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1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, There are over 1,000,000 Illinois residents that
3 are not proficient in English; and

4 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois recognizes that
5 comprehensive communication with one's health care provider is
6 critical; and

7 WHEREAS, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
8 guarantees individuals the right to receive interpreter
9 services from health facilities that receive federal funds;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, The Language Assistance Services Act affirms that
12 the intent of the General Assembly is to provide quality
13 health care despite the persistence of language barriers; and

14 WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic has facilitated a
15 transition to telehealth services in which Limited English
16 Proficiency (LEP) patients face structural barriers in
17 accessing and utilizing, including lack of access to
18 technology, need for medical interpreters, unfriendly patient
19 portals, and increased privacy concerns; and

20 WHEREAS, The American Geriatric Society has published

1 findings indicating LEP patients over 60 are at a higher risk
2 for worse mental and physical outcomes; and

3 WHEREAS, The Illinois Advisory Committee to the U.S.
4 Commission on Civil Rights heard testimony that LEP patients
5 do not always receive interpreter services in health
6 facilities and that, even when interpreter services are
7 provided, it is not always an accurate interpretation; and

8 WHEREAS, A survey of hospitals conducted by the American
9 Medical Association found that over 80% of the hospitals
10 indicated that they frequently encounter patients with limited
11 English proficiency; and

12 WHEREAS, The current law does not hold health care
13 providers and medical interpretation service companies
14 accountable for failing to work with qualified or certified
15 interpreters or for failing to work with best practices in
16 providing medical interpretation services; therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
18 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
19 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that the Statewide Task Force on
20 Limited English Proficient Patient Access to Quality
21 Interpreter Services is hereby created to provide
22 recommendations regarding access to quality interpreting

1 services for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) patients; and
2 be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall focus on issues
4 including, but not limited to:

5 (1) The barriers preventing LEP patients from
6 accessing quality interpreting services;

7 (2) The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic relating to
8 its effects on access to quality interpreter services;

9 (3) Issues concerning funding for services and
10 reimbursement for health care providers;

11 (4) The number and quality of certified interpreters;

12 (5) Effective communication of the law to health care
13 providers; and

14 (6) Creating a plan for realistic enforcement of
15 violations of the Language Assistance Services Act; and be
16 it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall consist of the
18 following voting members, who shall have racial, ethnic,
19 gender, and geographic diversity and include the following:

20 (1) One member appointed by the Director of the
21 Illinois Department of Public Health, who shall serve as
22 chair;

23 (2) Two members of the House of Representatives, one
24 appointed by the Speaker of the House and one appointed by

1 the House Minority Leader;

2 (3) Two members of the Senate, one appointed by the
3 President of the Senate and one appointed by the Senate
4 Minority Leader;

5 (4) One member of the Governor's policy leadership
6 team appointed by the Governor; and

7 (5) 16 public members appointed by the Task Force
8 chair:

9 (a) 8 members who should equitably represent
10 the following groups:

11 (i) An association that advocates on
12 behalf of the health of the Chinese-American
13 community;

14 (ii) An association that advocates on
15 behalf of the health of the Hispanic/Latino
16 community; and

17 (iii) An association that advocates on
18 behalf of the health of the midwest Asian-American
19 community;

20 (b) Three members who are nationally board
21 certified medical interpreters who can highlight
22 challenges as well as opportunities for State action
23 to enhance the number of nationally board certified
24 medical interpreters;

25 (c) One member from an association that
26 advocates on behalf of hospitals and health care

1 providers;

2 (d) One member from an association that
3 advocates on behalf of civil rights;

4 (e) One member from the Illinois Department of
5 Healthcare and Family Services who deals primarily
6 with non-English speaking residents;

7 (f) One member from the Illinois Department of
8 Human Services who is knowledgeable on how LEP affects
9 rural, low income families; and

10 (g) One physician licensed by the State whose
11 practice focuses on emergency medicine and can speak
12 to the importance of quality communication as it
13 relates to emergency medicine; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall have all appointments
15 made within 30 days of the adoption of this resolution; and be
16 it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Task Force members shall receive no
18 compensation for their service but may receive reimbursement
19 for actual expenses incurred in the performance of their
20 duties, subject to the availability of funds for that purpose;
21 and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the Illinois Department of Public Health
23 shall provide administrative support for the Task Force; and

1 be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall meet at the call of the
3 chair and then shall meet at least monthly until it completes
4 its work; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall submit its final
6 report to the General Assembly and the Governor no later than
7 January 1, 2025, and, upon the filing of its final report, is
8 dissolved; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
10 delivered to the Director of the Illinois Department of Public
11 Health, the Speaker of the House, the House Minority Leader,
12 the President of the Senate, the Senate Minority Leader, and
13 the Governor.