeline by
17 legislating disciplinary guidelines for public and charter
18 schools; and

19 WHEREAS, Schools are barred from issuing fines directly;
20 school officials refer students to police who serve as school
21 resource officers who write the tickets; and

1 WHEREAS, The practice of ticketing students in schools
2 made the news in April 2022 with the release of the three-year
3 investigation by the Chicago Tribune and ProPublica, The Price
4 Kids Pay; and

5 WHEREAS, Black students in Illinois are two times more
6 likely than their white peers to receive a ticket issued by
7 school resource officers; and

8 WHEREAS, In 2019, Amara Harris, then a junior at
9 Naperville North High School in Naperville Community Unit
10 School District 203, was accused of stealing another student's
11 AirPods at Naperville North High School; and

12 WHEREAS, Amara Harris insisted that the incident was a
13 mix-up, not a theft, and after considering all information and
14 evidence, Naperville North administrators did not take
15 disciplinary action; and

16 WHEREAS, Still, the City of Naperville school resource
17 officer wrote Amara Harris a ticket for violating a municipal
18 ordinance for theft; and

19 WHEREAS, Paying the \$100 ticket would have made the matter
20 go away, however, Amara Harris would not admit to something

1 she did not do; and

2 WHEREAS, Amara Harris's concerns were that paying the fine
3 and admitting to theft would blemish her reputation and
4 accomplishments, which included being on the honor roll,
5 cheerleading, being on the step team, serving as an aide in the
6 classroom and for the school deans, and graduating from high
7 school early; and

8 WHEREAS, For three and a half years, Amara Harris attended
9 court hearings to prove her innocence, postponing plans to
10 attend on-campus classes at Spelman College in Atlanta,
11 Georgia, where she was accepted to begin in the fall of 2020;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, Amara Harris's journey brought attention to the
14 issue of ticketing Black students, highlighting the ongoing
15 disparities for school administrators, city officials, and
16 State legislators to address; and

17 WHEREAS, Amara Harris has not only displayed great
18 leadership skills to her peers and community, but she has
19 displayed unfaltering courage in the face of adversity; and

20 WHEREAS, In an unusual civil trial, a jury of her peers
21 found Amara Harris not liable of theft on August 10, 2023, and

1 the \$100 fine was dismissed; and

2 WHEREAS, Despite Amara Harris's legal challenges, she
3 graduated from Spelman College with a Bachelor of Arts in
4 International Studies in May 2024; and

5 WHEREAS, Amara Harris's case demonstrates the need for a
6 change in Illinois law to end the practice of ticketing
7 students; therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
9 HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
10 we recognize Amara Harris for her courage and perseverance to
11 defend truth and fight for justice; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
13 presented to Amara Harris as a symbol of our respect and
14 esteem.