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LRB099 15912 GRL 40228 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, 2014 marked the 60th anniversary of the 1954  
3 landmark United States Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board  
4 of Education, which found that "separate educational  
5 facilities are inherently unequal" and banned separate public  
6 schools for black and white students; and

7           WHEREAS, Despite this landmark ruling, many schools and  
8 districts throughout the United States have been alleged to  
9 still be "separate" due, in part, to racially and economically  
10 isolated housing patterns in many areas; and

11           WHEREAS, According to a 2013 Economic Policy Institute  
12 report entitled "For Public Schools, Segregation Then,  
13 Segregation Since", "[t]oday, African American students are  
14 more isolated than they were 40 years ago, while most education  
15 policymakers and reformers have abandoned integration as a  
16 cause"; and

17           WHEREAS, A considerable body of research indicates that  
18 racial and economic diversity in schools is one of the few  
19 education reforms that is proven to improve the educational  
20 achievement and life opportunities of minority and low-income  
21 children systemically; and

1           WHEREAS, The best way to ensure that public educational  
2 resources are equitably distributed among all children is to  
3 allow all children access to the same resources in the same  
4 schools; and

5           WHEREAS, Diverse schools promote better educational  
6 outcomes and provide benefits for all students; research has  
7 confirmed that African-American and Hispanic students perform  
8 better on tests in schools that are diverse, while school  
9 diversity has no negative impact on the test scores of white  
10 students; in addition, studies have found that prolonged  
11 contact with racially diverse students may have significant  
12 effects on students' complex thinking, and a more diverse  
13 classroom environment encourages critical thinking in all  
14 students, as well as improves high school graduation and  
15 college matriculation rates for minority students at those  
16 schools; and

17           WHEREAS, Beyond educational benefits, diverse schools  
18 provide other societal advantages, including improving  
19 cross-racial understanding and reducing racial prejudice;  
20 diverse schools also improve the potential for reducing  
21 residential lack of diversity; and

22           WHEREAS, Diverse schools are linked to a host of positive  
23 learning outcomes for white students as well, including the

1 promotion of critical thinking and problem-solving skills and  
2 higher academic achievement; attending diverse schools is also  
3 linked to social and psychological advantages for white  
4 students, including more friendships across racial lines and  
5 higher levels of cultural competence, a critical advantage in  
6 the modern workplace and today's global economy; and

7 WHEREAS, Diverse schools are essential to prepare all  
8 children to live and work together in a nation in which  
9 African-Americans, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, Pacific  
10 Islanders, and other non-whites will collectively comprise the  
11 majority of the United States population by 2042; therefore, be  
12 it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
14 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
15 urge the Illinois State Board of Education to officially  
16 recognize the importance and benefits of school diversity and  
17 to set it as a priority when making decisions regarding  
18 admissions policies and practices, creation of new schools,  
19 school rezoning, and other pertinent decisions and to commit to  
20 having a strategy in each district for overcoming impediments  
21 to school diversity; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
23 delivered to the Illinois State Board of Education.