



HJ0100

LRB095 19077 NHT 45269 r

1

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2

WHEREAS, Several recent economic and academic studies have demonstrated a growing skills gap among workers in the nation; and

3

4

5

WHEREAS, These studies have demonstrated that the greatest disparity in skills exists among the nation's traditionally underrepresented minority populations, specifically African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans; and

6

7

8

9

WHEREAS, A logical and efficient manner of addressing this skill gap is through the provision of post-secondary education; and

10

11

12

WHEREAS, Illinois needs to improve college access for all of its citizens in order to address the skill gap, provide a cadre of more qualified and competent workers for Illinois businesses, and improve the State economy; and

13

14

15

16

WHEREAS, Traditionally underrepresented populations, specifically African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans, make up an increasingly higher percentage of the State's population, and thus will be called upon to make up an increasingly higher percentage of the State's workforce; and

17

18

19

20

1           WHEREAS, Traditionally underrepresented populations,  
2 specifically African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans,  
3 make up a disproportionately lower percentage of those students  
4 attending colleges and universities in Illinois as compared to  
5 their overall Illinois population; and

6           WHEREAS, It has been demonstrated that traditionally  
7 underrepresented student populations are more successful in  
8 their degree attainment when they are taught and supported by  
9 faculty and staff that includes those of similar ethnic and  
10 cultural backgrounds; and

11           WHEREAS, Traditionally underrepresented populations,  
12 specifically African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans,  
13 make up a disproportionately lower percentage of the faculty  
14 and staff at colleges and universities in Illinois as compared  
15 to their overall Illinois population; therefore, be it

16           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
17 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
18 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that a bi-partisan task force on the  
19 status of underrepresented minorities in higher education is  
20 commissioned to evaluate the status of traditionally  
21 underrepresented populations, specifically African Americans,  
22 Latinos, and Native Americans, in this State's public and  
23 private institutions of higher education; and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That membership on this task force include 2  
2   Republican and 2 Democrat members of the House of  
3   Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House; 2  
4   Republican and 2 Democrat members of the Senate, appointed by  
5   the President of the Senate; the Chairperson, or his or her  
6   designee, of the State Board of Education, the Executive  
7   Director, or his or her designee, of the Board of Higher  
8   Education, and the Executive Director, or his or her designee,  
9   of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission; and the head, or  
10   his or her designee, of a group representing independent  
11   Illinois colleges and universities, the head, or his or her  
12   designee, of a group representing black concerns in higher  
13   education in Illinois, the head, or his or her designee, of a  
14   group representing Latinos and higher education in Illinois,  
15   and the head, or his or her designee, of a group representing  
16   the interests of community colleges in Illinois, each appointed  
17   jointly by the Speaker of the House and President of the  
18   Senate; and be it further

19           RESOLVED, That this task force assess accessibility of  
20   institutions of higher education in Illinois for those in the  
21   above-stated Illinois populations who want to enroll as  
22   students; and be it further

23           RESOLVED, That the task force assess the representation of

1 these populations in all job categories, including faculty,  
2 staff, and civil service, at institutions of higher education  
3 in Illinois; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the task force assess issues of campus  
5 climate that might affect the success of students and the  
6 retention of faculty and staff at institutions of higher  
7 education in Illinois; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That the task force pay particular attention  
9 during its assessment of those college and university programs  
10 that target areas of the most drastic skills disparity, as  
11 identified by previously published economic and academic  
12 studies; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That in order to make these assessments, the task  
14 force shall receive assistance from the Board of Higher  
15 Education and shall hold a series of regional public hearings  
16 on college and university campuses across the State; and be it  
17 further

18 RESOLVED, That this task force shall file a report with the  
19 General Assembly, the Office of the Governor, the State Board  
20 of Education, and the Board of Higher Education upon completion  
21 of its assessments, and that this report shall include any  
22 findings and recommendations for further legislative action

1 that are generated as a result of the task force's work; and be  
2 it further

3 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
4 delivered to the the Chairperson of the State Board of  
5 Education, the Executive Director of the Board of Higher  
6 Education, and the Executive Director of the Illinois Student  
7 Assistance Commission.