



1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Changes over the past several decades in federal
3 and state laws defining crimes, prescribing sentences for
4 crimes, prescribing and limiting services and treatment for
5 persons incarcerated for crimes, and setting conditions and
6 services post-release from prison or jail have resulted in
7 staggering increases in the numbers of persons with past
8 criminal convictions; and

9 WHEREAS, Between 1970 and 2001, the Illinois prison
10 population increased by more than 500 percent, from 7,326 to
11 44,348; and

12 WHEREAS, Nationwide, over 650,000 men and women, a figure
13 larger than the entire population of Boston or Washington, DC,
14 will be released from state and federal confinements in 2006;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Approximately 244,000 men and women are currently
17 under correctional supervision in Illinois, including those in
18 jail, in prison, on probation, and on parole; and

19 WHEREAS, Almost all - between 95 and 97 percent - of those
20 who are incarcerated or detained in the United States will
21 serve their time and come home; and

22 WHEREAS, Over the past several decades enactment of and
23 changes to federal and state laws limiting opportunities for
24 employment, as well as education, housing, public assistance,
25 and other aspects of civil life, for persons with criminal
26 convictions have resulted in high barriers to those persons'
27 success in society after they have served the sentences for
28 their convictions; and

29 WHEREAS, Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich convened the

1 Statewide Community Safety and Reentry Working Group and
2 Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley convened the Mayoral Policy
3 Caucus on Prisoner Reentry to study prisoner reentry, and the
4 reports and recommendations from those groups are becoming
5 available in 2006; and

6 WHEREAS, Barriers to employment and job promotion for
7 persons with criminal convictions are extremely complex
8 issues, involving, among others, public employers at all levels
9 of government, private employers, labor organizations,
10 education and training institutions, public safety officials,
11 public and private licensing and certification bodies,
12 insurers, employment placement agencies, custodians of and
13 users of arrest and conviction records, drug treatment
14 agencies, and persons with criminal records; and

15 WHEREAS, A thorough examination of the barriers to
16 employment for people with criminal conviction records and a
17 thorough study of ways in which such barriers could be lowered
18 or eliminated without exposing employers, individuals, the
19 general public, or property to unreasonable risk is warranted;
20 therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
22 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
23 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that there is hereby established a
24 Legislative Task Force on Employment of Persons with Past
25 Criminal Convictions; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall have the following
27 members:

28 12 voting members, as follows: 3 members of the Senate
29 appointed by the president of the Senate, 3 members of the
30 Senate appointed by the Senate Minority Leader, 3 members of
31 the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the
32 House of Representatives, and 3 members of the House of

1 Representatives appointed by the House Minority Leader; and be
2 it further

3 RESOLVED, That all actions of the Task Force require the
4 affirmative vote of at least 7 voting members; and be it
5 further

6 RESOLVED, That the following persons shall serve without
7 compensation as ex-officio, non-voting members of the Task
8 Force:

9 (A) The Director of the Illinois Department of
10 Corrections, or his or her designee;

11 (B) The Director of the Illinois Department of
12 Employment Security, or his or her designee;

13 (C) The Secretary of the Illinois Department of Human
14 Services, or his or her designee;

15 (D) The Director of the Illinois Department of Children
16 and Family Services, or his or her designee;

17 (E) The Secretary of the Illinois Department of
18 Financial and Professional Regulation, or his or her
19 designee; and

20 (F) The Chairman of the Illinois Human Rights
21 Commission, or his or her designee; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the voting members of the Task Force shall
23 select a chairperson; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall conduct public
25 hearings and examine the barriers faced by persons with past
26 criminal convictions with respect to obtaining employment; and
27 be it further

28 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall evaluate those
29 recommendations made by the Governor's Statewide Community
30 Safety and Reentry Working Group; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall report its findings and
2 recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly in a
3 final report which shall be filed on or before October 31,
4 2006; the requirement for reporting to the General Assembly
5 shall be satisfied by filing copies of the report with the
6 Speaker, the Minority Leader and the Clerk of the House of
7 Representatives and the President, the Minority Leader and the
8 Secretary of the Senate and the Legislative Research Unit, as
9 required by Section 3.1 of the General Assembly Organization
10 Act, and filing additional copies with the State Government
11 Report Distribution Center for the General Assembly as required
12 under paragraph (t) of Section 7 of the State Library Act; and
13 be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the report shall include, but need not be
15 limited to, the following:

16 (1) An assessment of those collateral consequences of a
17 criminal conviction which impede employment of persons
18 with past criminal convictions, and the experiences of
19 other states in addressing this issue;

20 (2) An assessment of the preparation for gainful
21 employment provided to those incarcerated in Illinois
22 correctional facilities, and the experiences of other
23 states in addressing this issue;

24 (3) An identification of the barriers which impede
25 those with criminal records from obtaining stable
26 employment; and

27 (4) Recommendations for legislative changes necessary
28 to facilitate the employment of persons with past criminal
29 convictions which, if implemented, would not expose the
30 employer, an individual, the general public, or property to
31 unreasonable risks; and be it further

32 RESOLVED, That within 60 days after the filing of the
33 report, the appropriate standing committees of both the House
34 and the Senate shall hold hearings to consider the

1 recommendations made by the Task Force; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this Resolution be
3 transmitted to the ex-officio members of the Task Force.