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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The Illinois economy is transforming; despite
3 having the nation's fifth largest state economy, the State
4 ranked only 35th in economic growth over the last 15 years; and

5 WHEREAS, Illinois' economic growth is lagging because we
6 are losing good jobs; between 1990 and 2005, the number of
7 manufacturing jobs in Illinois declined by 24.3%, or 222,500;
8 during this same period, 34% of job growth occurred in
9 education, health services, and hospitality, sectors that
10 currently pay, on average, 29% less than manufacturing jobs;
11 adjusted for inflation, median wages have declined leaving
12 families with the same income they had in 1989; nearly 685,000
13 working Illinoisans earn less than the living wage for a single
14 adult - \$17,950 annually; and

15 WHEREAS, 40% of new job growth will be in mid- to high-wage
16 sectors; manufacturers will continue to be a major employer,
17 but most of these jobs will require increasingly sophisticated
18 levels of skill; in fact, over 35% of Illinois' new jobs will
19 require an associate degree or higher and 71% of the highest
20 wage jobs will require a post-secondary degree; and

21 WHEREAS, To attract high wage jobs, Illinois will need
22 high-skilled workers; but, at the same time that our economy

1 demands skilled workers in order to remain competitive and
2 thrive, federal funds for workforce development continue to
3 shrink, after adjusting for inflation; and

4 WHEREAS, It is time for Illinois to make a new commitment;
5 about 594,000 twenty-five to fifty-four year olds have no high
6 school diploma or equivalent; 60% of these working age
7 individuals are without an associate degree or higher; just 35%
8 of Illinois' young adults are enrolled in postsecondary
9 education; over the next 15 years, 33% of the State's labor
10 force will retire and the fastest growing segments of our
11 population who must replace them have generally lower education
12 levels; and

13 WHEREAS, Strong workforce development is a key driver of
14 long-term business retention and growth; additionally,
15 Illinois must use its economic development policies
16 strategically targeting disadvantage areas to foster high-wage
17 job creation and to leverage infrastructure investments; these
18 are the tools that can ensure Illinois' families, businesses,
19 and communities enjoy a prosperous future; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
21 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that,
22 to compete successfully in a global economy and end poverty,
23 Illinois needs an integrated economic and workforce

1 development policy that works for everyone and that includes
2 producing skilled workers in strong businesses with good jobs
3 that foster thriving communities; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That this new policy must provide lasting value
5 to Illinois' 10 economic regions and offer sustainable
6 programming that allows for the flexibility necessary to
7 address regional differences in the economy, business climate
8 and the workforce; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly create, upon passage of
10 this resolution, a bipartisan task force that shall hold public
11 hearings, gather evidence, develop, and propose legislation
12 and ultimately furnish a report that will:

13 (1) Ensure Illinoisans develop the skills businesses
14 demand in a modern economy.

15 (2) Create career paths and job opportunities for all
16 working-age Illinoisans, from the least skilled and most
17 disadvantaged to middle income workers whose skills have
18 become obsolete.

19 (3) Invest resources in the capital and human
20 infrastructure needed to attract and retain "high road"
21 employers that provide quality jobs, wages, and benefits.

22 (4) Encourage entrepreneurship, small business growth,
23 technology transfers from Illinois' higher education
24 system, and other economic/workforce development

1 innovation in all communities across Illinois to grow
2 competitive State businesses.

3 (5) Support economic and workforce development that is
4 environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable.