



1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, In the 2004-2005 school year, over 321,000  
3 children with disabilities were served in special education  
4 programs across Illinois; and

5 WHEREAS, The number of children in special education  
6 programs has risen 12% in the last 5 years alone, and special  
7 education accounts for approximately 21% of all education  
8 spending; and

9 WHEREAS, The federal government has established a goal of  
10 reimbursing 40% of the costs of special education incurred by  
11 school districts, but it currently provides only 18% of costs  
12 nationally and only 14% in Illinois; and

13 WHEREAS, Illinois has failed for decades to update  
14 reimbursement rates for special education costs, with the last  
15 reimbursement rate set in 1973 for special education orphanage  
16 tuition, in 1985 for special education personnel, in 1978 for  
17 special education private tuition, in 1976 for special  
18 education summer school, and in 1965 for special education  
19 transportation; and

20 WHEREAS, Illinois has continued to prorate special  
21 education mandated categoricals at less than 100%, with the  
22 FY06 budget prorating these mandated categoricals at 97%; and

23 WHEREAS, Even if Illinois fully funded mandated  
24 categoricals at 100%, this would still only represent partial  
25 funding, as the reimbursement rates are severely outdated; and

26 WHEREAS, Illinois school districts currently spend an  
27 estimated \$1 billion from their own general education funds to  
28 meet the unreimbursed costs of special education services that  
29 are mandated by federal and State laws and administrative

1 rules; and

2 WHEREAS, Special education continues to represent a  
3 growing financial burden on school districts as the need for  
4 services increases while State and federal funding fails to  
5 increase along with that need; therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
7 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
8 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that a task force shall be created to  
9 study current special education funding needs and to make  
10 recommendations as to how the State can increase special  
11 education funding and ease the financial burden on school  
12 districts; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the task force shall consist of the State  
14 Superintendent of Education (or his or her designee) plus 16  
15 members appointed as follows: the House Majority Leader and the  
16 House Minority Leader shall each appoint one representative,  
17 the Senate President and the Senate Minority Leader shall each  
18 appoint one senator, and these 4 leaders shall each appoint 3  
19 public members representing the interests of special education  
20 administrators and services, school districts, and disability  
21 advocates; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the task force shall be facilitated by the  
23 State Board of Education; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the task force shall report its findings and  
25 recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by  
26 January 1, 2007; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
28 transmitted to the State Superintendent of Education.