

HR0050 Enrolled

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whole; and

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2 WHEREAS, Illinois has a reputation economic as an 3 powerhouse, demonstrated by globally recognized businesses 4 producing cutting edge technologies and high-value services, a 5 gross state product of more than \$600 billion in 2007, and the 6 fifth largest state economy in the nation; and 7 WHEREAS, Jobs that require more than a high school 8 education but less than a 4-year degree ("middle-skill jobs") 9 currently make up the largest segment of jobs in this State's 10 economy and will continue to do so for years to come; and 11 WHEREAS, More than half of Illinois jobs in 2006 were middle-skill jobs, representing more than 3 million workers; 12 13 and 14 WHEREAS, The portion of jobs that are middle-skill jobs in

HOUSE RESOLUTION 50

WHEREAS, The demand for middle-skill workers in Illinois is expected to increase between 2004 and 2014, to about one million middle-skill job openings; and

this State is greater than the portion in the nation as a

20 WHEREAS, Middle-skill jobs will be the majority of jobs

1 needed to build this State's and the nation's green economy;

- 2 and
- 3 WHEREAS, Middle-skill workers include those that work in
- 4 occupations critical to our communities' safety and
- 5 infrastructure, including police officers, fire fighters,
- 6 nurses, therapists and other medical technicians, air traffic
- 7 controllers, electricians, and mechanics; and
- 8 WHEREAS, Middle-skill jobs are local, hands-on jobs and are
- 9 unlikely to be outsourced to other countries; and
- 10 WHEREAS, In Illinois, 51% of all jobs are classified as
- 11 middle-skill, but only 43% of Illinois workers likely have the
- 12 education and training required to fill these positions; and
- 13 WHEREAS, The National Commission on Adult Literacy's most
- recent report revealed that more than 350,000 Illinoisans
- 15 between the ages of 18 and 64 lacked a high school credential;
- 16 and
- 17 WHEREAS, These trends will worsen in Illinois over the next
- 18 15 years as the proportion of low-skill workers in this State's
- 19 workforce is likely to increase at the same time that the
- 20 percentage of middle-skill workers is projected to decline; and

- 1 WHEREAS, At the same time there is a decline in educational 2 attainment in the workforce, there has been a steady and steep decline in federal funding for workforce education and training 3 programs, including funding that supports adults to 4 5 associate degrees, vocational certificates, apprenticeships that are offered in both community-based 6 7 training organizations and community colleges; and
- 8 WHEREAS, Two-thirds of the people who will be in this 9 State's workforce in the year 2020 were already working adults 10 in 2005, which means that most of the workforce of 2020 will be 11 people already beyond grade K through 12 education; and
- WHEREAS, We need to prepare adults currently in the workforce, who could benefit significantly from new investments in education and training, to be part of the solution to the middle-skill gap facing our State today and in the years ahead; therefore, be it
- 17 RESOLVED, BYTHE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ΟF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that 18 19 this State make it a priority that up to 2 years of 20 post-secondary education or training is available to all citizens in this State; and be it further 21
- 22 RESOLVED, That this educational goal must be the core of

- our State's economic development, workforce development, and
- post-secondary education strategies; and be it further
- 3 RESOLVED, That if our economic development, workforce
- 4 development, and post-secondary education policies are built
- 5 from this shared goal to individuals, families and communities
- 6 across our State will experience greater prosperity.