

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, There are 149,760 Illinois youth, ranging from
3 16 to 21 years of age, who are high school dropouts according
4 to a recent study by the Center for Labor Market Studies at
5 Northeastern University; and

6 WHEREAS, This study outlines that in Illinois, of the
7 149,760 youth who are high school dropouts, 74,500 are White,
8 43,000 are Hispanic, 29,500 are Black, and 2,760 are listed
9 as other; and

10 WHEREAS, In the Chicago area there are 100,626 youth,
11 ranging between 16 and 21 years of age, who have dropped out
12 of school; of this population, 41,726 are Hispanic, 33,408
13 are White, 23,266 are Black, and 2,226 are listed as other;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, In Chicago there are 49,437 youth who have
16 dropped out of school, ranging from 16 to 21 years of age, of
17 this population 26,381 are Hispanic, 17,375 are Black, 4,715
18 are White, and 966 are listed as other; and

19 WHEREAS, The vast majority of Chicago area and downstate
20 Illinois high school dropouts come from lower income areas;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, Illinois employers are experiencing shortages of
23 skilled workers, and high school dropouts could provide the
24 needed addition to the workforce needs of the Illinois
25 economy and Illinois business; and

26 WHEREAS, Eighty percent of prison inmates are high school
27 dropouts and as such high school dropouts can pose a problem
28 in terms of crime and public safety to the general public in
29 their communities and neighborhoods; and

30 WHEREAS, High school dropouts earn \$342,000 less over

1 their lifetime than people who have a high school diploma;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, The benefit to Illinois taxpayers is \$312,000
4 over the lifetime of a high school dropout who returns to
5 school and completes a high school diploma in terms of
6 increased earnings as well as reduced social costs including
7 prison, welfare, mental health, etc.; and

8 WHEREAS, There is significant research and program
9 experience to draw on and utilize to develop successful
10 programs to re-enroll, teach, and graduate dropouts from high
11 schools; and

12 WHEREAS, A Statewide Legislative Task Force would be a
13 way to examine and develop ways to address this issue of
14 youth who have dropped out of school; and

15 WHEREAS, The purpose of this Statewide Legislative Task
16 Force would be to examine policies, programs, and other
17 issues related to developing a variety of successful
18 approaches utilizing best program practices to re-enroll,
19 teach, and graduate high school dropouts; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
21 NINETY-SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
22 a nine member legislative task force be appointed to examine
23 policies, programs, and other issues related to developing a
24 variety of successful approaches to re-enroll, teach, and
25 graduate high school dropouts and in doing so improve
26 community safety and the Illinois economy; the members of the
27 task force shall be appointed as follows: 5 members appointed
28 by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and 4 members
29 appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of
30 Representatives; and be it further

31 RESOLVED, The Statewide Legislative Task Force shall have

1 duties that include conducting a series of public hearings
2 throughout the State to discuss the impact of high school
3 dropouts on various regions of the State, completing a review
4 of dropout data that allows for a comparison of Illinois
5 rates both nationally and with other states in the region,
6 and producing a final report with recommendations on how to
7 address the challenge of students dropping out of school; and
8 be it further

9 RESOLVED, The Task Force shall report its findings no
10 later than January 10, 2002; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, Upon presenting its final report, the Task
12 Force shall be dissolved.