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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, United States Secretary of Education Margaret
3 Spellings has announced guidelines, referred to as a New Path
4 for the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, based on a
5 set of "common sense" principles to guide states in meeting the
6 Act's goals; and

7 WHEREAS, This New Path maintains the primary elements of
8 the Act, such as the annual testing and reporting of student
9 subgroup data, but also emphasizes increasing individual
10 student achievement, narrowing the achievement gap, and
11 encouraging sound overall state education policies that ensure
12 that progress is being made; and

13 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Education has
14 recognized that schools serving certain designated subgroups,
15 such as children who are limited English speakers and children
16 who have disabilities, require flexibility in determining
17 adequate yearly progress; and

18 WHEREAS, This type of flexibility is also needed for
19 schools that serve other vulnerable population groups, such as
20 high school drop-outs who return to school and who, for reasons
21 including but not limited to their low academic achievement
22 levels, are often confronted with multiple barriers that impede
23 their academic progress; and

24 WHEREAS, Some states have requested permission to
25 implement growth-based accountability models, also called
26 "value-added models," which give schools credit for student
27 improvement over time by tracking individual student
28 achievement from year to year, and which show promise as fair,
29 reliable, flexible, and innovative methods for measuring
30 school and student improvement; and

1 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Education has
2 responded to the states' requests by agreeing to a rigorous
3 evaluation of growth-based accountability models and their
4 ability to help meet the laudable goals of the federal No Child
5 Left Behind Act of 2001; therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL
7 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
8 CONCURRING HEREIN, that we urge the United States Department of
9 Education to use more flexible criteria in determining adequate
10 yearly progress under the federal No Child Left Behind Act; and
11 be it further

12 RESOLVED, That there is hereby created a No Child Left
13 Behind Growth-Model Task Force to examine the models proposed
14 by other states and to explore the potential for a growth model
15 to give a clearer, fairer picture of individual student
16 progress, such as the progress of those students in alternative
17 schools; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall consist of (i) the
19 Governor or his designee, (ii) the State Superintendent of
20 Education or his designee, (iii) one member appointed by a
21 statewide association representing principals, (iv) one member
22 representing a charter school serving at-risk high school
23 drop-outs who have returned to school, (v) one member appointed
24 by an organization representing regional superintendents of
25 schools, (vi) one member appointed by a statewide organization
26 representing school administrators, (v) one member appointed
27 by a statewide organization that represents both parents and
28 teachers, (vi) one member appointed by a statewide organization
29 representing administrators of special education, (vii) one
30 member who is a representative from a statewide alternative
31 education association, and (viii) an additional member
32 appointed by the State Superintendent of Education based on the
33 individual's knowledge of NCLB regulations or growth model

1 research and design, or both; and that the State Board of
2 Education shall provide such staff assistance to the Task Force
3 as is reasonably required for the proper performance of its
4 responsibilities; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall hold, at minimum, four
6 meetings, with at least one meeting held in Chicago and one
7 meeting held in Springfield, and it shall report its findings
8 to the General Assembly on or before January 1, 2007; and be it
9 further

10 RESOLVED, That the Task Force is abolished upon completing
11 its report; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
13 delivered to the U.S. Secretary of Education, the State Board
14 of Education, the Speaker of the United States House of
15 Representatives, the President pro tempore of the United States
16 Senate, and to each member of the Illinois Congressional
17 delegation.