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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Every hour of every school day, 16 students become dropouts in the City of Chicago; the majority of these students are African American and Latino; and

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WHEREAS, Youth Connection Charter School is a not-for-profit charter school association that caters to drop out students, allowing them a second chance to earn a degree and providing them with professional skills to achieve rewarding careers; and

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WHEREAS, The average dropout rate for Chicago Public Schools for the past five years was 41%; alarmingly, the average age of a student who drops out is 18 or 19, and the average reading comprehension is at the 7th grade level; 40% of these dropouts read below a 6th grade level; and

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WHEREAS, 75% of America's state prison inmates are high school dropouts; additionally, young adults who become dropouts are over three times more likely than high school graduates to be arrested in their lifetime; and

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WHEREAS, It is tragically clear that a high number of high school dropouts do not achieve at the same level that people with high school degrees, are more frequently incarcerated, and

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1 are predominately African American or Latino; and

2 WHEREAS, Chicago Public Schools has been battling the
3 problem of high drop out rates, but, sadly, the number has not
4 been able to drop below 40%; and

5 WHEREAS, Youth Connection Charter School re-enrolls high
6 school dropouts and achieves a higher graduation rate than
7 Chicago Public Schools with this already marginalized
8 population; and

9 WHEREAS, Youth Connection Charter School has a current
10 waiting list of 1,200 students; sadly, these students who are
11 unable to enroll face the same challenges and negative
12 consequences that other dropouts face, despite the fact that
13 they are trying to obtain a degree; and

14 WHEREAS, It is our obligation as a society to ensure that
15 all students regardless of race or socioeconomic status have
16 the right to achieve a high quality secondary education; Youth
17 Connection Charter School has the ability and the capacity to
18 help more young adults reach the achievement of obtaining a
19 high school diploma; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL
21 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we request that the

1 Chicago Public Schools allocate 2,100 seats to Youth Connection
2 Charter School over a seven-year period in order to address the
3 immediate and urgent need to help as many young adults as
4 possible achieve an education; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
6 presented to Chicago Public Schools CEO Ron Huberman.