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1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The Great Migration, a long-term movement of  
3 African Americans from the South to the urban North,  
4 transformed Chicago and other northern cities between 1916 and  
5 1970; and

6 WHEREAS, Chicago attracted slightly more than 500,000 of  
7 the approximately 7 million African Americans who left the  
8 South during these decades; and

9 WHEREAS, Before the Great Migration, African Americans  
10 constituted just 2 percent of Chicago's population, but by 1970  
11 African Americans constituted 33 percent of Chicago's  
12 population; and

13 WHEREAS, What had been in the nineteenth century a largely  
14 southern and rural African American culture became a culture  
15 deeply infused with urban sensibility in the twentieth century;  
16 and

17 WHEREAS, What had been a marginalized population in Chicago  
18 emerged by the mid-twentieth century as a powerful force in the  
19 city's political, economic, and cultural life; and

20 WHEREAS, The Black Metropolis National Heritage Area

1 Project Steering Committee has worked with Congressman Bobby  
2 Rush on federal legislation for the Black Metropolis District  
3 National Heritage Area (NHA) and the Great Migration Centennial  
4 will serve as one of the benchmarks for the National Heritage  
5 Area which focuses on preservation, tourism & economic  
6 development, conservation, recreation, education &  
7 interpretation; and

8 WHEREAS, The Black Metropolis National Heritage Area  
9 Project Steering Committee has identified 10 Major Promise  
10 Programs for the next century which include:

- 11 1. Great Migration Public Art;
- 12 2. In Motion: African American Migration Experience;
- 13 3. Great Migration Trail: Rails to Trails Conservancy  
14 Project;
- 15 4. The Rosenwald Building;
- 16 5. The Chicago Blues Museum;
- 17 6. The Pullman Porter Great Migration Blues Trail;
- 18 7. Leadership Development Institute;
- 19 8. Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships;
- 20 9. Black Metropolis Social Innovation Fund; and
- 21 10. Bronzeville Postmark and Postal Sub-station; and

22 WHEREAS, The Great Migration Centennial celebrates the  
23 promise that Chicago once offered a people in search of a  
24 better life 100 years ago; and

1           WHEREAS, The theme adopted by the Black Metropolis National  
2 Heritage Project Steering Committee, "Creating a New Promise",  
3 acknowledges the hope that has been restored through the new  
4 political administration and addresses the need for the greater  
5 Chicagoland region to deliver on its promise and create a new  
6 social compact for the future; and

7           WHEREAS, To succeed in the 21st century global competition  
8 for jobs, prosperity, and quality of life for all, we must have  
9 inspiring and well-accepted plans to produce action; and

10           WHEREAS, The Great Migration Centennial will challenge  
11 children and adults throughout the region to make choices today  
12 that will define the way we live for the next century;  
13 therefore, be it

14           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL  
15 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
16 CONCURRING HEREIN, that the Illinois Great Migration  
17 Centennial Commission is created; and be it further

18           RESOLVED, That the members of the Commission shall include  
19 the President of the Senate or his designee and the Speaker of  
20 the House of Representatives or his designee, each serving as  
21 one of the co-chairpersons, the Governor or his designee, one

1 vice-chairperson appointed by the co-chairpersons, all of whom  
2 shall serve as the Executive Committee and 25 appointed  
3 members, with the Governor, the President of the Senate, the  
4 Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Minority Leader of  
5 the Senate, and the Minority Leader of the House of  
6 Representatives appointing 5 members each; and be it further

7       RESOLVED, That the appointed members shall serve without  
8 compensation, but shall be reimbursed for their reasonable and  
9 necessary expenses if funds allow; and be it further

10       RESOLVED, That the appointed members shall be from diverse  
11 backgrounds so as to reflect the diverse citizenry of Illinois  
12 working together for a common democratic cause, and that their  
13 individual qualifications shall include varying educational,  
14 professional, and civic experiences that bring different  
15 perspectives and cooperative outlooks to the Commission; and be  
16 it further

17       RESOLVED, That the purpose of the Commission is to plan for  
18 the Great Migration Centennial to be commemorated and  
19 celebrated from January to December 2016 and to:

- 20           1. Elevate the centennial of the Great Migration to a  
21           high profile bi-partisan event;
- 22           2. Recognize the Great Migration as the largest  
23           migration to ever occur in North America;

1           3. Stimulate and encourage the creation and growth of  
2 programs about the Great Migration;

3           4. Highlight and publicize the institutions in the  
4 State that are connected to the Great Migration and their  
5 impact;

6           5. Work with coordinated statewide groups  
7 commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Great  
8 Migration; and

9           6. Encourage communities and citizens to support and  
10 get involved in the commemoration; and be it further

11           RESOLVED, The Great Migration Centennial Commission serves  
12 to promote a deeper knowledge, understanding and engagement in  
13 the life and times of the African American Migration  
14 Experience, through conferences, publications, preservation of  
15 historic sites, and local, statewide and national observances  
16 as well as arts projects, forum, travel and tourism promotions  
17 and year-long celebration activities; and be it further

18           RESOLVED, That the Commission's preliminary goals are to  
19 develop:

20           1. a national honorary committee of historians,  
21 educators, authors, politicians, celebrities and other  
22 notables;

23           2. educational curriculum, events, tours, exhibits and  
24 programs at the elementary, high school, secondary,

1 graduate and post-graduate level;

2 3. a signature entertainment event for fundraising and  
3 broadcast purposes;

4 4. an educational symposium with university partners,  
5 the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment  
6 for the Humanities, the Illinois Arts Council, as well as  
7 private foundations and other philanthropic organizations;

8 5. a year-long cultural promotional event calendar  
9 supported by travel packages and other travel or tourism  
10 incentives; and

11 6. a logo and trademark design for official use on all  
12 Centennial commissioned related merchandise, apparel and  
13 products officially licensed; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the Commission shall meet as frequently as  
15 necessary, at the call of the co-chairpersons; and be it  
16 further

17 RESOLVED, The Commission shall have the option of creating  
18 a Council of Advisors and any working groups or committees it  
19 deems necessary; and, be it further

20 RESOLVED, The Commission shall have the option to  
21 collaborate with any Federal or local commissions designated to  
22 recognize the Great Migration Centennial commemoration via  
23 internet links, shared exhibits, activities and programs; and

1 be it further

2 RESOLVED, The Commission shall work with and establish  
3 opportunities with the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs  
4 and the Mayor's Office of Special Events; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the Commission shall, while working in  
6 coordination with and with the assistance of Black Metropolis  
7 National Heritage Area Project Steering Committee, broaden  
8 outreach by using established channels, including publicly  
9 supported media and electronic, computer-assisted  
10 communication systems, and elicit voluntary assistance from  
11 educational, legal, civic, and professional organizations and  
12 institutions, as well as, notable individuals; and be it  
13 further

14 RESOLVED, That no later than December 31, 2012, the  
15 Commission shall report to the General Assembly and the  
16 Governor on its planning progress to commemorate and celebrate  
17 the Great Migration Centennial; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the Department of Commerce and Economic  
19 Opportunity shall have primary responsibility for, and shall  
20 provide staffing and technical assistance and administrative  
21 support to, the Commission in its efforts; and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
2 delivered to the Governor of the State of Illinois.