

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Poverty and welfare dependence are widespread
3 throughout the State of Illinois, with almost 1,500,000 of
4 its citizens being dependent on the State's public assistance
5 programs for their most basic needs, and over 200,000
6 families, including 500,000 children, relying on cash
7 assistance from the State for all or part of their
8 subsistence needs; and

9 WHEREAS, Poverty and unemployment diminish individual
10 self-esteem, can undermine family stability, and affect
11 family formation, community security, and cohesion; and

12 WHEREAS, Under the new federal welfare law, the Personal
13 Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of
14 1996, cash assistance benefits will be limited to 60 months,
15 and over 100,000 adult heads of households in the Illinois
16 welfare caseload must have been employed by the year 2002 or
17 they and their children will be destitute; and

18 WHEREAS, Voluntary efforts by the private sector to
19 employ welfare recipients are laudable and to be commended,
20 but the State must also take direct responsibility to ensure
21 that welfare recipients are hired in jobs that will allow
22 them to leave the welfare rolls altogether; and

23 WHEREAS, The State spends billions of dollars each year
24 to improve its economy and infrastructure and to deliver
25 services to the people of the State, all of which also serves
26 to provide jobs for its citizens; and

27 WHEREAS, The State can accomplish the objectives of
28 relieving welfare dependency and ensuring economic
29 self-sufficiency as well as the objectives related to
30 carrying out necessary governmental operations at the same
31 time, and with significant savings in State outlays in cash

1 assistance and supportive service dollars; and

2 WHEREAS, Poverty and welfare dependency can be alleviated
3 by targeting some of the resources of the State and making
4 jobs available to the welfare poor, specifically by bringing
5 qualified poor persons into the State workforce and into
6 workforces that are generated through State contracts,
7 without causing the displacement of existing workers; and

8 WHEREAS, Some State jobs that are newly created or that
9 are open through attrition and some jobs created under State
10 contracts, can be filled by qualified welfare recipients
11 without compromising the integrity of the hiring process,
12 contractor profits, collective bargaining agreements, timely
13 completion of projects, or the health and safety of Illinois
14 workers; and

15 WHEREAS, To the extent that these jobs are filled by
16 welfare recipients, the State accomplishes 4 important
17 governmental objectives simultaneously: (1) the alleviation
18 of welfare dependency, ensuring of economic self-sufficiency,
19 and lifting of individuals and families out of poverty, (2)
20 the stabilization of families and communities that are
21 hardest hit by persistent poverty and unemployment, (3) the
22 accomplishment of the essential work of the State which must
23 be performed through these jobs, and (4) the reduction of
24 State outlays for cash assistance and services for the poor;
25 and

26 WHEREAS, The State's immediate, direct, and significant
27 interest in relieving welfare dependency and the employment
28 of the poor in jobs generated through the expenditure of
29 State funds are important issues that must be addressed;
30 therefore be it

31 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
32 NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that

1 the Welfare to Work Task Force is created and shall consist
2 of 5 members appointed as follows: 3 members of the House of
3 Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of
4 Representatives, one of whom shall be designated the
5 chairperson by the Speaker of the House of Representatives,
6 and 2 members of the House of Representatives appointed by
7 the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, all of
8 whom shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed
9 for their reasonable and necessary expenses from funds
10 appropriated for that purpose; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall study various issues
12 relating to the placement of qualified welfare recipients in
13 State jobs or jobs contracted out by the State; the Task
14 Force shall examine, among any other issues it chooses to
15 investigate, the following issues: (1) the feasibility of
16 requiring State agencies to provide the Department of Human
17 Services with a job announcement simultaneously with the
18 posting of its positions, except for those positions subject
19 to recall by laid-off employees, or those otherwise exempt,
20 (2) the ability of the Department of Human Services to review
21 positions, make eligibility determinations, recruit and
22 screen potential employees, and refer aid recipients to fill
23 those positions, and (3) the feasibility of requiring
24 employers to employ qualified aid recipients for not less
25 than 5% of the hours worked on a State contract; and be it
26 further

27 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall receive the
28 assistance of legislative staff, may employ skilled experts
29 with the approval of the Speaker of the House of
30 Representatives, and shall report its findings to the General
31 Assembly on or before January 7, 2004.