



1 SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 700

2 WHEREAS, Illinois barns are witnesses to the role of
3 agriculture in our State's image and its economy and serve as
4 scenic landmarks for residents and visitors alike; and

5 WHEREAS, Historic barns and agricultural structures across
6 rural Illinois symbolize important Illinois values of
7 heritage, hard work, productivity, and closeness to the land
8 and community with the people who built them; and

9 WHEREAS, Historic barns uphold the historic rural
10 qualities of the State's landscape, along with providing a
11 picturesque atmosphere for the State's citizens and visitors to
12 enjoy; and

13 WHEREAS, These structures provide insight into our
14 distinctive agricultural history and heritage, as well as a
15 visual description of rural life, both past and present, in
16 Illinois; and

17 WHEREAS, Local historic preservation and community
18 organizations in at least ten counties across Illinois
19 highlight their local barns with organized or self-guided barn
20 tours, the first of which began in Greene County in 1984 and
21 has continued every September since as part of Greene County
22 Days; and

23 WHEREAS, One private Illinois barn preservation
24 organization, the Illinois Barn Alliance, released a statewide
25 survey in August, 2005, and found that residents in 46 Illinois
26 counties have conducted barn surveys, organized barn tours, or
27 engaged in other activities that directly promote historic
28 barns; and

29 WHEREAS, While historic barns are cherished by so many

1 Illinois residents and visitors, many barns can no longer
2 produce the necessary income to prevent their loss by decay or
3 demolition, or they become threatened when the surrounding land
4 is removed from active agricultural use; and

5 WHEREAS, Many states, including Iowa, Wisconsin, New York,
6 Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire enacted legislation creating
7 barn preservation and restoration programs to assist barn
8 owners with their efforts to preserve these cultural and
9 architectural treasures for the enjoyment and economic benefit
10 of this and future generations; therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL
12 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that the Department of
13 Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), in consultation with
14 the Department of Agriculture, the Illinois Historic
15 Preservation Agency, and any other public entities as the DCEO
16 deems necessary, shall conduct a study of (i) current historic
17 barn restoration/preservation efforts and needs in Illinois,
18 (ii) the benefits that an historic barn
19 restoration/preservation program could have in the context of
20 the creation of a comprehensive plan for the development and
21 promotion of tourism in rural areas, including the potential
22 for expanded heritage tourism efforts to take advantage of the
23 increased interest in Lincoln and the underground railroad
24 sites, as well as the potential for expanded agricultural and
25 natural resource tourism efforts, and (iii) programs and
26 incentives in place in other states to promote historic barn
27 restoration and preservation; the DCEO shall report its
28 findings to the Governor and the General Assembly by December
29 1, 2006; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That in conducting its study the Department of
31 Commerce and Economic Opportunity shall also consult with the
32 Illinois Barn Alliance and any other private local historical,
33 preservation, and community organizations engaged in promoting

1 and preserving historic barns in their communities or counties;
2 and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution shall be
4 presented to the Director of Commerce and Economic Opportunity,
5 to the Director of Agriculture, and to the Director of the
6 Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.