

1 SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, In an effort to address the State's economic
3 difficulties, Governor George H. Ryan has proposed that the
4 funding for 22 categorical grant programs, including funding
5 for transitional bilingual education, be distributed through
6 the foundation level of support figure rather than
7 categorically; and

8 WHEREAS, Enrollment in transitional bilingual education
9 programs has increased 5% from the 1996-1997 school year to
10 the 2000-2001 school year and now represents over 140,500
11 students statewide; and

12 WHEREAS, The State Board of Education's Division of
13 Research's December 2000 report, "Transitional Bilingual
14 Education and Transitional Program of Instruction Evaluation
15 Report", found that in fiscal year 2000, 13.6% of limited
16 English proficient students transitioned into mainstream
17 classrooms, up substantially from 11.5% in fiscal year 1999
18 and 9.7% in fiscal year 1998, thereby demonstrating that
19 these students are increasingly being transferred into
20 mainstream classrooms, which is a primary goal of
21 transitional bilingual education programs; and

22 WHEREAS, A follow-up study conducted on a sample of
23 students transitioned to mainstream education during fiscal
24 year 1997 indicated that their mainstream performance is
25 generally favorable, with more test scores meeting or
26 exceeding standards, thereby demonstrating the success of
27 transitional bilingual education programs; and

28 WHEREAS, The State's oversight obligations include, among
29 other things, ensuring the following:

30 (1) that funds are being used to hire bilingual
31 education teachers;

32 (2) that these teachers are properly certified;

1 (3) that an adequate number of staff are hired;

2 (4) that expenses are necessary and appropriate;

3 (5) that entrance into a transitional bilingual
4 education program is a result of the application of uniform
5 criteria across the school district;

6 (6) that exit from the program is contingent upon
7 assessment by a normed instrument; and

8 (7) that through on-site inspections, the program is
9 being conducted in a physical space that is conducive to a
10 learning environment; and

11 WHEREAS, One of the primary methods the State uses to
12 enforce compliance with State law is to withhold funds until
13 questionable school districts come into compliance; and

14 WHEREAS, If schools receive transitional bilingual
15 education funds regardless of their compliance with the
16 State's bilingual education laws, the State will be less able
17 to ensure compliance; and

18 WHEREAS, Numerous groups have publicly expressed
19 opposition to the Governor's plan with regard to bilingual
20 education, including the Mexican American Legal Defense and
21 Education Fund, the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual
22 Education, and the Illinois Association for Multilingual and
23 Multicultural Education; therefore, be it

24 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SECOND GENERAL
25 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we urge Governor
26 George H. Ryan to reconsider his proposal to consolidate
27 bilingual education funding; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That we urge the Governor not to take further
29 action with respect to his proposal; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
31 presented to the Governor.