



HR0613

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives desire all residents to continue their
4 education and skill development beyond high school, and are
5 especially concerned with the low number of minorities and
6 first-generation students pursuing and achieving additional
7 degrees and certificates; and

8 WHEREAS, In 1967, minority enrollment at Northern Illinois
9 University accounted for only 3 percent of the total
10 enrollment, with minority faculty and staff members comprising
11 an even smaller percentage; these numbers, despite NIU's
12 proximity to Chicago, were not an accurate representation of
13 the diversity of the region; and

14 WHEREAS, Rhoten Smith, who was President of the university
15 at the time, understood that higher education is a vital
16 component of success, especially for those who struggle to
17 break racial, economic, and social barriers; he recognized that
18 public universities have a responsibility to make higher
19 education available to students of all backgrounds, and that a
20 failure to do so, "is to bar the door to a hopeful future in the
21 very faces of those of our citizens who have least to hope for
22 from life"; and

1 WHEREAS, In an effort to attract a more racially and
2 ethnically diverse faculty, staff, and student representation
3 to Northern Illinois University, President Smith hired William
4 Brooks and McKinley Davis to develop and implement aggressive
5 plans for recruitment, employment, and enrollment; and

6 WHEREAS, McKinley "Deacon" Davis of Freeport, Illinois,
7 was an All-State basketball player and member of the Harlem
8 Globetrotters who studied the condition of American high
9 schools while traveling the country performing with the
10 Globetrotters; and

11 WHEREAS, McKinley Davis, as Northern Illinois University's
12 director of Special Programs, developed a procedure for
13 reviewing applications from students who did not meet the
14 university's customary admission policies and selecting
15 certain ones for interviews, support and guidance, which he
16 called giving them a CHANCE - Counseling Help Assistance
17 Necessary College Education; he served as CHANCE director until
18 1978; and

19 WHEREAS, McKinley Davis passed away in 2003, and in January
20 of 2004, Northern Illinois University President John Peters
21 re-dedicated the CHANCE program as "The McKinley 'Deacon' Davis
22 CHANCE Program"; and

1 WHEREAS, The guiding mission of the CHANCE program is to
2 identify, recruit, admit, and assist otherwise capable
3 students whose pre-college education has not fully enabled them
4 to take maximum advantage of their potential and the
5 opportunities of higher education at Northern Illinois
6 University; and

7 WHEREAS, CHANCE students are provided academic, personal
8 and career counseling; tutorial assistance for courses;
9 academic skills-enhancement courses; academic monitoring
10 throughout the student's undergraduate career; financial aid
11 counseling, peer mentoring; and skills-building for transition
12 to the university experience; and

13 WHEREAS, The program began with 50 students and has grown
14 to now admit nearly 500 students per year; it has made an
15 impact on more than 15,000 students over the past 45 years; and

16 WHEREAS, Through a number of programs and concerted
17 efforts, including CHANCE, Northern Illinois University has
18 increased its enrollment of minorities to now total 37% of its
19 student body, and has increased its employment of minorities to
20 19% of its faculty and staff; and

21 WHEREAS, CHANCE has received support from State
22 legislators, is well-known throughout Illinois, and holds a

1 national reputation for its achievements, which have served as
2 a model for other states and universities; and

3 WHEREAS, Moving forward, CHANCE is looking to expand the
4 number of science, technology, engineering and math majors at
5 Northern Illinois University; therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
7 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
8 we congratulate Northern Illinois University's CHANCE program
9 on its 45th anniversary; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
11 presented to the CHANCE program and its current Director,
12 Denise Hayman, as a symbol of our respect and encouragement for
13 all higher education institutions to expand hiring and
14 educational efforts for minorities and first-generation
15 students.