



1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The reform of the Chicago public school system in
3 1995 granted the mayor of the City of Chicago and the board of
4 education a great deal of flexibility in the management of City
5 of Chicago School District 299 (CPS); and

6 WHEREAS, CPS still receives a quarter of the State's annual
7 appropriations for elementary and secondary education; and

8 WHEREAS, CPS received approximately \$1.6 billion in fiscal
9 year 2006 in State funding, representing an increase of more
10 than \$90 million; and

11 WHEREAS, Despite the increase in State funding, the Chicago
12 Board of Education approved a budget of approximately \$5
13 billion, down \$2.4 million from fiscal year 2005; and

14 WHEREAS, The fiscal year 2006 budget for CPS calls for a
15 1.9% property tax hike (the maximum increase allowed under
16 State law) and also calls for the school district to dip into
17 its cash reserves for the second time in 3 years; and

18 WHEREAS, CPS's budget has been criticized by taxpayer
19 watchdog groups as lacking in transparency, with operating
20 costs continuing to skyrocket despite reduced staffing and
21 enrollment; and

22 WHEREAS, Following the adoption of the budget by the
23 Chicago Board of Education, local taxpayer watchdog groups
24 issued a letter to the State Board of Education demanding a
25 State audit of the school district's use of consultants, which
26 the Chicago Board of Education has increased by \$70 million for
27 fiscal year 2006; and

28 WHEREAS, Further concerns have been raised over community

1 input into the decisions on which schools should be shuttered
2 and which proposed schools should serve as replacements under
3 Chicago's Renaissance 2010 plan that calls for the closure of
4 60 of the lowest performing schools in order to open 100 new
5 charter, contract, or performance schools over the next 5
6 years; and

7 WHEREAS, CPS received \$11 million in new funding in fiscal
8 year 2006 for early childhood education programs, which the
9 Chicago Board of Education has decided to use as grants to
10 private day care centers to boost salaries, hire certified
11 teachers, buy supplies, and train staff on educational
12 techniques rather than expand preschool programs to reduce the
13 current waiting list; and

14 WHEREAS, CPS continues to face a major budget deficit of
15 \$328 million in fiscal year 2007; and

16 WHEREAS, In an effort to reduce that deficit, CPS has
17 proposed cutting teaching positions, asking for another
18 property tax hike, and, even more significantly, asking the
19 General Assembly for a waiver so that CPS may forgo its \$70
20 million pension obligation to the Public School Teachers'
21 Pension and Retirement Fund of Chicago, a payment that will
22 only continue to grow in outlying fiscal years; therefore, be
23 it

24 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
25 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
26 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we direct the Auditor General to
27 immediately conduct a management, performance, and financial
28 audit of the Chicago Board of Education to determine the
29 efficiency with which both State and local funds provided to
30 CPS are handled; and be it further

31 RESOLVED, That we urge full cooperation by Mayor Richard M.

1 Daley and the Chicago Board of Education during the course of
2 the Auditor General's investigation; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the Auditor General, in his audit reports,
4 advise the General Assembly as to any areas of inefficiency and
5 mismanagement and the extent to which these would result in
6 cost savings to the school district and the State should they
7 be corrected; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That the Auditor General, in his reports, should
9 advise the General Assembly and the Chicago Board of Education
10 on how to create more transparency in the school district's
11 budget and improve the overall accounting, reporting, and
12 budgeting systems of the school district; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the Auditor General's audit reports
14 concerning the Chicago Board of Education and CPS be submitted
15 to the General Assembly and the Governor; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
17 delivered to the Auditor General, the Legislative Audit
18 Commission, the Chicago Board of Education, Mayor Richard M.
19 Daley, and the State Board of Education.