



1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 52

2 WHEREAS, The Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career
3 Success has documented the critical role higher education plays
4 in economic recovery and growth, particularly in ensuring the
5 State has an educated workforce to meet the needs of business
6 and industry; and

7 WHEREAS, The Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career
8 Success recommends that the Board of Higher Education, in
9 consultation with other State agencies for education,
10 employment, and economic development, "increase the number of
11 high-quality postsecondary credentials to meet the demands of
12 the economy and an increasingly global society"; and

13 WHEREAS, Illinois has committed to the goal that 60% of its
14 workforce will hold a high-quality college credential by 2025
15 to ensure its economic future; and

16 WHEREAS, Most recent projections from the Georgetown
17 University Center on Education and the Workforce are that 70%
18 of Illinois jobs will require postsecondary education by 2020;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, Currently, only 42.5% of the State's nearly 7
21 million working-age adults between the ages of 25 and 64 years

1 hold at least a 2-year college degree; and

2 WHEREAS, There is a critical need for Illinois institutions
3 of higher education to increase the number of postsecondary
4 degrees in fields of critical skills shortages, such as
5 healthcare, construction, computer technology, public safety,
6 and mechanical fields; and

7 WHEREAS, Illinois' economic success requires providing
8 college credentials aligned with current and future workforce
9 needs at the State and regional levels; and

10 WHEREAS, Achieving workforce needs depends upon additional
11 strategic State investment in higher education, along with
12 improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of the higher
13 education system; and

14 WHEREAS, Working age adults attempting to return to school
15 to complete certificates and degrees in high-demand fields face
16 many barriers to success; and

17 WHEREAS, The Illinois Council of Community College
18 Presidents has recommended that the community college system be
19 allowed to grant 4-year baccalaureate degrees for nursing and
20 other applied career areas; and

1 WHEREAS, The development of postsecondary degree programs
2 should be predicated on evidence of the needs of Illinois
3 residents rather than institutional interests; and

4 WHEREAS, The Board of Higher Education has the statutory
5 authority and responsibility to review all applications for new
6 academic degree programs for public community colleges and
7 universities; therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
9 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
10 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that the Board of Higher Education
11 establish a Higher Education Commission on the Future of the
12 Workforce; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the Commission shall be comprised of 11
14 members, including one senator appointed by the President of
15 the Senate, one senator appointed by the Minority Leader of the
16 Senate, one representative appointed by the Speaker of the
17 House of Representatives, one representative appointed by the
18 Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, and the
19 remaining 7 members appointed by the Board of Higher Education
20 to represent a cross-section of the education, employment, and
21 economic development communities, as well as experts in quality
22 postsecondary degree creation; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the Board of Higher Education shall provide
2 administrative support to the Commission; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the Commission's study shall include, but
4 not be limited to the following:

5 (1) examining and analyzing current and projected
6 workforce needs for each economic region of the State and
7 postsecondary degree and credential production capacity
8 and goals;

9 (2) identifying State, regional, and national partners
10 available to support efficient and effective delivery of
11 postsecondary credential and degree programs aligned with
12 regional workforce needs;

13 (3) determining current policies and practices in
14 Illinois being utilized among Illinois' public and private
15 colleges and universities for partnerships for degree
16 completion;

17 (4) examining opportunities for expanding
18 postsecondary certificates and associate and baccalaureate
19 completions using effective and efficient strategies and
20 partnerships among high schools, technical schools,
21 community colleges, and 4-year colleges and universities;

22 (5) developing distance and online learning, as well as
23 competency-based credits to serve place-bound and adult
24 learners, including military personnel and veterans;

25 (6) examining incentives for students to enter and

1 complete degree programs in critical-needs areas,
2 particularly aimed at underemployed and displaced workers;

3 (7) examining improvements in student advising,
4 including articulation, transfer, and acceptance of
5 credits to streamline the education pipeline to the
6 workforce;

7 (8) providing incentives, including financial
8 assistance, for working adults and individuals with
9 substantial college credit, but no degree, to complete
10 college degrees;

11 (9) analyzing best practices implemented in other
12 states for incentivizing certificate and degree
13 completion, including incentives for students and for
14 colleges and universities; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the Commission shall report to the General
16 Assembly and the Governor 6 months from the formation of the
17 Commission; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
19 delivered to the Governor, the chairperson of the Board of
20 Higher Education, the chairperson of the Illinois Community
21 College Board, the chairperson of the State Board of Education,
22 the chairperson of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission,
23 the chairperson of the Employment Security Advisory Board, and
24 the president of each public and private college and university

1 in the State.