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1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, In 2007, the Ninety-fifth General Assembly  
3 adopted House Joint Resolution 69, directing the Board of  
4 Higher Education to develop a master plan for Illinois higher  
5 education; and

6 WHEREAS, On December 9, 2008, the Board of Higher Education  
7 unanimously endorsed the "Public Agenda for College and Career  
8 Success" as the blueprint to guide education policy in this  
9 State for the next decade, codifying 4 major goals:

10 (1) match Illinois' educational attainment to the  
11 best-performing U.S. states and world countries;

12 (2) ensure college affordability for students,  
13 families, and taxpayers;

14 (3) increase quality postsecondary credentials and  
15 elevate higher education graduation rates to meet the  
16 demands of a global society; and

17 (4) better integrate Illinois' educational, research,  
18 and innovation assets to meet the economic needs of this  
19 State and its regions; and

20 WHEREAS, The Public Agenda recommends the specific goal of  
21 making this State one of the 5 most affordable states in the  
22 country; and

1           WHEREAS, The Public Agenda identifies several barriers to  
2 this goal:

3           (1) dwindling State support for colleges, which  
4 equates to significant tuition increases;

5           (2) the diminished buying power of the Monetary Award  
6 Program (MAP), resulting from the failure of State  
7 financial aid to keep pace with tuition increases;

8           (3) the denial of MAP awards to one-fourth of eligible  
9 students because of funding shortfalls;

10           (4) increased reliance on loans by middle-income  
11 students to finance college;

12           (5) increased work hours for students to pay for rising  
13 tuition, often extending their time-to-degree and total  
14 educational costs; and

15           (6) lack of support for middle-income students (those  
16 at the high end of the second income quintile through the  
17 low end of the fourth income quintile), who typically do  
18 not qualify for need-based grant aid from either State or  
19 federal sources and have been greatly affected by the rise  
20 in out-of-pocket costs as well; and

21           WHEREAS, The Public Agenda recommends priorities,  
22 strategies, and actions to address the growing affordability  
23 challenge; therefore, be it

24           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE

1 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
2 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that the Board of Higher Education,  
3 working in concert with the Illinois Student Assistance  
4 Commission and the Illinois Community College Board, shall  
5 undertake a study of college affordability and funding, based  
6 on the findings and recommendations of the Public Agenda for  
7 College and Career Success and including the following:

8 (1) a review of State financial aid programs for  
9 low-income students to ensure that programs are effective,  
10 efficient, widely understood, and aligned with all Public  
11 Agenda goals;

12 (2) strategies to help students achieve their  
13 educational objectives faster;

14 (3) measures to assist middle-income students who do  
15 not typically qualify for need-based grant aid; and

16 (4) steps to find institutional operating efficiencies  
17 that reduce costs while expanding access and maintaining  
18 quality; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the Board of Higher Education, the Illinois  
20 Student Assistance Commission, and the Illinois Community  
21 College Board shall prepare a report with findings and  
22 recommendations on improving college affordability and higher  
23 education funding and submit that report to the General  
24 Assembly; and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
2 delivered to the chairpersons of the Board of Higher Education,  
3 the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, and the Illinois  
4 Community College Board.