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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The General Assembly of the State of Illinois is committed to seeing that every one of the citizens of the State of Illinois has decent, safe, and affordable housing; and

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WHEREAS, A growing number of citizens of the State of Illinois are currently homeless, and shelter nights rose by 24% from 2000 to 2001 (before the current economic turndown), as shown by Department of Human Services data (25% in Chicago, 23% in the rest of the State; 43% in the collar counties, 1% in the northern counties, 25% in the central counties, and 54% in the southern counties); and

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WHEREAS, In the last 10 years, the number of shelter nights for the whole State rose by 89%, with increases experienced every year since 1994; and

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WHEREAS, Homelessness is very expensive in terms of public dollars expended for emergency hospital visits, in-patient stays, emergency substance abuse treatment, and jail stays; very costly in terms of human suffering and generations of lives wasted; and very demoralizing to all citizen; and

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WHEREAS, Supportive housing has, through extensive research, been shown to be effective in enabling even the most vulnerable people and families to remain housed and to take appropriate steps to move towards employment and independence, and has been shown, in a recent major study, to be cost efficient, virtually expending the same amount in public dollars as the costs of homelessness; and

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WHEREAS, Long-term and repeatedly homeless individuals and families comprise only approximately 20% of the total homeless population, but use approximately 80% of total

1 shelter days, effectively living in the shelter system; and

2 WHEREAS, This use of homeless services does not end the
3 homelessness of the most vulnerable individuals and families
4 using the services and at the same time prevents other more
5 short-term or transitionally homeless families and
6 individuals who could benefit from the services from
7 accessing these services; therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-THIRD GENERAL
9 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we commit ourselves,
10 along with a growing number of states and cities across the
11 nation, to end both long-term and repeated homelessness in
12 Illinois in 10 years by creating and sustaining 8,000 units
13 of permanent supportive housing in Illinois in the coming
14 decade targeted for the most vulnerable homeless families and
15 individuals; ending the practice of discharging large numbers
16 of people into homelessness from hospitals, mental health and
17 chemical dependency treatment facilities, jails, and prisons;
18 securing investments in additional affordable and supportive
19 housing alternatives so that supportive housing can be made
20 available to those who do become homeless and need support
21 services to stay housed; and gradually shifting resources in
22 a manner determined by each community so that those who
23 become homeless can be expediently re-housed and connected to
24 supportive services; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That we will consider these goals and
26 strategies in establishing our policies and budgets; and be
27 it further

28 RESOLVED, That we encourage municipalities, counties,
29 townships, other governmental bodies, and related agencies to
30 adopt these goals and strategies in establishing their
31 policies and budgets.