

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, There are over 48,000 adults and juveniles
3 incarcerated in 36 correctional facilities run by the State
4 of Illinois; and

5 WHEREAS, Despite problems of overcrowding and
6 understaffing, these prisons have an excellent record of
7 maintaining the public safety; and

8 WHEREAS, In other states where private prisons have made
9 encroachments, correctional security has often been
10 significantly compromised, resulting in more serious injuries
11 to staff and inmates, as well as a growing number of inmate
12 escapes; and

13 WHEREAS, One of the primary causes of such unsafe
14 conditions in private prisons is the poor training, high
15 turnover, and low compensation of their employees; and

16 WHEREAS, The Illinois General Assembly has recognized
17 that "issues of liability, accountability, and cost warrant a
18 prohibition of the ownership, operation, or management of
19 correctional facilities by for-profit contractors" by its
20 enactment of a moratorium against private prisons; and

21 WHEREAS, In spite of that moratorium, attempts are still
22 being made to privatize operations of the State's
23 correctional facilities through incremental measures; and

24 WHEREAS, The Department of Corrections currently
25 contracts out medical services at its facilities, which has
26 led to difficulty in recruiting and retaining health care
27 professionals and hardships for employees, including bounced
28 pay checks from fly-by-night contractors; and

29 WHEREAS, The Fiscal Year 2002 budget submitted to the
30 General Assembly by Governor Ryan would allow for

1 privatization of a number of important functions that impact
2 prison security at the new Kewanee Youth Center and Lawrence
3 Correctional Center, including dietary, medical, commissary,
4 and educational services; and

5 WHEREAS, The privatization of such support functions
6 would be detrimental to the efficient and secure function of
7 these facilities and is therefore contrary to the intent of
8 the Private Correctional Facility Moratorium Act; and

9 WHEREAS, Proposed legislation is making another attempt
10 to foster privatization in the Illinois prison system that
11 would allow certain inmates to be housed in private nursing
12 homes; and

13 WHEREAS, The establishment of such nursing homes could
14 lead to situations where inmates who should be incarcerated
15 are living in unsecured settings; therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-
17 SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THE SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that
18 the State of Illinois affirm its commitment to a secure,
19 safe, and effective State prison system by forestalling
20 efforts to incrementally privatize operations of the
21 Department of Corrections; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the Department of Corrections revise its
23 budget to allow for the dietary, educational, health, and
24 commissary services at Kewanee Youth Center and Lawrence
25 Correctional Center to be provided by employees of the
26 Department of Corrections; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly supports the
28 continued examination of the operations of Department of
29 Correction's medical vendors that has been undertaken by the
30 House Prison Reform Task Force; and be it further

31 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly opposes the housing

1 of convicted persons in private nursing home settings; and be
2 it further

3 RESOLVED, That the Department of Corrections shall, prior
4 to the privatization of any aspect of operations at a State
5 correctional facility, seek the authorization of the General
6 Assembly to request bids for any services that are normally
7 performed by employees of the Department of Corrections; and
8 be it further

9 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
10 delivered to the Director of Corrections.