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HOUSE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Direct support professionals are the primary providers of publicly-funded long-term support and services for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, The Congressional Budget Office has found that the demand for direct support professionals will grow rapidly in the coming decade; and

WHEREAS, In recent years, community-based providers serving children and adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities have expressed growing concerns about the inability to recruit and retain direct support professionals despite increasing demand for services; and

WHEREAS, Governor Bruce Rauner, through a proclamation issued on August 24, 2016, acknowledged that there is a documented critical and growing shortage of direct support professionals throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, The United States Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is the principal federal agency for measuring labor market activity, working conditions, and price changes in the economy; and

1 WHEREAS, Policymakers at the federal and State levels make
2 frequent use of BLS data and analytics to identify trends in
3 employment, productivity, price indexes, and compensation; and

4 WHEREAS, The BLS recently looked at the data it collects
5 for wages, total compensation, and job openings for two direct
6 care occupations: home health aides and personal care aides;
7 this look was organized to better understand wages, total
8 compensation, and job openings for these direct care positions
9 as posited against eight alternative occupations with similar
10 educational level requirements and short-term training
11 requirements; and

12 WHEREAS, While there is a standard occupational
13 classification for both home health aides and personal care
14 aides, there is not separate standard occupational
15 classification for direct support professionals; and

16 WHEREAS, As there is overlap with respect to educational
17 and training requirements among home health aides, personal
18 care aides, and direct support professionals, there are clear
19 differences in occupation responsibilities, modalities of
20 employment, and populations served and supported; and

21 WHEREAS, Factoring direct support professionals in with

1 home health aides and personal care aides does not provide
2 policymakers at both the federal and State levels with accurate
3 data on the key indicators for direct support professionals of
4 wages, total compensation, job openings, and turnover; and

5 WHEREAS, In August of 2016, a United States Government
6 Accountability Office Report on the Long-Term Care Workforce to
7 the Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Health Care, Benefits, and
8 Administrative Rules, Committee on Government Oversight and
9 Government Reform indicated there are gaps in existing federal
10 data that make it difficult to know what the current workforce
11 numbers are and to predict future trends regarding supply and
12 demand; and

13 WHEREAS, In the report, it was specifically noted that
14 "According to BLS officials, due to the National Compensation
15 Survey's small sample size, benefits data are limited to direct
16 care workers in all industries and cannot be broken down by
17 occupation or specific industry"; and

18 WHEREAS, In the same report, it was noted that "Unless the
19 Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA) takes
20 actions to overcome data limitations in order to make
21 projections of supply and demand, the ability of policymakers
22 and other stakeholders to develop appropriate workforce
23 strategies to ensure a sufficient number of qualified direct

1 care workers will continue to be hampered"; and

2 WHEREAS, The need to capture accurate data at the federal
3 level to ensure government has the information it needs to
4 build the direct support professional workforce is at its
5 highest need; and

6 WHEREAS, By designating the Direct Support Professional as
7 its own standard occupational classification, the BLS will be
8 in a position to capture much more precise and accurate data
9 specific to the profession; this in turn will assist federal
10 and State policymakers to inform the public of the current
11 status of the workforce, impact policymaking on direct support
12 professional issues, which will include potential changes by
13 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and other
14 federal agencies as they recognize the need for focus on this
15 workforce, and potentially impact federal resources legislated
16 by the United States Congress for direct support professional
17 initiatives, and potentially increasing the amount of people
18 employed in the State; therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
20 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
21 urge the United States Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor
22 Statistics to designate the Direct Support Professional as its
23 own standard occupational classification so that more accurate

1 and precise data on this workforce can be captured and analyzed
2 on an ongoing basis; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
4 delivered to the Secretary of the United States Department of
5 Labor.