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LRB102 24532 MST 33766 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, Out of School Time (OST) programs are a critical  
3 service for youth, families, and communities throughout  
4 Illinois; this was evident during 2020, the first year of the  
5 pandemic, when OST programs offered emergency services for  
6 children of frontline workers, provided tens of thousands of  
7 meals for children and their families, supported youths'  
8 social and emotional needs, and served as virtual learning  
9 sites in partnership with schools; these programs were often  
10 the safest place, both physically and emotionally, for  
11 numerous school age youth to spend their day; and

12           WHEREAS, Each year, regardless of a pandemic, Out of  
13 School Time programs benefit communities throughout Illinois  
14 by:

15           (1) Being a critical part in violence prevention in  
16 communities by actively engaging youth in supportive  
17 environments; afterschool programs also provide a safe  
18 haven and help dissuade youth from engaging in risky  
19 behaviors on and offline; studies have found that  
20 participants in afterschool programs are 30% less likely  
21 to participate in criminal activities;

22           (2) Supporting their participants social and emotional  
23 learning (SEL), as well as fostering character  
24 development; according to the Afterschool Alliance,

1 "Afterschool and summer learning programs are a unique  
2 setting where youth can connect to positive adult mentors,  
3 feel safe to try new things, and have the opportunity to  
4 acquire new skills and develop mastery in an area.";  
5 compared to control students, students participating in  
6 SEL programs showed significantly more positive outcomes  
7 with respect to enhanced SEL skills, attitudes, positive  
8 social behavior, and academic performance and  
9 significantly lower levels of conduct problems and  
10 emotional distress;

11 (3) Partnering in education with schools; OST programs  
12 offer educational support during the school year and  
13 lessen learning loss during the summer; regarding the  
14 COVID pandemic, OST programs are critical to learning  
15 recovery; studies show that afterschool programs are  
16 sparking students' interest in school, leading to better  
17 school attendance, grades, standardized test scores, and  
18 behavior; OST programs also support academic outcomes by  
19 providing STEM activities, mentoring programs, career  
20 exploration, arts enrichment, and physical activity;

21 (4) Allowing parents, guardians, or caregivers to go  
22 to work or attend school knowing their children are safe  
23 and receiving quality programming, with 82% of parents  
24 agreeing that their afterschool program provides peace of  
25 mind and helps them keep their job; working families and  
26 businesses also benefit from afterschool programs that

1 ensure that youth have a safe place to go while parents or  
2 guardians are at work; parents and guardians who do not  
3 have access to childcare miss an average of eight days of  
4 work per year, and this decreased worker productivity  
5 costs businesses up to \$300 billion annually; and

6 (5) Ensuring nutrition for youth through healthy after  
7 school snacks and, in many cases, evening meals; 96% of  
8 afterschool programs in Illinois offer at least a snack in  
9 their programs, while a quarter offer either breakfast,  
10 lunch, or dinner; many OST programs are USDA meal sites  
11 with over 28,056,694 meals and snacks being served to  
12 Illinois youth in these programs from October 1, 2020 to  
13 September 30, 2021; and be it further

14 WHEREAS, The need for more Out of School Time programs is  
15 great in Illinois, with four children waiting to access an  
16 afterschool program for every one child currently enrolled;  
17 additionally, nearly 430,000 youth who are not enrolled in a  
18 summer program say they would be if one was available to them;  
19 not only will Out of School Time programs cause a noticeable  
20 change in areas of need in our State, but they will also save  
21 money in the long-term; by increasing kids' earning potential,  
22 improving academic achievement, and reducing juvenile crime  
23 and delinquency, afterschool/OST programs save up to \$9 for  
24 every \$1 invested; therefore, be it

1           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
2 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
3 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we support Out of School Time  
4 programs in Illinois and recognize that they serve as a key  
5 component to supporting violence prevention, academic  
6 achievement, social/emotional well-being, nutritional needs,  
7 and a strong workforce, and we further recognize these  
8 programs' importance in a continuum of care for youth from  
9 birth to adulthood.