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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Teen REACH provides over 20,000 youth and parents in over 200 communities throughout the State with out-of-school time programs which have a track record of preventing risky behavior, keeping youth safe, and building essential skills to prepare them for the workforce and for a successful future; and

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WHEREAS, Funding for Illinois' Teen REACH programs will be substantially eliminated for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2011 and the entirety of Fiscal Year 2012 under proposals put forth by the Governor; and

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WHEREAS, The elimination of Teen REACH would immediately and drastically reduce quality after-school services throughout the State, leaving 20,000 youth without a safe place to go during out-of-school-time hours; and

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WHEREAS, Teen REACH has been independently evaluated and the results chosen for inclusion in the Harvard Family Research Project After-School Evaluation Database; Teen REACH contains key program components recognized as being part of a quality after-school program; the program has a 12-year track record of success and a strong infrastructure, and it is performance-measurement driven and includes detailed program standards, policies and procedures, technical assistance, and

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1 compliance monitoring of providers; and

2 WHEREAS, The Teen REACH program and its service have
3 allowed Illinois to access and leverage other federal dollars
4 for programs supporting youth; and

5 WHEREAS, Teen REACH is unique in providing a comprehensive
6 array of supports, including academic assistance, life-skills
7 building, mentoring, and job preparation; and

8 WHEREAS, Teen REACH is a critical support for at-risk
9 youth, primarily those aged 11-17, who confront multiple
10 barriers to success; and

11 WHEREAS, Teen REACH targets youth facing multiple risks,
12 including neighborhood violence, poverty, a lack of academic
13 support and of the opportunities needed to develop positive
14 life skills and avoid dangerous behavior; earlier surveys
15 revealed that nearly one-third of the Teen REACH youth surveyed
16 were from single-parent homes, and 77% were from low-income
17 families; Teen REACH youth have multiple risk factors
18 including:

- 19 (1) living in single-parent households;
20 (2) residing in households receiving TANF funds;
21 (3) experiencing academic difficulties;
22 (4) witnessing or being a victim of family violence;

- 1 (5) having siblings who dropped out of school;
- 2 (6) having siblings who are teen parents;
- 3 (7) having siblings who are involved in the juvenile
4 justice system;
- 5 (8) having one or both parents who are incarcerated;
- 6 (9) receiving services from DCFS or a partner delivery
7 system;
- 8 (10) being obese or otherwise nutritionally at-risk;
- 9 (11) having a parent or siblings who are involved with
10 substance abuse; and

11 WHEREAS, Youth are more likely to become victims of violent
12 crime or use drugs between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.
13 and research has shown that crime can decrease with the
14 presence of after-school programs; research indicates that
15 students who spend time in extracurricular activities are less
16 likely to use drugs or become teen parents; substantially
17 eliminating Teen REACH would strip neighborhoods of an
18 important tool for fighting juvenile crime, delinquency, and
19 risky behavior; and

20 WHEREAS, Such drastic funding and service reductions
21 undermine Public Act 96-1302, in which the General Assembly
22 declares that it is the policy of this State to provide all
23 young people between the ages of 6 and 19 with access to
24 quality after-school programs through a State commitment to

1 sufficient and sustainable funding for programs that promote
2 positive youth development; such drastic funding and service
3 reductions also undermine the State's investments in at-risk
4 youth at earlier stages of their life, by ending services
5 during a critical developmental period when they are most
6 at-risk of dropping out of school or becoming involved in risky
7 behavior; Teen REACH ensures that State investments in early
8 childhood and beyond will be successfully sustained over a
9 child's development through adolescence and into adulthood;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Youth engaged in quality after-school activities
12 demonstrate improved academic success and workforce skills
13 compared to youth who do not participate; youth with high
14 levels of participation in quality after-school programs show
15 better achievement in math, reading, and other subjects;
16 studies show they miss fewer days of school, have lower
17 drop-out rates, and higher graduation rates; studies of Teen
18 REACH reveal that over 90% of parents indicate their child is
19 completing homework more often as a result of Teen REACH, and
20 over 80% of parents say their child is more likely to prepare
21 for school projects and tests, has improved their study skills,
22 is more interested in school, is getting better grades, and is
23 a better reader as a result of Teen REACH; and

24 WHEREAS, The effective elimination of Teen REACH will harm

1 working families and negatively impact the quality of Illinois'
2 workforce as approximately 20,000 families will be forced to
3 find affordable, quality out-of-school alternatives; statewide
4 demand for services already far exceeds current supply, with
5 shortfall estimates between 60% and 70%; 70% of Teen REACH
6 youth surveyed indicated that without Teen REACH, they would
7 not be in an after-school program; low and middle-income
8 parents' job security may also be compromised, as parents may
9 be forced to decide between keeping their-much needed jobs and
10 staying home with their children to ensure they are safe;
11 studies demonstrate that after-school programs are an
12 important work support and are good for business with 54% of
13 parents surveyed by the After-School Corporation saying that
14 after-school programs allowed them to work more hours; it is
15 estimated that decreased employee productivity and increased
16 rates of absenteeism related to concerns for after-school care
17 cost businesses between \$496 and \$1,984 per employee per year,
18 depending on the employee's salary; and

19 WHEREAS, The State will incur increased costs due to
20 elimination of quality after-school options, including
21 increased educational and truancy costs, public safety costs
22 within the Department of Corrections, the Department of
23 Juvenile Justice, and local police departments, and increased
24 public health costs associated with youth substance abuse and
25 teen pregnancy; therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
2 NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
3 the House of Representatives deems that these draconian cuts
4 will decimate Illinois' after-school and youth development
5 system; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the drastic reduction of State funding for
7 Teen REACH shall be immediately halted; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution shall be
9 delivered to the Governor and the Secretary of the Department
10 of Human Services.