

STATE OF ILLINOIS
89TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

82nd Legislative Day

January 10, 1996

Speaker Daniels: "The House will come to order and the Members will be in their chairs. Speaker Daniels in the chair. The Chaplain for the day is Father Don Wolford of St. Patrick's Church in Decatur. Father Wolford is the guest of Representative Julie Curry. Guests in the gallery may wish to rise for the invocation. Father Wolford."

Father Wolford: "Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, You have revealed Your glory to all peoples. God of power and might, wisdom and justice, through Your authority is rightly administered, laws are enacted, and judgement is decreed. Let the light of Your divine wisdom direct the deliberations of this House of Representatives and shine forth in all it's proceedings. May they seek to preserve peace, promote happiness, and continue to bring us the blessings of liberty, justice, and equality. We pray especially today for Honorable James Edgar, the Governor of the State of Illinois, for Members of the Legislature, for judges, elected officials, and all others who are entrusted to guard our political welfare. May they be enabled by Your powerful protection to discharge their duties with honesty and ability. We likewise commend to Your unbounded mercy all citizens of the State of Illinois, that we may be blessed in the knowledge and sanctified in the observance of Your holy law. May we be preserved in union and that peace which the world cannot give and after enjoying the blessings of this life, be admitted to those which are eternal. We pray to You, our Lord and God, forever and ever. Amen."

Speaker Daniels: "Thank you, Father. We'll be led in the Pledge of Allegiance by Representative John Doody."

Doody - et al: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands,

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one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Speaker Daniels: "Roll Call for Attendance. Representative Currie is recognized to report any excused absences on the Democratic side of the aisle."

Currie: "Thank you, Speaker. Let the record show please that Representative Martinez is excused because of family commitments and Representative Young because of illness."

Speaker Daniels: "With the leave of the House, the Journal will so indicate. Representative Cross is recognized to report any excused absences on the Republican side of the aisle."

Cross: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the record would please reflect that Representative Moore is excused today."

Speaker Daniels: "The record will so reflect with leave of the House. Mr. Clerk, take the record. There are 114 Members answering the roll and a quorum is present. Mr. Clerk, announcement, Introductions of Bills."

Clerk McLennand: "Members are encouraged to read a memo that is on their desk. Laptop computers are available in Room 122 for their review today from 1:30 until 4:00 and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00. Again, the Members are able to inspect and practice on the laptop computers in Room 122A. Introduction, First Reading of House Bills. House Bill 2648, offered by Representative Holbrook, a Bill for an Act relating to disqualification from public office. House Bill 2649, offered by Representative Cross, a Bill for an Act to amend a Communicable Disease Report Act. House Bill 2650, offered by Representative Holbrook, a Bill for an Act to amend a Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief and Pharmaceutical Assistance Act. House Bill 2651, offered by Representative Leitch, a Bill for an Act to amend the School Code. House Bill 2652, offered by

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Representative Ryder, a Bill for an Act to amend the Illinois Public Aid Code and House Bill 2653, offered by Representative Clayton, a Bill for an Act in relation to local government indebtedness. Introduction and First Reading of these House Bills."

Speaker Daniels: "Committee Reports."

Clerk McLennand: "Committee Report from Representative Cross, Chairman from the Committee on Health Care and Human Services, to which the following Bills were referred, action taken on January 10, 1996, reported the same back with the following recommendation: 'do pass Short Debate' House Bill 2587. Representative Saviano, Chairman from the Committee on Registration and Regulation, to which the following Bills were referred, action taken on January 9, 1996, reported the same back with the following recommendation: 'do pass Short Debate' House Bill 1747. Announcements. Members are notified that the Veterans Affairs Committee scheduled for 11:00 a.m. on Thursday has been cancelled. Veterans Affairs Committee scheduled for 11:00 a.m. Thursday has been cancelled."

Speaker Daniels: "The House will stand at ease."

Clerk McLennand: "Attention, Ladies and Gentlemen, please take your seats and clear the aisles. Please take your seats and clear the aisles. Thank you."

Speaker Daniels: "The House will come to order. Members please be in their chairs. Those not entitled to the floor will please retire to the gallery. The doorkeeper is recognized for an announcement."

Doorkeeper: "Mr. Speaker, the Honorable President Phillip and Members of the Senate are at the door and seek admission to the chamber."

Speaker Daniels: "Mr. Doorkeeper, please admit the Honorable

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Senators. The Members please be in their chairs. Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. As designated in House Joint Resolution 78, the hour of twelve noon having arrived, the House shall stand in recess until the conclusion of the Governor's address and the 89th General Assembly will convene in Joint Session. The Joint Session will please come to order and the Members of the House and our guests from the Senate will please take their seats. Mr. Clerk, is a quorum of the House present?"

Clerk McLennand: "Yes, Mr. Speaker, a quorum of the House is present."

Speaker Daniels: "Mr. President, is a quorum of the Senate present in this chamber?"

President Philip: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A quorum of the Senate is present."

Speaker Daniels: "There being a quorum of the House and a quorum of the Senate in attendance, this Joint Session is convened. We are also joined today by other distinguished officials. Let me at this time recognize those distinguished officials present today with us. First I'd like to recognize Joan Walters, the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, Director Walters. William Holland, the Auditor General of the State of Illinois, William Holland. Joe Spagnolo, the State Superintendent State Board of Education. The Honorable Denny Hastert, former Member of the Illinois House, U.S. Congressman. Harry Crisp, Chairman, Illinois Community College Board of Trustees. The Lieutenant Governor of the State of Illinois, Robert Kustra. The Attorney General of the State of Illinois, Jim Ryan. Former Speaker of the House, Lieutenant Governor, now Secretary of State, George Ryan. Former Member of the

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House, former State Senator and now the Treasurer of the State of Illinois, Judy Baar Topinka. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and former Mayor of the City of Chicago, the Honorable Michael Bilandic. Justice of the Supreme Court, the Honorable Benjamin Miller, Ben Miller. Justice of the Supreme Court, the Honorable James Heiple. Justice of the Supreme Court, the Honorable Charles Freeman. Justice of the Supreme Court, the Honorable Moses Harrison. Justice of the Supreme Court, the Honorable Mary Ann McMorro. And Justice of the Supreme Court, the Honorable John Nickels. And sitting in the gallery today, we are pleased to be joined by the First Lady of the State of Illinois, Brenda Edgar. The wife of the Lieutenant Governor of the State of Illinois, Mrs. Kathy Kustra. And the wife of the Secretary of State of the State of Illinois, Mrs. Lura Lyn Ryan. The Chair recognizes the Honorable Majority Leader, Robert Churchill."

Churchill: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the Clerk would please read Joint Session Resolution 3, I would move for its immediate adoption."

Clerk McLennand: "Joint Session Resolution #3 resolved that a committee of 10 be appointed, 5 from the House by the Speaker of the House and 5 from the Senate by the President of the Senate to wait upon His Excellency, Governor Jim Edgar, and invite him to address the Joint Assembly. Representative Jack Kubik, Representative David Leitch, Representative Ann Zickus, Representative Ralph Capparelli, Representative Julie Curry. State Senators Larry Bomke, David Luechtefeld, Senator Thomas Walsh, Senator James Clayborne and Senator Lewis Viverito."

Speaker Daniels: "The Gentleman from Lake, the Majority Leader moves for the adoption of the Resolution. All those in

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favor signify by saying 'aye'; those opposed 'nay'. In the opinion of the Chair, the 'ayes' prevail and the Resolution is adopted. Pursuant to the Resolution, the following are appointed as a Committee to escort the Chief Executive: Representative Kubik, Representative Leitch, Representative Zickus, Representative Capparelli, Representative Julie Curry, Senator Bomke, Senator Luechefeld, Senator Walsh, Senator Clayborne, and Senator Viverito. The Committee of Escort will please convene at the rear of the chamber and await His Excellency, the Governor of the State of Illinois. The Doorkeeper is now recognized for an announcement."

Doorkeeper: "Mr. Speaker, the Honorable Governor of the State of Illinois and his Party wish to be admitted to the chamber."

Speaker Daniels: "Mr. Doorkeeper, admit the Honorable Governor. Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, the Governor of the State of Illinois, Governor Jim Edgar. Ladies and Gentlemen, the Governor of the State of Illinois, Jim Edgar."

Governor Edgar: "Speaker Daniels, President Philip, Justices of the Supreme Court, my fellow Constitutional Officers, Members of the 89th General Assembly, and my fellow citizens of Illinois. The state of our state is good. We face many challenges but there are many reasons to be optimistic as we look toward the next few years and the next century. First and foremost among those reasons is our economy. It is full of vitality today, and even more importantly, a solid real foundation has been laid for bright tomorrows. During the last three years, Illinois has gained more than 300,000 jobs, out pacing every other industrial state in this nation. Manufacturing jobs in Illinois increased by more than twice the national average

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and Illinois exports last year continued a trend of surpassing the nation, increasing 27% during the first three quarters of 1995. Our unemployment rate has been under the national average month after month after month. Indeed, our average unemployment rate in 1995 was the lowest in more than two decades. And as we begin this new year and approach the threshold of a new century, the outlook is very positive. Recently, Crain's Chicago Business reported on a survey conducted by nationally recognized experts on the economy. The survey focused on 114 major metropolitan areas and here's the conclusion reached by the experts. The Chicago metropolitan area will top all the others, except for Atlanta in job creation as we head into the 21st century. More than a quarter of a million new jobs in the Chicago metropolitan area alone. That forecast confirms what we have seen and sensed throughout Illinois. Business people throughout our state have been upbeat about our economy. But more importantly, they have demonstrated their confidence in it, day after day, expansion after expansion, in every corner of Illinois. Look at what we have seen only in the last few months. McDonald's announced a major expansion at its corporate headquarters in Oakbrook, an investment of half billion dollars that will create as many as 7,000 new good jobs in administration, research, and marketing. And then there's Motorola. In addition to building a new \$100 million production plant in Harvard, Illinois that will employ more than 3,000 people, Motorola revealed a few weeks ago that it will invest another \$40 million in a facility at Elgin adding another 1,500 new jobs to the Illinois economy. U.S. Robotics announced it will invest \$70 million in facilities at Morton Grove and Mt. Prospect,

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adding at least 3,000 new jobs to the Illinois economy over the next few years. And thousands of new jobs will be added throughout the state in the months ahead because of expansions by downstate businesses including Elco Industries in Rockford, Magnet in Centralia, Magna Bank in Belleville, John Deere Health Care in the Quad Cities, Menard's in Plano, WalMart's distribution center in Olney, and GE with an investment of \$100 million in its Mattoon lamp manufacturing plant. The economic development strategy we developed five years ago is paying off. With Lieutenant Governor Kustra playing a key role in implementing that strategy, we are providing job training and infrastructure improvements. But most importantly, we have encouraged Illinois businesses to grow and expand by improving our business climate. Last year in particular, we made giant strides by acting to reduce the number of costly and frivolous lawsuits. Gone at long last are laws that enriched a few lawyers and branded our state as unfriendly to business and job growth. We also have demonstrated that state regulators and business can work together to protect both the environment and the bottom line. For example, businesses in the Rockford area were offered the opportunity to avoid fines and penalties and be good citizens by coming forward voluntarily to comply with environmental laws. More than 60 businesses came forward. Most of them were small businesses and they saved themselves \$600 thousand in potential penalties while helping us to protect the environment. We're expanding that initiative to cover some 4,000 printing operations and 15,000 auto body shops statewide. And we are preparing to embark on yet another initiative that will keep us in the vanguard of joint ventures with the private sector to

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protect our environment. In an innovative approach that promises to become a model for the nation, 3M and very likely several other companies will join with state regulators to develop more cost effective ways that business can comply with environmental laws. Day after day we are sending the right signal to businesses within Illinois and throughout the world that are deciding where to make their next job creating investment. Soon we will become the first state in the nation to electronically link the business and economic expertise that we offer with a major information source for manufacturers on the World Wide Web. That source is the Thomas Register, the Bible of the manufacturing world when it comes to purchasing and engineering. When it goes up on the World Wide Web in March, it will feature technical and economic assistance available in Illinois. Our 25,000 manufacturers will have easy access to assistance from Illinois universities, community colleges, laboratories, and industrial organizations. The initiative also will attract new industry and more jobs to Illinois by publicizing the expertise and skilled workers readily available from our universities and colleges, Argonne, Fermilab, and other institutions. And with the support of this Legislature, we can make Illinois even more attractive to business expansion and job growth. Today I am proposing that we reduce unemployment insurance taxes for each and every employer in Illinois, from the largest to the smallest. If you agree to that cut, employers will be paying over \$200 million less in taxes next year. The Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund has a very healthy surplus and I want to see those dollars used for more investments, more expansion, more job creation in Illinois, instead of

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sitting idle in a government account. I also want employers and organized labor to work toward improving our unemployment insurance program and our worker's compensation system. Meanwhile, we in state government will continue our efforts to make it more effective and efficient by streamlining and downsizing. Because of those efforts, state government is in far better fiscal shape than it was in 1991 when a new Governor and many of you in this chamber, began making tough decisions and showing the discipline necessary to live within our means. We've restored the fiscal health of our state employees health insurance program. Our Medicaid backlog has been slashed by approximately \$800 million, meaning that those who provide health care to the poor are being paid more quickly and we are delivering more services with less bureaucracy. Last year you concurred in my initiative to streamline and focus our efforts to protect, preserve, and promote natural resources. We reduced bureaucratic overhead by replacing three Cabinet departments with one. Today I'm proposing additional streamlining, this time in delivery of service to the truly needy and in regulation of financial institutions. I'm recommending that we establish a Department of Human Services to provide services now being provided by seven different agencies, all with their own budget offices, all with their own personnel offices, their own legal staffs, their own communication offices, and their own programs. We cannot afford to tackle the significant challenges we face with separate and overlapping bureaucracies and services that sometimes duplicate each other. In the next few weeks, we will reach out to those who receive and provide services as we finalize how most effectively to implement this

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reorganization. But there is no question in my mind that streamlining will reduce bureaucracy and it will help us to take full advantage of the greater flexibility we expect to receive from Washington in using federal dollars. Flexibilities that will allow for more innovation in state capitols, in communities throughout the nation, instead of more and more long distance social engineering in the nation's capitol. Services to troubled children and troubled families, services to those with mental illness or mental disabilities, services to those with physical disabilities, services for alcoholism and substance abuse, services to senior citizens, all will be better targeted and better coordinated with less administrative cost under the reorganization I want this Legislature to approve this Session. I also am proposing today that we combine two Cabinet departments that regulate banks and savings and loans. So if you concur with the proposals I am making today, we will have nine fewer Cabinet departments in state government than just two years ago. And by downsizing agencies, along with taking other actions to make us more efficient, we will have reduced the number of state employees under my jurisdiction by several thousand. And we will have done so while adding hundreds and hundreds of case workers to address the explosion of child abuse and neglect and while adding hundreds and hundreds of prison guards to staff the additional prisons we have brought on line to keep dangerous people safely behind bars. Not more government; better government. I'm proud that the Department of Children and Family Services is now working more closely with the Chicago Police Department and the Cook County court system so all three can respond more effectively to child abuse and neglect. It didn't take

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millions of dollars in new programs to bring about that greatly improved cooperation. It took a commitment by my special counsel for child welfare services and representatives of DCFS, the police, and the courts to sit down, talk, and act. We will continue to make improvements in other areas, often using new technology. This spring we will make it easier for teachers to apply for and receive their teachers certificates. A process that now takes weeks or months will take only moments when it's done via computers at the regional superintendents' offices. We also will make it easier than ever to file income tax returns in Illinois. Seven out of every 10 income tax payer who prepare their own returns will be able to file by telephone, get any refunds they have coming earlier and not worry about sending us paper. In addition, the Department of Revenue will use interactive television to promote more fairness in the property tax system by training assessors to do a more professional job. Not more government, better government. Meanwhile we have been moving ahead on other fronts. Last year we accomplished what very few believed could be accomplished, real reform of the Chicago school system. Real reform that has been hailed as a model for troubled metropolitan school districts across the nation. And we empowered local schools, not only in Chicago, but throughout Illinois to make improvements without being stymied by a Springfield-knows-best-mentality and all the bureaucratic red tape that goes along with it. I want to congratulate the leadership in Chicago for using the new flexibility and powers we gave them to make extremely positive changes in the system. Now I want to continue empowering school districts elsewhere in Illinois by allowing them similar flexibility in using funds given them

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for a variety of purposes. Let those districts and not Springfield decide on how best to spend those state funds. And as we give that additional flexibility to school districts throughout the state, let us pave the way for even more innovation by empowering communities throughout the state to establish charter schools. We would demand that charter schools meet high standards, but we give them almost total freedom to determine how to meet those standards. Free to be bold, free to innovate, free to break from the timeworn practices of the past. They would become greenhouses for school reform that could be transplanted to schools throughout Illinois. Both the House and the Senate have approved legislation to establish charter schools, but for technical reason there has been no agreement on the same Bill. Come to an agreement this year in this Session. Let's begin charter schools in Illinois. I also want to explore the possibility of additional school reform in Chicago. I'm asking Lieutenant Governor Kustra who's been my point man on Chicago school reform to spearhead an initiative that could lead to residential academies, boarding schools in inner city areas for parents and foster parents to send kids who have been disadvantaged or are struggling in traditional schools. The Lieutenant Governor also has played a key role in our drive to bring technology to every classroom in our state. The World Wide Web is opening great new avenues of opportunity, new worlds of information for all those who navigates its many wonders. There is no speed limit on that information highway. There is no limit to what students and the rest of us can learn from its pages. But our students must have access to it. They must have the hardware that supports the rapidly changing technology. Technology can be one of

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the great equalizer of educational opportunities across Illinois. Or, unchecked and unguided, it can widen the gap between the affluent in poor school districts. I want to make sure that technology helps every student in Illinois, no matter where he or she goes to school. In some schools today, students in kindergarten are already learning to use the mouse, as well as the crayon. And when we fulfill our goal of having every school in Illinois on-line, the Internet will replace the encyclopedia. Today I'm announcing that the state will build a statewide network. We will run a high-tech T-One line into every one of the 903 school districts in Illinois and then pay for the ongoing line charges for that equipment. We'll also invest more resources in teaching our teachers. We will expand the number of regional training centers operated by the State Board of Education, showing teachers how to better integrate technology into the learning process in a more meaningful way. We are building classrooms without walls, classrooms where wealth and geographic location do not define educational achievement and classrooms that will enable our students to learn and lead and not lag behind. But as high tech allows our young people to explore new worlds of learning, we cannot allow the violence of the outside world to invade the playgrounds and corridors of our schools. Children must be safe and feel safe in their schools. It's no secret to any of us today that the attraction of a fast buck from selling drugs has brought violent street gangs to almost every neighborhood of Illinois and too often that violence has spilled into the classroom and the playgrounds. Several months ago, we enacted legislation launching a violence prevention initiative headed by the Attorney General. It will bolster

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community efforts that can make a significant difference. I also commend the Attorney General and the State Board of Education for their work to make our schools safer. Among other things they are committed to providing safe transportation for students who must walk through dangerous areas of the inner city to go to school. And I urge this General Assembly to fund the State Board's proposal encouraging school districts to set up high discipline alternative schools for the most disruptive of their students. But even as we focus on the violence that cheats too many of our young people of their potential and the high tech that promises to increase the potential of millions and millions of our young people, I am optimistic that we can move forward in this Session on another front that greatly impacts their future. For decades our system of funding elementary and secondary education has been under attack and for good reason. It has been and continues to be unfair and uneven. There is a lack of equity where tax dollars support a pupil in one district by \$4,000 and a pupil in another district right next door is supported by more than \$10,000. And I'll say again what I've said many times for many years throughout this state, we rely too heavily on property taxes to fund education in Illinois. It is time to squarely address these issues and I'm optimistic you and I can do so during this legislative Session. Soon we'll have recommendations from a commission headed by former University of Illinois President, Stan Ikenberry. When I established this task force last year, some were skeptical and I understand that. We've had numerous commissions study school funding, but I am confident this commission will give recommendations that we can accept and move on. First, it has an outstanding

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chairman who demonstrated as the president of a world class university that he knows how to get things done for the benefit of young people. Secondly, Stan Ikenberry is just one of many distinguished action oriented members of this commission. Thirdly, my charge was clear. We don't want another study. We want an action plan. We want a plan that is realistic and politically doable. I realize that legislative Sessions in the even number years, like this one, are generally limited to fashioning a budget and I'm for fashioning a good budget and doing it early just like last year. But the Ikenberry Commission will make its recommendations in just a couple of months and I'm very hopeful that we can endorse and embrace those recommendations before the the final gavel falls on this legislative session. We also must build on our efforts to reform welfare. While Washington has debated, debated, debated, and deadlocked on welfare reform, we have acted in Springfield. Our state has been in the forefront of transforming a welfare system that focused on dependence to a welfare-to-work system that focuses on independence. We encourage and no longer penalize welfare recipients who want to take temporary jobs. We encourage and no longer penalize fathers who want to stay with their families. Our Earnfare Program which recently won a national award for innovation from the Council of State Governments provides thousands and thousands of former welfare recipients with work, a pay check, and most important, pride. Teenaged mothers 18 and under are being required to pursue their education while on welfare so they can help them move off welfare. 1995, you and I built on those reforms by requiring AFDC mothers with older children to seek and hold down jobs and holding parents accountable when children in

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elementary grades are not in school regularly. And for this Session of the General Assembly, I am proposing that you approve legislation so we can start requiring recipients with alcohol and drug problems to undergo treatment. At the same time, we must press ahead with our fresh approach to dealing more effectively and efficiently with disadvantaged and troubled children in families. In my first State of the State back in 1991, I asked you to help me launch Project Success. The concept was simple. If a child shows up to school malnourished or is upset over family problems, that child is going to have difficulty learning. So help should be readily available once a teacher or counselor has spotted the problem. We spend billions of dollars each year in Illinois on services for children. There was no need to spend billions or even millions more. What we did through Project Success was to better coordinate and focus state and community services and we asked community leaders to help us develop and implement the program. We began under the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Kustra by testing Project Success in six neighborhoods in the state. Now Project Success is found in 130 communities working with over 400 elementary schools throughout Illinois with the goal of eventually expanding statewide. And the program has impressed business leaders interested in improving education and the quality of life in their communities. For example, Kraft Foods committed funds for Project Success in eight communities when it became a corporate sponsor in 1994. Last year, Kraft Foods tripled its support. Project Success has been a model for the nation and what had been launched as an initiative to improve learning in our schools, also has become an inspiration for much broader

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human services reform right here in Illinois. The question is not whether we're going to help disadvantaged children and their families, the question, is how are we going to help them? The Casey Foundation, a nationally recognized innovator in human services area, liked our willingness to innovate and to make better use of existing services. So in 1994 the foundation gave us \$2.5 million to launch a one-stop shopping initiative as a fresh, sensible approach delivering human services effectively, efficiently, and compassionately. Troubled families often need services that cannot be supplied by a single state or community agency. We found too often they have difficulty obtaining those services and when they do, there is often duplication, confusion, and conflicting approaches from different agencies dealing with the same families. So with the help of the Casey Foundation, we are testing a brand new approach in five communities throughout Illinois with the goal of eventually expanding it statewide. In those communities, just as in Project Success, the people closest to the problems are being empowered. Neighbors, community groups, churches and synagogues, civic and business leaders, local officials, they are custom tailoring and implementing remedies that they believe will work in their communities. As a result, state and local resources are being better coordinated, more strategically targeted, more effectively utilized. The one size fits all approach doesn't work nationally and it doesn't and won't work here in the State of Illinois. I have discouraged and vetoed unfunded state mandates on local government and I will continue to do so and I hope you will do the same. And we will be putting more and more resources into community based programs, in mental health, in human resources,

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because I believe strongly in community and neighborhood empowerment. I also believe strongly, as this General Assembly does, in making and keeping communities and neighborhoods safe. Fifteen months ago, we enacted the most sweeping and tough anti-crime package in decades. We followed that last year by enacting landmarking Truth In Sentencing Legislation. Simply put, those who commit violent crimes not punishable by death will be spending all or most of their life in prison. But we did not stop with Truth In Sentencing. Being implemented as I speak is a new law that enables law enforcement officers to alert citizens of a community when a sex offender moves into their midst. This year I want to bolster our anti-crime effort in another important area. I will be asking for funds to increase the number of parole agents in Illinois. This will allow us to build on an initiative to overhaul a traditional parole system that has not been effective in keeping ex-prisoners from returning to a life of crime and ultimately back to prison. I've heard some imply and even assert that there is a correlation between the number of parole agents and the violent crime rate and the number of repeat offenders. But there is absolutely no documentation of that, none despite all the demagoguery from some vote hungry politicians and headline hungry newspaper reporters. Nice to know the other side's not asleep. Checking in with a parole agent from time to time never has gotten the job done and never will. What we've launched and are building upon in Illinois is a program that recognizes that prisoners will become repeat offenders if they lack the job skills and the opportunity to be employed and if they resume drug habits that got them into trouble in the first place. Under this program called Pre-Start, parole agents

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begin working with prisoners before they leave prison. Many then receive very special attention when they are released. This approach has been studied by experts at Southern Illinois University who believe we're on the right track and that we should invest more of our resources in it. So that's what we will do with your support. We will expand Pre-Start by opening three centers in the Chicago area where released offenders will be required to participate in programs such as a substance abuse treatment and to attend classes on job training, parenting, life skills, and violence reduction. The center also will be active in helping to find jobs for the released offenders. In addition, we will expand the Community Intervention Program, an initiative that has been proven successful with released offenders who've had serious substance abuse problems. And if you approve the funding for this initiative, we will hire an additional 32 parole agents who will be deployed as part of our efforts to significantly increase our supervision of sex offenders. I also want to shore up our efforts in another area of public safety. On October 25th, all of us were jolted by seven young people being killed and 30 others injured when a train slammed into a school bus at Fox River Grove. I immediately directed the State Department of Transportation to investigate and to make recommendations. One of its findings was that there was no single state agency ultimately accountable for safety at rail crossings. It also determined that information on potential danger spots were scattered. Today, I'm asking you to send me legislation to make one agency, the Illinois Commerce Commission, accountable for railroad safety. The ICC will work closely with the State Department of Transportation

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and other local officials to assure that our safety efforts at rail crossings are well coordinated. We also will establish a central source for all information that could alert us to the problems at rail crossings. And I have directed the Department of Transportation to develop a state-of-the-art warning system that will trigger a loud and clear alarm to a bus driver in the bus itself, that a train is approaching. We must do all we can to prevent another Fox River Grove tragedy from ever happening again in the State of Illinois. I'm also asking this Legislature to act quickly in the next few days to set the speed limit on county and township roads at 55, as local governments have requested. Under current state law, the limit went from 55 to 65 automatically when the federal government got out of the speed limit business. So now we have a need to change state law to do what is right for traffic safety and I'm confident you will give this matter the most urgent attention that it requires. Motorists may save a few minutes with a 65 per hour limit on those two lane roads, but saving minutes is not worth losing lives. I also will seek favorable action from this Legislature on other fronts. We need to assure that Illinois workers can keep their health insurance if they change or lose their jobs and we need to expand coverage to other workers by making it easier for their employers to band together and obtain insurance at affordable prices. I sent you legislation to accomplish those goals last year and the year before. Occasionally, I've noticed I've had to wait a while to see an important State of the State initiative become law. But workers and Illinois have waited long enough for this health insurance reform and I hope this Legislature enacts it this year. I also want you to do what is right and

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responsible by approving legislation that will allow us to maintain and expand infrastructure and buildings throughout Illinois. Last year, partisan politics prevented this Legislature for the first time in anyone's memory from authorizing expenditures for capital improvements. We are not being efficient if we don't do the necessary upkeep to head off far more costly expenditures in the future. It's time for the obstructionists in the Legislature to pick another partisan fight instead of this one, which is so important to efficient and responsible government. I also want you to tighten provisions enacted late last year that allows employers to monitor conversations of some employees. This legislation which was sent to me in a Bill that dealt with many important matters that had to be enacted went farther than its stated purpose. It should be changed to apply strictly to telemarketing industry which sought the Bill so it could monitor the sales performance of its employees. I also want you to repeal another law that has provided taxpayer subsidies for those who construct and operate incinerators. Most communities do not want the incinerators and it is time we stop asking our taxpayers to subsidize them. We also should reform our riverboat tax structure. All but a couple of riverboats in Illinois are making their owners and investors extremely wealthy, tripling even the most optimistic forecasts made when the riverboat legislation was approved in 1990. I believe it's only fair that we channel more of those receipts toward the benefits of all Illinoisans and to use it to fund worthwhile programs like the health insurance program for retired teachers which this Legislature approved last year without identifying a funding source. A year ago, I stood at this podium and issued an ambitious

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call to action. Inspired by its new Leadership, this Legislature responded to that call and other challenges in unprecedented fashion. I salute those in this chamber today who joined with me in moving Illinois forward on many fronts. You went to work immediately. You and I worked closely together and we got the job done. We agreed upon a budget a full month before the beginning of the fiscal year. No impasse. No deadlock. No nonsense. I look forward to working with you in the same fashion during this Session for the good of the people we all serve. Things aren't perfect in state government and in the State of Illinois. They probably never will be. But too often we read, hear, and talk only about what is wrong, not what is right. Too many of our people are still unemployed, but there are 5.8 million Illinois men and women working in our factories, on our farms, and in our retail outlets, the highest number ever in the history of this state. Too many of our people are still impoverished and dependent. But thousands of former welfare recipients have demonstrated that they can achieve independence through reforms like Earnfare, if they are given motivation and opportunity. We need better results out of many classrooms in our state. But in most classrooms in Illinois, young people are getting an education today that is much better than the one we received. An education that will open new vistas and will help them to compete effectively well into the 21st Century. The outrage of child abuse sickens us day after day. We can't tolerate the tragic slaughter of young people, whether it's abuse from parents or boyfriends, whether it's gang warfare or other senseless violence. But I sense a revival of community, a revival of neighborhood, in many of the communities that have lived with these

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atrocities day after day, month after month, year after year. They are reclaiming their communities and neighborhoods and we're going to help them with new approaches rooted in the old but timeless values of community, neighborhood, parental commitment, and personal responsibility, decency, and humanity. As I have traveled around Illinois, my faith in our people and in our future has grown. The best in us will prevail, as it always has, with Illinois' best and brightest. For example, with us in the gallery today are three of Illinois' most decorated military heroes, winners of the Congressional Medal of Honor. I'd like them to stand and be recognized. Joining us today are Russel Dunham and Harold Fritz. Unfortunately, our good friend, Clyde Choate was sick and was unable to be with us, but again we're very proud of you. The best in us will prevail and I look forward working with people in all corners of Illinois and with this Legislature to build on our strengths and to meet our challenges. Together we'll ensure that the best of Illinois prevails. Together we'll make the great State of Illinois an even greater state for our children and their children and for generations to come. Thank you."

Speaker Daniels: "Thank you, Governor. Will the Committee of Escort please come forward to escort the Governor from the chamber? The President of the Senate is recognized for a Motion."

Senate President Philip: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move the Joint Session now do arise."

Speaker Daniels: "The President of the Senate has moved that the Joint Session do now arise. All those in favor signify by saying 'aye'; those opposed 'nay'. The 'ayes' prevail and the Joint Session shall now arise. Mr. Clerk,

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announcements."

Clerk McLennand: "Committee Announcements. Members are encouraged...Committee Announcements for tomorrow. Aging Committee will meet in Room 122B at 9:00 a.m. Aging, 9:00 a.m. Constitutional Officers will meet in Room C-1 at 9:30. Personnel and Pensions will meet in Room 114 at 9:00 a.m. Again, Committee changes for Thursday, the 11th, Aging, 9:00 a.m.; Constitutional Officers, 9:30 a.m.; Personnel and Pension, 9:00 a.m."

Speaker Daniels: "Members of the House, please be aware that there is a committee change in time for tomorrow. Make sure you check your committee times for your hearings tomorrow. The House will now come to order. Mr. Clerk, are there any announcements?"

Clerk McLennand: "No further announcements. Computer availability scheduled for 9 to 1:00 tomorrow will still remain from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00, as Members wish to visit."

Speaker Daniels: "Representative Churchill now moves that the House stand adjourned until Thursday, January 11, 1996, at the hour of 10:00 a.m., allowing Perfunctory time for the Clerk. All those in favor signify by saying 'aye'; all those opposed say 'nay'. In the opinion of the Chair, the 'ayes' have it and the House now stands adjourned, allowing time for Perfunctory Session for the Clerk, until Thursday, January 11th, at the hour of 10:00 a.m."

Clerk McLennand: "House Perfunctory Session will be in order. Committee Reports. Committee Report from Representative Cowlshaw, Chairman from the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education, to which the following Bills were referred, action taken on January 10, 1996, reported the same back with the following recommendations: 'do pass'

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Senate Bill 366; 'do pass as amended' House Bill 998 and House Bill 1000. The House Perfunctory Session will stand in recess until the hour of 3:00 p.m."

Clerk McLennand: "The House Perfunctory Session will be in order. Introduction and First Reading of House Bills. House Bill 2654, offered by Representative Gwenn Klingler, a Bill for an Act to amend the Sports Volunteer Immunity Act by changing Section 1. Introduction and First Reading of this House Bill. The House Perfunctory Session will stand in recess 'til the hour of 4 p.m."

Clerk McLennand: "The hour of 4:00 having arrived, the House Perfunctory Session will be in order. Introduction and First Reading of House Bills. House Bill 2655, offered by Representative Wennlund, a Bill for an Act concerning fire resistant compartmentalization of units in a multi-family dwellings. House Bill 2656, offered by Representative Wennlund, a Bill for an Act to amend the Fire Protection District Act. House Bill 2657, offered by Representative Wennlund, a Bill for an Act concerning vending machine commissions. Introduction, First Reading of these House Bills. House Perfunctory Session will be in order. The House Perfunctory Session will be in recess until the hour of 5:30."

Clerk McLennand: "House Perfunctory Session will be in order. Introduction and First Reading of House Bills. House Bill 2658, offered by Representative Durkin, a Bill for an Act in relation to death sentences amending named Acts. House Bill 2659, offered by Representative Black, a Bill for an Act to amend the Property Tax Code. Introduction and First Reading of these House Bills. Being no further business, the House Perfunctory Session stands adjourned and the House will reconvene on Thursday, January 11th, at the hour

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