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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, On July 2, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed into law the Land Grant College Act of 1862, sponsored by Vermont Congressman Justin Morrill; officially titled "An Act Donating Public Lands to the Several States and Territories which may provide Colleges for the Benefit of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts," the Morrill Act provided each state with 30,000 acres of federal land for each member in their Congressional delegation; the land was then sold by the states and the proceeds used to fund public colleges that focused on agriculture and the mechanical arts; sixty-nine colleges were funded by these land grants, including the University of Illinois; and

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WHEREAS, In 1890, the Second Morrill Land Grant Act of 1890 provided for an annual federal appropriation for the states, including for use in agriculture and mechanic arts community extension services, laying the basis for today's University of Illinois Extension Service and subsequent community extension services, including Illinois county fairs and the Illinois State Fair in Springfield; and

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WHEREAS, In 1901, Joliet Junior College was established as America's first public community college, as an experimental postgraduate high school program, the "brainchild" of J.

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1 Stanley Brown, Superintendent of Joliet Township High School  
2 and William Rainey Harper, President of the University of  
3 Chicago; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1917, the federal Smith-Hughes National  
5 Vocational Education Act of 1917 and subsequent federal  
6 legislation provided for annual federal funding for vocational  
7 and home economics programs, for vocational research,  
8 including through the Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984,  
9 and for many technology skill programs carried out in high  
10 schools and community colleges; and

11 WHEREAS, In 1936, the Rural Electrification Act provided  
12 for the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) rural  
13 development and the Rural Electrification Administration to  
14 take responsibility, through loans and grants to cooperatives  
15 and local providers, to bring electricity to rural America,  
16 and, in 1949, the Rural Electrification Administration took  
17 responsibility to extend telephone services to rural areas, and  
18 became linked in 1965 and 1972 with the Appalachian Regional  
19 Development and the Rural Development Acts, and became the  
20 Rural Utilities Service in 1994; and

21 WHEREAS, With the many research projects in Illinois which  
22 contributed to the development of the public Internet by 1995,  
23 the University of Illinois extension and other parties created

1 pioneering online community development tools available in  
2 every county by 1998, and, beginning in 2000, worked with the  
3 USDA-supported Rural Partners, Illinois Rural Health  
4 Association, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, the office  
5 of the Lt. Governor under several administrations, and provider  
6 and consumer organizations, to host annual Rural  
7 Telecommunication and Health Conferences, initially bringing  
8 together rural parties and then adding parties from  
9 metropolitan Chicago in strong networks linking Internet  
10 infrastructure, services, and policy; and

11 WHEREAS, In 1999 and 2000, the Illinois General Assembly  
12 adopted the Illinois Century Network law, linking schools,  
13 libraries, and other public institutions with Internet  
14 services, and the Eliminate the Digital Divide Law to provide  
15 digital literacy services through community technology centers  
16 in low income communities throughout the State; now, the  
17 Illinois Century Network serves 9000 schools, libraries, and  
18 community anchor institutions, and plays a role as a major  
19 "middle mile" fiber provider across the State; from 2002 to  
20 2005, the statewide Illinois Community Technology Consortium  
21 project (funded with \$1.3 million in community investment  
22 proceeds from Ameritech-SBC merger and matched by \$2.7 million  
23 in federal, community foundation, State, and local grants and  
24 in-kind contributions), worked with institutions and circuit  
25 riders in all regions of Illinois, with assistance from UI

1 Extension in evaluation, professional development, and  
2 network-building; and

3 WHEREAS, From these efforts, in 2004 the University of  
4 Illinois Urban and Regional Planning department created a  
5 policy report for Illinois Online, which became the basis for  
6 the creation of the Illinois Broadband Deployment Council in  
7 2005, and with a newly appointed Broadband Deployment Council,  
8 launched in 2010; and

9 WHEREAS, In 2007, the Illinois General Assembly adopted the  
10 High Speed Internet Act which led to the creation of the  
11 Illinois public-private partnership for broadband data,  
12 infrastructure access, and extension of broadband adoption and  
13 use; and

14 WHEREAS, In 2007, the Federal Communications Commission  
15 began its Pilot Rural Health Care Program to link rural  
16 hospitals, clinics, and providers through high speed Internet,  
17 primarily fiber and fixed wireless, and the Illinois Rural  
18 Health Net was awarded \$21 million for 3 years of activity,  
19 which began after the Illinois General Assembly, in January  
20 2009, provided matching funds, along with funding electronic  
21 health record pilot programs in all regions of Illinois; and

22 WHEREAS, In 2008, the Rural Utilities Service, through the

1 federal Farm Bill and the 2009 American Recovery and  
2 Reinvestment Act, took on major responsibilities to bring high  
3 speed Internet, or broadband Internet, infrastructure, and  
4 services to rural areas, in cooperation with the United States  
5 Department of Commerce's National Telecommunication and  
6 Information Administration; and

7 WHEREAS, In 2009 and 2010, Illinois institutions,  
8 companies, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations  
9 received about \$250 million in Federal USDA and Department of  
10 Commerce infrastructure and services multi-year awards,  
11 matched by broadband funds authorized by the Illinois General  
12 Assembly capital bill, and coordinated through a series of  
13 Regional Broadband Summits in Naperville, Chicago, Carbondale,  
14 and Champaign; and

15 WHEREAS, In 2011, Illinois budget constraints presented  
16 challenges to future financial support for some Internet  
17 extension programs, including Internet infrastructure and  
18 service programs after the completion of federal funding in  
19 2013, and the need to provide for Illinois Eliminate the  
20 Digital Divide digital literacy programs; public-private  
21 cooperation has been pledged to develop multi-year structures  
22 and commitments for sustainability of these programs,  
23 including through networks developed and strengthened by the  
24 Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity,

1 Illinois land grant institutions, State universities,  
2 community colleges, and community anchor institution networks  
3 in each of the 48 community college areas; and

4 WHEREAS, In fall 2011, the Federal Communications  
5 Commission launched the Universal Service Reform Program to  
6 integrate the provision of regular telephone service with  
7 Internet service in all states, with the greatest impact on  
8 rural areas that have opportunities to benefit from combined  
9 world-class telephone and Internet service through  
10 public-private cooperation; and

11 WHEREAS, Investments in Internet infrastructure and  
12 services programs have been demonstrated to bring a 10 times  
13 return-on-investment in economic activity, and to serve as  
14 crucial anchors for Illinois research, development, and job  
15 creation in technology firms supported by digital skills  
16 programs at all levels; and

17 WHEREAS, The United States Postal Service cites the need  
18 for Internet connectivity to increase from today's 65-70%  
19 statewide (with many communities with less than 50%  
20 connectivity) to 85-95% for the United States to remain  
21 competitive in the world, and development organizations cite  
22 the need for fiber and advanced fixed wireless facilities  
23 providing from 100 megabit to 1 gigabit and higher service in

1 the next 5 years in order to retain and attract job-creating  
2 development; and

3 WHEREAS, On September 10-15, 2012, almost 90,000  
4 participants will convene at Chicago's McCormick Place for the  
5 biannual International Manufacturing Technology Show,  
6 including 9,000 students and educators at the Student Summit  
7 (Chicago's largest trade show), and many public officials and  
8 technology students and educators, as well as equipment  
9 manufacturers from across the State will be attending;  
10 therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL  
12 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we celebrate and  
13 commemorate, during 2012, the pioneering activities of  
14 Illinois institutions, companies, and agencies, particularly  
15 Land Grant-based research-teaching-extension universities,  
16 State universities, and community colleges to achieve  
17 Universal Internet Extension in Illinois; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That we work with the University of Illinois, the  
19 Illinois Department of Economic Opportunity, and related  
20 parties for Illinois and local elected officials to participate  
21 in appropriate research and extension celebrations of the  
22 Morrill Land Grant Act Sesquicentennial events, including  
23 showcasing groundbreaking events for economic development, and

1 events at county fairs and the Illinois State Fair; and be it  
2 further

3 RESOLVED, That we work with Illinois schools, libraries,  
4 and community institutions to instill understanding of the  
5 importance of Digital Age beginning-to-advanced technology  
6 skills at all levels, including spreading regular information  
7 about opportunities for students, families, and educators from  
8 all regions of Illinois to work, including in local  
9 presentations by public officials; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That we work to develop Illinois Broadband  
11 Awareness Programs with Partnership for a Connected Illinois  
12 and Community Anchor Institution networks in each library  
13 district, municipality, and county, watershed and community  
14 college districts, with regional planning bodies, and with  
15 Internet extension and economic development teams to highlight  
16 the benefits of broadband Internet skills and connectivity to  
17 positively impact the lives of families, businesses, and  
18 communities in meeting the 7 National Needs for Broadband  
19 (Health, Economic Opportunity, Education, Energy &  
20 Environment, Government Performance, Civic Engagement, and  
21 Public Safety) developed in the Federal Communications  
22 Commission's National Broadband Plan of 2010; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That we request the appropriate Illinois Senate



1 and House committees to work with their respective higher  
2 education, education, telecommunications, economic  
3 development, and healthcare committees, and with the Governor  
4 and all Constitutional officers, to plan for such Morrill Act  
5 Sesquicentennial commemoration and celebration events in  
6 Illinois and elsewhere.