



HJ0122

LRB101 20987 MST 71452 r

1

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2

WHEREAS, Creating a clear path to the middle class and ensuring our nation's economic prosperity means opening the doors of higher education to more Illinois citizens; today, three-quarters of the fastest-growing occupations require education and training beyond a high school diploma, yet, nearly half of the students who begin college in this country do not finish within six years, and tuition continues to rise, putting college out of reach for the very families that need it most to join the middle class; a generation ago, the U.S. led the world in college attainment of young adults, and now, we rank 13th; and

13

WHEREAS, In today's economy, higher education is no longer a luxury for the privileged few but is a necessity for individual economic opportunity and America's competitiveness in the global economy; at a time when jobs can move anywhere in the world, skills and education will determine success for individuals and for nations; as a result, a college education remains the best investment a student can make in his or her future; and

21

WHEREAS, Addressing growing college costs and debt is absolutely critical; many more students need access to vastly more affordable and quality higher education opportunities,

22

23

1 including tuition-free degree options; for too long, America's
2 higher education system has focused almost exclusively on
3 inputs, enrolling students in college, and too little on
4 outcomes, graduating from college with high-quality degrees;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, We must reset the incentives that underpin the
7 system so that the focus is on the outcome that matters,
8 completing a quality degree at a reasonable cost; otherwise, we
9 will merely be finding better ways of paying for an
10 unsustainable status quo; therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
12 HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
13 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that there is created the Free
14 College Tuition Task Force which is charged with conducting a
15 study on what the cost to the State would be to provide free
16 college tuition through first dollar programs, middle dollar
17 programs, last dollar programs, and any other possible funding
18 sources; the study shall consist of, but not be limited to: (1)
19 the potential rise in cost to the various community colleges
20 and universities, (2) the potential rise in administrative cost
21 for the state agency that will administer the grant, (3) how
22 much it would cost to fund a grant for community colleges only
23 and a grant for 4-year universities only, and (4) how funding
24 will intersect with eligibility criteria; the study shall also

1 look at innovative ways to keep Illinois students from leaving
2 the State to attend college; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall consist of the
4 following members, who shall serve without compensation:

5 (1) Two members of the House of Representatives
6 appointed by the Speaker of the House;

7 (2) Two members of the House of Representatives
8 appointed by the Minority Leader of the House;

9 (3) Two members of the Senate appointed by the Senate
10 President;

11 (4) Two members of the Senate appointed by the Senate
12 Minority Leader;

13 (5) Two members appointed by the Governor;

14 (6) The Governor, or his or her designee;

15 (7) The Executive Director of the Illinois Board of
16 Higher Education, or his or her designee;

17 (8) The Executive Director of the Illinois Student
18 Assistance Commission, or his or her designee; and

19 (9) The Executive Director of the Illinois Community
20 College Board, or his or her designee; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That the Illinois Student Assistant Commission
22 shall provide administrative support to the Task Force; and be
23 it further

1 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall hold quarterly meetings
2 and shall select a chairperson at its first meeting; and be it
3 further

4 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall have the option to
5 bring in subject matter experts in order to conduct a complete
6 analysis and provide Illinois with the best possible program
7 aimed to increase access to education and to make social equity
8 the center of our efforts; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall submit its final report
10 to the Governor and the General Assembly no later than January
11 1, 2021 and is dissolved upon the filing of the report.