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LRB103 32544 LAW 62128 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives recognize that food waste production in Illinois is high; the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency reports that 19 million tons of waste is landfilled in Illinois every year, and of that, food waste accounts for as much as 20%, which is more than any other single waste stream found in landfills across the State; and

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WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic intensified food insecurity, and the State now faces unprecedented levels of hunger; Feeding America reports that, in Illinois, approximately 1,201,290 people are facing hunger, of which 315,330 are children; the average cost of a meal in Illinois is \$3.58, while the State's minimum wage is currently \$13 per hour; the rise in the cost of living due to inflation means that families have to depend on community-based and mutual aid organizations to fill gaps in nourishment to sustain themselves daily; and

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WHEREAS, The increasing number of grocery store closures across the State of Illinois have exacerbated food insecurity; in November 2022, a Whole Foods in Chicago's Englewood neighborhood closed its doors just 6 years after opening; similarly, two Aldi locations in Chicago closed their doors

1 abruptly, claiming crime and theft as reasons for closing;
2 these sudden closures create food deserts in communities
3 already facing limited resources, forcing residents to travel
4 longer distances to visit a grocery store; and

5 WHEREAS, The demand for food exceeds the available supply
6 in high-need, low-income communities; the Greater Chicago Food
7 Depository provided 77.3 million meals in 2022, a 25% increase
8 compared to pre-pandemic times; and

9 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois has no existing framework
10 to deal with food waste production fit for human consumption
11 to alleviate food insecurity; therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
13 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
14 we urge the State of Illinois to develop policies to reduce
15 food waste and address increasing food insecurity.