



HR0042

LRB100 07720 MST 17786 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives recognize that over the last 150 years,
4 beginning with the Emancipation Proclamation, African
5 Americans have made strides and advancements toward equality;
6 the Civil Rights Movement enabled groundbreaking legislation
7 such as the Voting Rights Act of 1965; today, we pay annual
8 tribute to one of the pioneers and most prominent stars of the
9 Civil Rights Movement, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; however,
10 there is still much work to be done particularly as it relates
11 to the economic disparity in too many African American
12 communities; and

13 WHEREAS, We recognize that communities throughout Illinois
14 are struggling under the weight of many economic and social
15 problems including unemployment, poverty, mortgage
16 foreclosures, deficiencies in public health services, and
17 crime; and

18 WHEREAS, These economic and societal challenges created or
19 exacerbated conditions which include inequalities in access to
20 justice in the civil court system, an overburdened and
21 ineffective criminal justice system, overcrowding conditions
22 in correctional facilities, increased homelessness, increases
23 in teen pregnancy, inadequate educational opportunities, a

1 lack of affordable housing, insufficient delivery of social
2 services to the less fortunate, and deficiencies in the
3 delivery of public health services; and

4 WHEREAS, Although unemployment is a lingering problem for
5 the economy as a whole, a recent study revealed that the recent
6 unemployment rate for blacks in Illinois was 17.5%, compared to
7 8.2% for whites, and 9.8% for all workers; and

8 WHEREAS, In 2016, there were 762 murders in the City of
9 Chicago - the deadliest year in nearly two decades and an
10 increase of over 50% from the previous year; five police
11 districts on the south and west sides of the city accounted for
12 nearly two-thirds of the increase in murders; 75% of those
13 murdered in Chicago are black; and

14 WHEREAS, The teen birth rate in the United States was
15 recently 38.1 births for every 1,000 teens, but in a comparable
16 time period in Illinois the teen birth rate was 77.9 births for
17 every 1,000 teens for black teens, while the white teen birth
18 rate was 20.6 per every 1,000 teens; and

19 WHEREAS, The inmate population in the Illinois
20 Correctional system is approximately 58% black, and the high
21 proportion of young black males with criminal convictions is a
22 well-recognized phenomenon; and

1 WHEREAS, Black leaders in Illinois are not alone in
2 recognizing that these broad social problems often strike the
3 hardest in the black community; and

4 WHEREAS, It is painful for the black leaders to ponder the
5 stories of human struggle, despair, and hurt that all too often
6 over shadow the stories of success and hope; and

7 WHEREAS, State government resources are expended in
8 ever-increasing amounts to address these social and economic
9 problems and those expenditures are a significant drain on the
10 State's road to financial stability; and

11 WHEREAS, State government, taxpayers, members of the
12 General Assembly, and the black community could benefit from
13 the creation of an action plan that identifies: what
14 modifications could be made to existing State of Illinois
15 programs, including those statutory and regulatory changes to
16 the current laws and regulations in Illinois that could
17 dramatically improve the delivery of services and also reduce
18 wasteful spending, how leadership programs and new educational
19 opportunities will foster and equip new leadership in the black
20 community, and ways in which State government may actively
21 create a change environment that will have positive impacts on
22 the many social problems that exist in Illinois, especially in

1 the black community; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
3 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
4 urge the Governor to create a commission, composed of
5 stakeholders in the communities where these problems continue
6 to devastated families, representatives of appropriate State
7 agencies, ministers, business leaders, and all community
8 appropriate stake holders to explore, discuss, and coordinate
9 efforts to prepare an action plan to offer enhanced State
10 governmental services in a meaningful way, foster leadership in
11 communities, and create programs that can foster success in
12 addressing the myriad of social and economic problems in the
13 affected communities; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That we urge that the Governor appoint members of
15 the commission by August 1, 2017 so as to allow the commission
16 to hold its first meeting soon after the appointments; and be
17 it further

18 RESOLVED, That the commission be charged with: finding and
19 creating innovative means to address and meet the numerous
20 needs of the black community, designing plans to assist and
21 enhance the efforts of State agencies and local governments
22 that serve blacks in communities throughout the State,
23 analyzing other successful State and local governmental

1 programs in law enforcement, job retraining, education,
2 economic opportunity, job creation, social services, and
3 public health, and developing an action plan that includes
4 information about changes and improvements to existing
5 programs that can be made without allocating additional tax
6 dollars to the programs by reallocating existing resources; and
7 be it further

8 RESOLVED, That we urge the commission to hold public
9 hearings and issue a written report of its findings and
10 recommendations to the Governor and to the General Assembly on
11 or before December 30, 2018; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
13 delivered to Governor Bruce Rauner.