



HJ0085

LRB095 15348 NHT 41336 r

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Several recent economic and academic studies have  
3 demonstrated a growing skills gap among workers in the nation;  
4 and

5 WHEREAS, These studies have demonstrated that the greatest  
6 disparity in skills exists among the nation's traditionally  
7 underrepresented minority populations, specifically African  
8 Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans; and

9 WHEREAS, A logical and efficient manner of addressing this  
10 skill gap is through the provision of post-secondary education;  
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Illinois needs to improve college access for all  
13 of its citizens in order to address the skill gap, provide a  
14 cadre of more qualified and competent workers for Illinois  
15 businesses, and improve the State economy; and

16 WHEREAS, Traditionally underrepresented populations,  
17 specifically African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans,  
18 make up an increasingly higher percentage of the State's  
19 population, and thus will be called upon to make up an  
20 increasingly higher percentage of the State's workforce; and

1           WHEREAS, Traditionally underrepresented populations,  
2 specifically African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans,  
3 make up a disproportionately lower percentage of those students  
4 attending colleges and universities in Illinois as compared to  
5 their overall Illinois population; and

6           WHEREAS, It has been demonstrated that traditionally  
7 underrepresented student populations are more successful in  
8 their degree attainment when they are taught and supported by  
9 faculty and staff that includes those of similar ethnic and  
10 cultural backgrounds; and

11           WHEREAS, Traditionally underrepresented populations,  
12 specifically African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans,  
13 make up a disproportionately lower percentage of the faculty  
14 and staff at colleges and universities in Illinois as compared  
15 to their overall Illinois population; therefore, be it

16           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
17 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
18 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that a bi-partisan task force on the  
19 status of underrepresented minorities in higher education is  
20 commissioned to evaluate the status of traditionally  
21 underrepresented populations, specifically African Americans,  
22 Latinos, and Native Americans, in this State's public and  
23 private institutions of higher education; and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That membership on this task force include 2  
2   Republican and 2 Democrat members of the House of  
3   Representatives, 2 Republican and 2 Democrat members of the  
4   Senate, and the directors or their designees of the following  
5   organizations: the State Board of Education, the Board of  
6   Higher Education, the Illinois Student Assistance Commission,  
7   the Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges and  
8   Universities, the Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in  
9   Higher Education, and the Illinois Latino Council on Higher  
10   Education; and be it further

11           RESOLVED, That this task force assess accessibility of  
12   institutions of higher education in Illinois for those in the  
13   above-stated Illinois populations who want to enroll as  
14   students; and be it further

15           RESOLVED, That the task force assess the representation of  
16   these populations in all job categories, including faculty,  
17   staff, and civil service, at institutions of higher education  
18   in Illinois; and be it further

19           RESOLVED, That the task force assess issues of campus  
20   climate that might affect the success of students and the  
21   retention of faculty and staff at institutions of higher  
22   education in Illinois; and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That the task force pay particular attention  
2 during its assessment of those college and university programs  
3 that target areas of the most drastic skills disparity, as  
4 identified by previously published economic and academic  
5 studies; and be it further

6           RESOLVED, That in order to make these assessments, the task  
7 force hold a series of regional public hearings on college and  
8 university campuses across the State; and be it further

9           RESOLVED, That this task force shall file a report with the  
10 General Assembly, the Office of the Governor, the State Board  
11 of Education, and the Board of Higher Education upon completion  
12 of its assessments, and that this report shall include any  
13 findings and recommendations for further legislative action  
14 that are generated as a result of the task force's work; and be  
15 it further

16           RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
17 delivered to the directors of the State Board of Education, the  
18 Board of Higher Education, the Illinois Student Assistance  
19 Commission, the Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges  
20 and Universities, the Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in  
21 Higher Education, and the Illinois Latino Council on Higher  
22 Education.