

August 25, 2011

To the Honorable Members of the
Illinois House of Representatives,
97th General Assembly:

I hereby return House Bill 190 with specific recommendations for change.

I am committed to ensuring a quality education for children throughout Illinois. House Bill 190 will help reach children who have dropped out of school as well as those students who come from under-performing or overcrowded schools. This legislation will allow for at least 5 charter schools in the Chicago area to be devoted to re-enrolled dropouts and at least 5 charter schools in the Chicago area to be devoted to students from low-performing or overcrowded schools.

I commend the sponsors for their work on this bill. While I am very supportive of the idea of focusing charter schools on the most disadvantaged and under-performing of our children, I believe that further clarity will allow the State to most appropriately target our resources. In order to further clarify which students are able to enroll in these charter schools, I recommend that the bill explicitly define the children who are at risk of dropping out. Additionally, in an effort to preserve the original intent laid out for these charter schools, I recommend that the legislation explicitly grant priority admission to those students who have dropped out.

Therefore, pursuant to Article IV, Section 9(e) of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return House Bill 190, entitled "AN ACT concerning education.", with the following specific recommendations for change:

on page 2, line 7, by replacing "dropouts or students at risk of dropping out" with "dropouts and/or students 16 or 15 years old at risk of dropping out"; and

on page 4, lines 12 and 13, by replacing "dropouts or students at risk of dropping out" with "dropouts and/or students 16 or 15 years old at risk of dropping out"; and

on page 4, line 16, after the period, by adding "“Priority admission” for charter schools exclusively devoted to re-enrolled dropouts or students at risk of dropping out means a minimum of 90% of students enrolled shall be high school dropouts.”; and

on page 5, line 22, after the period, by adding ““Students at risk of dropping out” means students 16 or 15 years old in a public school in a district organized under Article 34 of this Code that enrolls students in any grades 9-12 who have been absent at least 90 school attendance days of the previous 180 school attendance days.”.

With these changes, House Bill 190 will have my approval. I respectfully request your concurrence.

Sincerely,

PAT QUINN
Governor