



1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 87

2 WHEREAS, According to a recent study by the Center for  
3 Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University in Boston,  
4 Massachusetts, there are 174,168 Illinois youth ages 16 to 24  
5 years old and 98,908 youth ages 16 to 21 years old who have not  
6 graduated from high school and are out of school; and

7 WHEREAS, This study outlines that in Illinois, of the  
8 174,168 youth who are out of school without a high school  
9 diploma, 50,877 are White, 74,645 are Hispanic, 42,294 are  
10 Black, and 6,352 are listed as other; and

11 WHEREAS, The vast majority of Chicago area and downstate  
12 Illinois youth who are out of school without a high school  
13 diploma come from lower income areas; and

14 WHEREAS, The vast majority of these youth who are out of  
15 school without a high school diploma see themselves as students  
16 who want to return to school and earn a high school diploma,  
17 but there are currently not enough options and opportunities  
18 for many of these re-enrolled students; and

19 WHEREAS, A comprehensive system is needed for all students  
20 - those in school and those who want to return to school, but  
21 the school experience that will help "out of school students"  
22 succeed when they re-enroll must be different; people learn in  
23 different ways, and smaller schools offer a more personal,  
24 flexible, and accountable curriculum that successfully  
25 re-enrolls, teaches, and graduates these out of school  
26 students; and

27 WHEREAS, Illinois employers are experiencing a shortage of  
28 skilled workers, and these "re-enrolled students" could  
29 provide the needed addition to the workforce needs of the  
30 Illinois economy and Illinois businesses; and

1           WHEREAS, Eighty percent of prison inmates are students who  
2 left school without a high school diploma and, as such, can  
3 pose a problem in terms of crime and public safety to the  
4 general public in their communities and neighborhoods; and

5           WHEREAS, Out-of-school students without a high school  
6 diploma earn \$516,000 less over their lifetimes than people who  
7 have a high school diploma and some college education; and

8           WHEREAS, The benefit to Illinois taxpayers is \$312,000 over  
9 the lifetime of a "re-enrolled student" who returns to school  
10 and earns a high school diploma in terms of that person paying  
11 more taxes on his or her increased earnings as well as the  
12 reduced social costs in terms of his or her utilizing welfare  
13 services, mental health services, and other dependency  
14 services, and being less likely to enter prison or incur other  
15 costs related to crime; and

16           WHEREAS, There is significant research and program  
17 experience to draw on and use to develop successful programs to  
18 re-enroll, teach, and graduate students who left school before  
19 earning a high school diploma; therefore, be it

20           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
21 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
22 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that there is created the "Task Force  
23 on Re-enrolling Students Who Dropped Out Of School" in order to  
24 examine and develop ways to address the growing issue of  
25 students who left school before earning a high school diploma;  
26 and be it further

27           RESOLVED, That the purpose of the Task Force is to examine  
28 policies, programs, and other issues related to developing a  
29 variety of successful approaches using best program practices  
30 to re-enroll, teach, and graduate students who left school

1 before earning a high school diploma and, in doing so, improve  
2 community safety and the Illinois economy; and be it further

3       RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall be composed of the  
4 following members: 8 legislators (2 of whom shall be appointed  
5 by the President of the Senate, 2 of whom shall be appointed by  
6 the Speaker of the House, 2 of whom shall be appointed by the  
7 House Minority Leader, and 2 of whom shall be appointed by the  
8 Senate Minority Leader); 1 representative from the Governor's  
9 office appointed by the Governor; 1 representative of the State  
10 Board of Education appointed by the State Superintendent of  
11 Education; 1 representative of the Department of Human Services  
12 appointed by the Secretary of Human Services; 1 representative  
13 of the Department of Children and Family Services appointed by  
14 the Director of Children and Family Services; 1 representative  
15 of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity  
16 appointed by the Director of Commerce and Economic Opportunity;  
17 1 representative of the Illinois Community College Board  
18 appointed by the President of the Illinois Community College  
19 Board; 13 representatives from the public (4 of whom should  
20 come from schools/programs working with students who had left  
21 school before earning a high school diploma and 9 other  
22 appointees) appointed by the Governor, with one of these public  
23 representatives serving as chairperson of the Task Force; and  
24 be it further

25       RESOLVED, That the duties of the Task Force shall include  
26 conducting a series of public hearings throughout the State to  
27 discuss the impact of students who have left school without a  
28 high school diploma on various regions of the State, completing  
29 a review of data regarding students who have left school  
30 without a high school diploma that allows for a comparison of  
31 Illinois data both nationally and with other states in the  
32 region and across the country, completing a review of various  
33 financing and funding mechanisms used by other states,  
34 counties, cities, foundations, and other financial funding

1 sources and producing a final report with recommendations to  
2 the Governor and the General Assembly on ways and means to  
3 address the challenge of re-enrolling students who have left  
4 school without a high school diploma; and be it further

5       RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education shall be  
6 responsible for facilitating the Task Force; and be it further

7       RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall issue an interim report  
8 of its findings to the Governor and the General Assembly no  
9 later than January 10, 2007; and be it further

10       RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall issue a final report by  
11 January 10, 2008, and upon filing this report, the Task Force  
12 is dissolved.