



HR1093

LRB098 21123 GRL 59274 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Feeding Illinois, the State association of 8 food banks serving all 102 counties, has found that more than 1.8 million of our 12.9 million citizens are "food insecure", meaning that 14.2% of our families, neighbors, and colleagues lack adequate access to the sustenance needed for a healthy and productive life; and

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WHEREAS, Washington Post reporter Eli Saslow won a 2014 Pulitzer Prize for a series of articles about food insecurity which he described as "a lasting scar" of the 2008 economic collapse; and

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WHEREAS, The number of Illinois citizens participating in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly the Food Stamp Program) has increased 40.7% between January of 2009 and January of 2014; and

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WHEREAS, The federal government responded to changing public interest by modifying SNAP to enable program recipients to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at farmers markets and farm stands; and

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WHEREAS, SNAP is one of 16 federal feeding programs spending approximately \$4 billion a year in Illinois; and

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1 WHEREAS, On May 5, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson's
2 aide, Sargent Shriver, proposed that the "War on Poverty"
3 incorporate a grassroots component based on this observation:
4 "Wherever local communities have started programs to help the
5 poor help themselves, the response has exceeded all
6 expectations"; and

7 WHEREAS, The Illinois Commission on the Eradication of
8 Poverty, created by statute in 2008, produced a strategic plan
9 that affirms Sargent Shriver's proposal by asserting: "...the
10 best solutions for poverty (oftentimes) come from local
11 innovation"; and

12 WHEREAS, Illinois schools provide subsidized meals for one
13 of every 5 Illinois children because they come from families
14 that exceed federal poverty guidelines; and

15 WHEREAS, Local food, nutrition, and agriculture plans at
16 the municipal and rural township level could provide structure
17 to support projects designed to help end hunger and poverty in
18 urban, suburban, exurban, and rural communities throughout
19 Illinois; and

20 WHEREAS, At least 6 Governors' councils and commissions
21 possess unique expertise and functions that, if aligned through

1 a collaborative process, could result in the improved delivery
2 of public and private resources for the benefit of
3 community-based initiatives to help end hunger and reduce
4 poverty in Illinois; and

5 WHEREAS, The Illinois Commission to End Hunger, created by
6 statute in 2010, is exploring how to encourage partnerships
7 between the State's 2,000-plus food pantries and its 375-plus
8 farmers' markets; and

9 WHEREAS, The Greater Chicago Food Depository is partnering
10 with Heartland Alliance on an urban agriculture pilot project,
11 Chicago FarmWorks, to create transitional jobs for
12 hard-to-employ people on a 2.6-acre vegetable farm in the West
13 Side Chicago community of East Garfield Park; and

14 WHEREAS, The Illinois Local Food, Farms, and Jobs Council,
15 created by statute in 2009, is working to facilitate action
16 supporting the growth of local food and farm economies from the
17 metropolitan Chicago area to Cairo; and

18 WHEREAS, The Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and
19 Community Service, created by statute, is discovering that
20 community-based local food projects could be a pathway to build
21 a statewide "volunteer infrastructure"; and

1 WHEREAS, The Illinois Task Force on Social Innovation,
2 Entrepreneurship, and Enterprise, created by Executive Order
3 11-05, has a set of charges that include the attraction of
4 funds "to accelerate progress on social issues, work
5 cross-sector, and advance social and economic development
6 goals"; and

7 WHEREAS, The Illinois Business Development Council,
8 created by statute in 2013, will enact an annual State business
9 plan based on input from such sources as "State and local
10 business development and marketing efforts focusing on areas of
11 high unemployment or poverty"; and

12 WHEREAS, Collaboration between these 6 State entities
13 could accelerate development of community-based food,
14 nutrition, and agricultural initiatives that contribute to
15 broader efforts to end hunger and reduce poverty in Illinois;
16 therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
18 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
19 we urge the Governor to design and execute a strategy to align
20 the unique expertise and functions of the Illinois Commission
21 to End Hunger, the Illinois Commission on the Eradication of
22 Poverty, the Illinois Local Food, Farms, and Jobs Council, the
23 Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, the

1 Illinois Task Force of Social Innovation, Entrepreneurship,
2 and Enterprise, and the Illinois Business Development Council
3 in an ongoing program to embolden and empower communities to
4 advance low-cost and high-return strategies to help end hunger
5 and poverty; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
7 delivered to the Governor.