



HR0343

LRB096 12599 RLJ 25960 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, During the last several decades, women have made tremendous progress in Illinois and the United States toward gaining economic and social equality; and

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WHEREAS, Women enjoy several safeguards against discrimination, a high level of economic security, and substantial protections against violence and exploitation; and

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WHEREAS, Despite this significant progress, the State must continue to ensure that women enjoy opportunities for equality, health care, safety, economic security, and career development; and

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WHEREAS, Women continue to earn less wages than men; women are less likely to own a business and more likely to live in poverty than men; gender based economic disparities abound regionally in Illinois, and, even more profoundly, race and ethnicity continue to shape women's economic opportunities; and

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WHEREAS, Women constitute a growing segment in our nation's economy; businesses owned and managed primarily by women contribute approximately \$2.46 billion to the nation's economy and employ more than 19 million Americans; and

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1 WHEREAS, In 2006, the last year of available data, Illinois
2 women-owned businesses numbered 285,000, representing 29.7
3 percent of the State's businesses; and

4 WHEREAS, Educational achievement is foundational to
5 economic opportunity for women and provides women with access
6 to good-paying and technology based jobs in Illinois; and

7 WHEREAS, The State needs to (1) be proactive in educating
8 the next generation of women in the fields of science,
9 technology, engineering, and mathematics, (2) create
10 incentives for all Illinois citizens to obtain a postsecondary
11 education, and (3) increase workforce development
12 opportunities, particularly for women who are underrepresented
13 in the higher education population; and

14 WHEREAS, Women's health issues need to be prioritized to
15 help prevent, diagnose, and treat illnesses commonly suffered
16 by women including heart disease, ovarian cancer, cervical
17 cancer, breast cancer, arthritis, osteoporosis, diabetes, and
18 chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; and

19 WHEREAS, Nationwide heart disease is the number one cause
20 of fatality in women; one in five females has some form of
21 heart or blood vessel disease; approximately 42,540 Illinois

1 citizens, about half of whom are women, will die of
2 cardiovascular disease; and 38 percent of women die within a
3 year after having a heart attack, as compared to 25 percent of
4 men; and

5 WHEREAS, Illinois is at the forefront of preventative
6 health care for women, but gender specific research and
7 technological efforts should be escalated to make certain our
8 progress continues; and

9 WHEREAS, In 2004, the Governor's Commission of the Status
10 of Women, created by an Executive Order in 1999, was abolished
11 in favor of the creation of the Governor's Office of Women's
12 Affairs; and

13 WHEREAS, The Office of Women's Affairs has been effective
14 in disseminating information on State agency programs,
15 advocating for legislation affecting women and their families,
16 and serving as an information center on government services,
17 private services, and resources available to women; however, a
18 strategic planning process should be set up in the State on
19 behalf of women and their families; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
21 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
22 urge Governor Pat Quinn to establish and appoint members to a

1 Commission on the Status of Women in order to continue progress
2 on issues impacting women in the State of Illinois; and be it
3 further

4 RESOLVED, That the Governor urge the Commission to focus
5 its efforts on helping women attain economic independence,
6 lifelong equality, health care, safety, and career development
7 opportunities; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
9 presented to the Governor of the State of Illinois.