



SR0289

LRB096 12952 NHT 26949 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, This State has a rich history of community and junior colleges by being the first state in the nation, in 1901, to house a public junior college, Joliet Junior College; and

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WHEREAS, Legislation was passed to hold referenda to set separate tax rates for both education and building funds to support junior college operations in 1943; and

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WHEREAS, State funding for junior college operations was first appropriated in 1955; and

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WHEREAS, The Junior College Act became effective on July 15, 1965, and in August of that same year, the first 9 members of the first Illinois Junior College Board were appointed; and

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WHEREAS, In 1973, the term "junior" was changed to "community" in statute; and

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WHEREAS, Since July 1990, the entire State has been included within community college district boundaries; and

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WHEREAS, The Illinois Community College System is the 3rd largest community college system in the nation; and

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1 WHEREAS, The Illinois Constitution declares that it is an
2 educational imperative to provide "educational development of
3 all persons to the limits of their capacities"; and

4 WHEREAS, The community college system's strategic plan,
5 entitled "Promise for Illinois Revisited", affirms the
6 community colleges' pledges to address workforce development
7 needs with flexible, responsive, and progressive programs;
8 offer rigorous programs designed for college and university
9 transfer; expand adult education and literacy programs; and
10 escalate efforts to meet the growing demand for trained
11 workers; and

12 WHEREAS, Community colleges' paramount mission is to
13 prepare people for college, for transfer to other colleges or
14 universities, and for employment in strong wage jobs that
15 demand high skills, while also providing adult literacy
16 education that prepares people for the GED, employment, or
17 college; strengthening their local economies through business
18 assistance and training; and providing community educational
19 programs and services; and

20 WHEREAS, In order to realize these objectives, the General
21 Assembly authorized certain tools, such as property taxes and
22 general revenue funding, to be used by community colleges in

1 order to fulfill their principal mission; and

2 WHEREAS, In recognition of an effort by some among the
3 community colleges to transform themselves and seriously alter
4 their mission, we, the members of the General Assembly, need to
5 reevaluate and reassess those fundamental beliefs and tools
6 that fulfill that original mission of community colleges;
7 therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL
9 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that the General Assembly
10 needs to begin the reassessment of the fundamental beliefs and
11 tools that help fulfill the original mission of public
12 community colleges in this State; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Research Unit begin
14 reviewing the funding mechanisms of community colleges,
15 including the availability of property taxes, the General
16 Revenue Fund, and other revenue streams; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Board of Higher Education begin a
18 dialogue with the Illinois Community College Board, community
19 colleges, and other educational stakeholders regarding the
20 potential for changes to the funding mechanisms and the degree
21 and program approval for community colleges; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
2 delivered to the Legislative Research Unit and the Board of
3 Higher Education.