



SR0242

LRB095 12315 CMK 36938 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, According to U.S. Census Bureau data for 2004,
3 18%, or 51,200,000 people in the U.S. are persons with
4 disabilities; and

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WHEREAS, According to data from the 2004 American Community
6 Survey, 12.4%, or 1,400,000 people in Illinois are persons with
7 disabilities; and

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WHEREAS, By 2030, 1,200,000 individuals nationwide with
9 developmental disabilities will be over the age of 60; and

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WHEREAS, In the U.S., 35% of people with a mental illness
11 or developmental disability live with caregivers between ages
12 of 40-60, and 25% live with caregivers over the age of 60; and

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WHEREAS, 1 in 6 people provide care for a chronically ill,
14 older adult, friend or relative with a disability without
15 public funds; and

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WHEREAS, Currently more than 50% of all direct support
17 positions, often known as caregivers, personal assistants or
18 homecare aides, turnover every year in the U.S.; in Illinois,
19 turnover in residential and vocational settings is nearly 70%,
20 with an estimated cost ranging from \$2,000 to \$5,000 to replace

1 a direct support worker; the high turnover results in
2 vacancies, puts unfair demands on remaining workers and, most
3 importantly, negatively impacts the quality and consistency of
4 support to people with disabilities and mental illness; and

5 WHEREAS, Poor wages and heavy job demands have caused this
6 crisis; in 2005, a report by the Illinois Direct Support
7 Professional Workforce Initiative, using data from multiple
8 studies, found that the average annual income for direct
9 support professionals in residential settings, vocational
10 settings, and in-home and respite settings ranged from \$18,366
11 to \$22,651; the current federal poverty level for a family of
12 four is \$20,650; and

13 WHEREAS, It is essential that people with disabilities and
14 mental illness have access to support that allows them to live
15 and work in the communities of their choice; and

16 WHEREAS, In order to stabilize and increase the number of
17 direct support professionals in the workforce, the wages and
18 benefits of direct support professionals must be improved and
19 made equitable among long term support options; and

20 WHEREAS, Medicaid is the single-largest payor of long-term
21 support and services for people with disabilities; enhanced
22 Federal Medicaid matching funds should be available to assist

1 states committed to addressing wage differentials among direct
2 support professionals by increasing the wages of direct support
3 professionals and supporting and improving the stability of the
4 direct support professional workforce; and

5 WHEREAS, The Direct Support Professionals Fairness and
6 Security Act of 2007, as introduced in the U.S. House of
7 Representatives in H.R. 1279, would provide a voluntary option
8 to states to receive additional Medicaid funding to reimburse
9 community-based organizations to raise the wages of direct
10 support professionals; therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL
12 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we urge the Congress of
13 the United States to support and pass H.R. 1279 so that states
14 will have additional options to raise the wages of direct
15 support professionals; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That we encourage the State of Illinois to take
17 advantage of this option should it become available; and be it
18 further

19 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be sent
20 to President George W. Bush and each member of the Illinois
21 congressional delegation.