WHEREAS, The abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of people with disabilities continues to plague our State; and

WHEREAS, Studies indicate that people with disabilities make up nearly 20 percent of all cases of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation reported in 2015, and that the total number of reports of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation has risen nearly 62 percent in the past ten years; and

WHEREAS, Studies indicate that three out of five victims suffered from some barrier to independent living, with 37 percent of all victims being functionally impaired and 16 percent being cognitively impaired; and

WHEREAS, Studies indicate that 74 percent of all reports of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation occur to individuals living independently in their own dwellings; and

WHEREAS, There are approximately 26,000 people with disabilities living independently in Illinois and receiving services through Illinois' Home and Community Based Services Program; and

WHEREAS, The percentage of self-reports of abuse, neglect,
and financial exploitation are very low, at only nine percent of all reports, and the typical reasons for this low number are lack of knowledge by the victim as to what constitutes abuse, how to report it, and what help is available; and

WHEREAS, Victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation incur health and economic consequences as a result of these situations, which cost the state Medicaid dollars; and

WHEREAS, Caseworkers at Home and Community Based Services have direct contact with customers when they enter the program and at least annually subsequent to that; and

WHEREAS, Many screening tools already exist for abuse, neglect, and exploitation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we declare our intent to eradicate abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of people with disabilities in Illinois; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge the Department of Public Health and the Department of Rehabilitation Services to work together to produce educational materials for people with disabilities in the Home and Community based Services Program in Illinois and
explain their rights, the warning signs of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation, and appropriate reporting methods; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge the Department of Public Health and the Department of Rehabilitation Services in their respective regions to provide appropriate educational information and reporting methods to their clients on an annual basis; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge the Illinois State Medical Society and the Illinois Nurses Association to provide their respective members with appropriate educational materials to assist them with identifying and reporting suspected abuse, neglect, and exploitation of disabled Illinois citizens in the Home and Community Based Services Program; and be it further

RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be delivered to the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Illinois State Medical Society, and the Illinois Nurses Association.