



1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, According to a recent study by the Center for
3 Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University, there are
4 174,168 Illinois youth ages 16 to 24 years old and 98,908 youth
5 ages 16 to 21 years old who are high school dropouts; and

6 WHEREAS, This study outlines that in Illinois, of the
7 174,168 youth who are high school dropouts, 50,877 are White,
8 74,645 are Hispanic, 42,294 are Black, and 6,352 are listed as
9 other; and

10 WHEREAS, The vast majority of Chicago area and downstate
11 Illinois high school dropouts come from lower income areas; and

12 WHEREAS, Illinois employers are experiencing a shortage of
13 skilled workers, and high school dropouts could provide the
14 needed addition to the workforce needs of the Illinois economy
15 and Illinois businesses; and

16 WHEREAS, Eighty percent of prison inmates are high school
17 dropouts and, as such, can pose a problem in terms of crime and
18 public safety to the general public in their communities and
19 neighborhoods; and

20 WHEREAS, High school dropouts earn \$516,000 less over their
21 lifetimes than people who have a high school diploma and some
22 college education; and

23 WHEREAS, The benefit to Illinois taxpayers is \$340,000 over
24 the lifetime of a high school dropout who returns to school and
25 earns a high school diploma in terms of that person paying more
26 taxes on his or her increased earnings, as well as the reduced
27 social costs in terms of his or her utilizing welfare services,
28 mental health services, and other dependency services and being
29 less likely to enter prison or incur other related costs to

1 crime; and

2 WHEREAS, There is significant research and program
3 experience to draw on and use to develop successful programs to
4 re-enroll, teach, and graduate dropouts from high schools;
5 therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
7 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
8 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that there is created the Task Force
9 on Dropouts to examine and develop ways to address the issue of
10 youth who have dropped out of school; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the purpose of the Task Force is to examine
12 policies, programs, and other issues related to developing a
13 variety of successful approaches using best program practices
14 to re-enroll, teach, and graduate high school dropouts and, in
15 doing so, improve community safety and the Illinois economy;
16 and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall be composed of the
18 following members: 4 legislators, one of whom shall be
19 appointed by the President of the Senate, one of whom shall be
20 appointed by the Speaker of the House, one of whom shall be
21 appointed by the House Minority Leader, and one of whom shall
22 be appointed by the Senate Minority Leader; one representative
23 of the State Board of Education appointed by the State
24 Superintendent of Education; one representative of the
25 Department of Human Services appointed by the Secretary of
26 Human Services; one representative of the Department of
27 Children and Family Services appointed by the Director of
28 Children and Family Services; one representative of the
29 Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity appointed by
30 the Director of Commerce and Economic Opportunity; one
31 representative of the Illinois Community College Board
32 appointed by the Chairperson of the Illinois Community College

1 Board; 2 representatives from the public appointed by the
2 Governor, with one of these public representatives serving as
3 chairperson of the Task Force; and 2 additional representatives
4 from the public, one of whom shall be appointed by State
5 Democratic Party leadership and one of whom shall be appointed
6 by State Republican Party leadership; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the duties of the Task Force shall include
8 conducting a series of public hearings throughout the State to
9 discuss the impact of high school dropouts on various regions
10 of the State, completing a review of dropout data that allows
11 for a comparison of Illinois rates both nationally and with
12 other states in the region, and producing a final report with
13 recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on
14 ways and means to address the challenge of re-enrolling
15 students who have dropped out of school; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall report its findings to
17 the Governor and the General Assembly no later than January 10,
18 2006; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That upon filing this report, the Task Force is
20 dissolved.