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1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 20

2 (As Amended by Senate Amendment No. 1)

3 WHEREAS, The Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career
4 Success has documented the critical role that higher education
5 plays in economic recovery and growth, particularly in ensuring
6 that this State has an educated workforce to meet the needs of
7 business and industry; and

8 WHEREAS, The Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career
9 Success recommends that the Board of Higher Education, in
10 consultation with other State agencies for education,
11 employment, and economic development, "increase the number of
12 high-quality post-secondary credentials to meet the demands of
13 the economy and an increasingly global society"; and

14 WHEREAS, Illinois has committed to the goal that 60% of its
15 workforce will hold a high-quality college credential by 2025
16 to ensure its economic future; and

17 WHEREAS, Most recent projections from the Georgetown
18 University Center on Education and the Workforce are that 70%
19 of Illinois jobs will require post-secondary education by 2020;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, Currently, only 42.5% of the State's nearly 7

1 million working-age adults (25-64 years old) hold at least a
2 2-year college degree; and

3 WHEREAS, There is a critical need for Illinois institutions
4 of higher education to increase the number of post-secondary
5 degrees in fields of critical skills shortages, such as
6 healthcare, construction, computer technology, public safety,
7 and mechanical fields; and

8 WHEREAS, Illinois' economic success requires providing
9 college credentials aligned with current and future workforce
10 needs at the State and regional levels; and

11 WHEREAS, Achieving workforce needs depends upon additional
12 strategic State investment in higher education along with
13 improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of the higher
14 education system; and

15 WHEREAS, Working-age adults attempting to return to school
16 to complete certificates and degrees in high-demand fields face
17 many barriers to success; and

18 WHEREAS, The Illinois Council of Community College
19 Presidents has recommended that the community college system be
20 allowed to grant 4-year baccalaureate degrees for nursing and
21 other applied career areas; and

1 WHEREAS, The development of post-secondary degree programs
2 should be predicated on evidence of the needs of Illinois
3 residents rather than institutional interests; and

4 WHEREAS, The Illinois Board of Higher Education has the
5 statutory authority and responsibility to review all
6 applications for new academic degree programs for public
7 community colleges and universities; therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL
9 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
10 CONCURRING HEREIN, that there is created the Higher Education
11 Commission on the Future of the Workforce within the Board of
12 Higher Education; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the Commission shall be comprised of 11
14 members, including one senator appointed by the President of
15 the Senate; one senator appointed by the Minority Leader of the
16 Senate; one representative appointed by the Speaker of the
17 House; one representative appointed by the Minority Leader of
18 the House; and 7 members appointed by the Board of Higher
19 Education to represent a cross-section from education,
20 including at least one member from a community college, one
21 member from a public university, and one member from a private
22 institution of higher education, as well as members of the

1 employment and economic development communities and experts in
2 quality post-secondary degree creation; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the Commission's study shall include, but
4 not be limited to, the following:

5 (1) examining and analyzing current and projected
6 workforce needs for each economic region of the State and
7 post-secondary degree and credential production capacity
8 and goals;

9 (2) identifying State, regional, and national partners
10 available to support efficient and effective delivery of
11 post-secondary credential and degree programs aligned with
12 regional workforce needs;

13 (3) determining current policies and practices in
14 Illinois being utilized among Illinois' public and private
15 colleges and universities for partnerships for degree
16 completion;

17 (4) examining opportunities for expanding
18 post-secondary certificates and associate's and
19 baccalaureate completions using effective and efficient
20 strategies and partnerships between high schools,
21 technical schools, community colleges, and 4-year colleges
22 and universities;

23 (5) developing distance and online learning as well as
24 competency-based credits to serve place-bound and adult
25 learners, including military personnel and veterans;

1 (6) examining incentives for students to enter and
2 complete degree programs in critical needs areas,
3 particularly aimed at underemployed and displaced workers;

4 (7) examining improvements in student advising,
5 including articulation, transfer, and acceptance of
6 credits to streamline education pipeline to the workforce;

7 (8) providing incentives, including financial
8 assistance, for working adults and individuals with
9 substantial college credit but no degree to complete their
10 college degrees; and

11 (9) analyzing best practices implemented in other
12 states for incentivizing certificate and degree
13 completion, including incentives for students and for
14 colleges and universities; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the Commission shall submit a report to the
16 General Assembly and the Governor 6 months from the formation
17 of the Commission; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
19 delivered to the Governor, the Chairperson of the Board of
20 Higher Education, the Chairperson of the Illinois Community
21 College Board, the Chairperson of the State Board of Education,
22 the Chairperson of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission,
23 the Chairperson of the Employment Security Advisory Board, and
24 the President of each public and private college and university

1 in this State.