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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success has documented the critical role higher education plays in economic recovery and growth, particularly in ensuring this State has an educated workforce to meet the needs of business and industry; and

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WHEREAS, The Illinois Public Agenda also has documented the fact that at least some postsecondary education is an essential credential for jobs in the present and future global marketplace; and

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WHEREAS, 40.8% of Illinois adults held a college degree in 2008, while the best-performing countries in the world averaged 55% of adults holding a college degree; and

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WHEREAS, To achieve a level of 60% of adults holding a college degree by 2025, the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems estimates that this State will need to increase the number of degrees awarded by 4,671 each year, for a total of 635,243 additional degrees between 2010 and 2025; and

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WHEREAS, The State of Illinois and its higher education institutions have a responsibility for student success,

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1 including improved student retention, program completion, and
2 graduation; and

3 WHEREAS, Funding for community colleges and public
4 universities in Fiscal Year 2010 is \$592 million, or 26% below
5 appropriations in Fiscal Year 2002 after accounting for
6 inflation; and

7 WHEREAS, Tuition and fee rates for entering students have
8 escalated 86% at public universities between Fiscal Year 2004
9 and Fiscal Year 2010 and by 52% at community colleges during
10 that period; and

11 WHEREAS, Between Fiscal Year 2002 and Fiscal Year 2010,
12 appropriations for the Monetary Award Program, the State's
13 premier, need-based, student financial aid program, fell by
14 nearly \$57 million or 12%, after accounting for inflation; and

15 WHEREAS, Many public universities and community colleges
16 have experienced severe cash flow crises due to delinquent
17 payments of Fiscal Year 2010 State appropriations; and

18 WHEREAS, The Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career
19 Success has recommended that the Board of Higher Education, in
20 consultation with other higher education agencies, "develop a
21 comprehensive funding strategy that makes more explicit and

1 intentional the links between state appropriations, tuition,
2 and need-based student financial aid"; therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL
4 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
5 CONCURRING HEREIN, that the Board of Higher Education establish
6 a Higher Education Finance Study Commission; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the Commission shall be comprised of 11
8 members, including one senator appointed by the President of
9 the Senate, one senator appointed by the Minority Leader of the
10 Senate, one representative appointed by the Speaker of the
11 House, and one representative appointed by the Minority Leader
12 of the House and the remaining 7 members appointed by the Board
13 of Higher Education to represent a cross-section of the higher
14 education community as well as experts in higher education
15 finance; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Commission's study shall include, but
17 not be limited to, the following:

18 (1) examining the history and means of higher education
19 funding in this State, comparing funding with other states
20 and peer institutions, and reviewing funding mechanisms
21 for adequacy, equity, and reliability;

22 (2) comparing the productivity of Illinois higher
23 education to other state systems and the productivity of

1 public colleges and universities to peer institutions;

2 (3) analyzing best practices implemented in other
3 states, such as Ohio and Indiana, for incentivizing
4 certificate and degree completion, including incentives
5 for students and for institutions;

6 (4) reviewing tuition and financial aid policies and
7 practices and their roles in improving certificate and
8 degree completion; and

9 (5) considering alternative funding mechanisms that
10 will advance the goals of the Illinois Public Agenda; and
11 be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the Commission consult with representatives
13 of other states or other higher education finance experts, as
14 appropriate, to inform the Commission about best practices; and
15 be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Commission shall report its findings and
17 recommendations to the Board of Higher Education, the Illinois
18 Community College Board, and the Illinois Student Assistance
19 Commission for adoption by these agencies; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the Commission shall report its findings and
21 recommendations to the General Assembly and the Governor on or
22 before December 1, 2010; 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 Community College Board, and the Illinois Student
4 Assistance Commission.