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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, are traumatic experiences occurring during childhood that may have a profound effect on a child's developing brain and body and may result in poor health during the person's adulthood; ACEs can be physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, physical and emotional neglect, and household dysfunction, such as domestic violence, separation or divorce involving household members, and substance abuse, untreated mental illness, or incarceration of a household member; and

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WHEREAS, Research over the last two decades in the evolving fields of neuroscience, molecular biology, public health, genomics, and epigenetics reveals that experiences in the first few years of life build changes into the biology of the human body that, in turn, influence the person's physical and mental health over the person's lifetime; and

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WHEREAS, Strong, frequent, or prolonged stress in childhood caused by adverse childhood experiences can become toxic stress, affecting the development of a child's fundamental brain architecture and stress response systems; and

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WHEREAS, Adverse childhood experience studies have also

1 found a strong correlation between the number of ACEs and a  
2 person's risk for disease and negative health behaviors,  
3 including suicide attempts, cancer, ischemic heart disease,  
4 diabetes, smoking, substance abuse, depression, obesity,  
5 unplanned pregnancies, workplace absenteeism, lower  
6 educational achievement, and lower wages; and

7 WHEREAS, Findings from the Illinois 2013 Behavioral Risk  
8 Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) Illinois ACEs Response  
9 Collaborative found that almost 60% of non-institutionalized  
10 adults in Illinois say they had at least one ACE; this number  
11 equates to almost 5 million Illinois residents; 14.2% of  
12 Illinois adults reported four or more ACEs; and

13 WHEREAS, The Illinois 2013 BRFSS also found that  
14 approximately one in seven women and one in eight men reported  
15 experiencing four or more ACEs; and

16 WHEREAS, BRFSS data also showed that approximately 20% of  
17 African American and Hispanic adults in Illinois reported four  
18 or more ACEs, compared to 13% of non-Hispanic whites; and

19 WHEREAS, Individuals with six or more ACEs were found, on  
20 average, to live 20 years less than those individuals with zero  
21 ACEs; and

1           WHEREAS, Among those who misuse opioids, the individuals  
2 most likely to experience problems with addiction are those who  
3 suffered ACEs; general population surveys have estimated that  
4 75% of individuals with substance use disorders have  
5 experienced trauma at some point in their lives; rates are even  
6 higher among populations seeking treatment for opioid  
7 addiction; and

8           WHEREAS, ACEs appear to be a root cause of many of our most  
9 challenging health and social problems, including smoking,  
10 substance abuse, obesity, heart disease, low birth weight,  
11 unemployment, depression, and suicide; without adequate family  
12 intervention and support, ACEs appear to be transmitted from  
13 one generation to the next, further exacerbating this problem;  
14 and

15           WHEREAS, It is more effective and less costly to positively  
16 influence the architecture of a young child's developing brain  
17 than to attempt to correct poor learning, health, and behaviors  
18 later in life; and

19           WHEREAS, Trauma-informed care is an approach that can bring  
20 greater understanding and more effective ways to prevent,  
21 identify, and support and serve children, adults, families, and  
22 communities affected by ACEs, trauma, adversity, and toxic  
23 stress; and

1           WHEREAS, Trauma-informed care is not a therapy or an  
2           intervention, but a principle-based, culture-change process  
3           aimed at recognizing strengths and resiliency as well as  
4           helping people who have experienced trauma to overcome those  
5           issues in order to lead healthy and positive lives; and

6           WHEREAS, The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services  
7           Administration and many other agencies and organizations  
8           provide substantial resources to better engage individuals and  
9           communities across the United States in order to implement  
10          trauma-informed care; and

11          WHEREAS, A trauma-informed Illinois enhances the ability  
12          of children and adults to adapt, cope and thrive despite  
13          difficult times, supporting the mental well-being of everyone  
14          in our state; therefore, be it

15          RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL  
16          ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that policy decisions  
17          enacted by the Illinois State Legislature should acknowledge  
18          and take into account the principles of early childhood brain  
19          development and should, whenever possible, consider the  
20          concepts of toxic stress, early adversity, and buffering  
21          relationships, and note the role of early intervention and  
22          investment in early childhood years as important strategies to

1 achieve a lasting foundation for a more prosperous and  
2 sustainable State through investing in human capital; and be it  
3 further

4 RESOLVED, That we declare May 15, 2019 as Trauma-Informed  
5 Awareness Day in Illinois to highlight the impact of trauma and  
6 the importance of prevention and community resilience through  
7 trauma-informed care; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That we encourage all officers, agencies and  
9 employees of the State of Illinois whose responsibilities  
10 impact children and adults, including the Office of the  
11 Governor, the State Board of Education, the Department of Human  
12 Services, the Department of Children and Family Services, the  
13 Department of Public Health, the Department of Juvenile Justice  
14 and Department of Corrections, to become informed regarding  
15 well-documented short-term, long-term and generational impacts  
16 of adverse childhood experiences, toxic stress and structural  
17 violence on children, adults and communities and to become  
18 aware of evidence-based and evidence-informed trauma-informed  
19 care practices, tools, and interventions that promote healing  
20 and resiliency in children, adults and communities so that  
21 people, systems and community, family and interpersonal  
22 relationships will be able to maximize their well-being; and be  
23 it further

1           RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
2 presented to Governor J.B. Pritzker, House Speaker Michael  
3 Madigan, Senate President John Cullerton, House Majority  
4 Leader Greg Harris, Senate Minority Leader Bill Brady, the  
5 Secretary of Human Services, the State Superintendent of  
6 Schools, and all directors of the above mentioned State  
7 departments.