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LRB102 21127 MST 30111 r

1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois is in great need of a state  
3 conviction integrity unit, run by the Attorney General's  
4 Office, to identify and overturn wrongful convictions and to  
5 set free those falsely imprisoned; and

6 WHEREAS, A conviction integrity unit investigates claims  
7 of innocence to determine whether new evidence gives rise to a  
8 substantial probability that the convicted defendant was not  
9 the person who committed the offense of conviction; a  
10 conviction integrity unit can also make recommendations about  
11 the appropriate remedy, if any, that should result from its  
12 findings; and

13 WHEREAS, The Attorney General's Office is best positioned  
14 to run a conviction integrity unit because its resources far  
15 exceed those of local prosecutors; and

16 WHEREAS, According to the National Registry of  
17 Exonerations, 78 prosecutors and attorneys general have  
18 created conviction integrity or review units in the past  
19 decade; 461 people have been freed due in part to work by these  
20 prosecutors; and

21 WHEREAS, Attorneys general in Washington D.C. and in eight

1 states, including Connecticut, Delaware, Michigan, Minnesota,  
2 New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, have  
3 launched conviction review units; and

4 WHEREAS, Since 2018, the Philadelphia District Attorney's  
5 Office, under Larry Krasner, has exonerated 17 people wrongly  
6 convicted of murder; Baltimore State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby  
7 has cleared 10 people serving murder or attempted murder  
8 sentences since 2016; and

9 WHEREAS, A convictions integrity unit will aid in  
10 achieving and ensuring justice by investigating claims of  
11 innocence, remedying identified wrongful convictions, and  
12 providing proactive support and recommendations to the  
13 Attorney General's Office; and

14 WHEREAS, Conviction integrity units can assist in  
15 addressing racial inequity in the criminal justice system and  
16 mass incarceration; and

17 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois' goal should be for justice  
18 and truth instead of preserving convictions in defiance of  
19 logic, facts, or new evidence; to wrongly convict a person is  
20 to deny them untold opportunities and the chance to live their  
21 life in freedom; therefore, be it

1           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL  
2 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF  
3 REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING HEREIN, that we urge the Office of  
4 the Attorney General to establish a task force to examine the  
5 creation of a statewide conviction integrity unit within its  
6 office; and be it further

7           RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
8 delivered to Attorney General Kwame Raoul and Governor JB  
9 Pritzker.