

House Concurrent Resolution No. 42

95TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES NASHEED (Sponsor), EL-AMIN, JONES (63), MEINERS, CARTER, BROWN (50), MEADOWS, KUESSNER, SCHIEFFER, DENISON, WALLACE, McDONALD, STORCH, OXFORD, WALTON GRAY, HOLSMAN, ROORDA, HOSKINS (80), WEBB, MORRIS, CHAPPELLE-NADAL, DOUGHERTY, ENGLUND, KIRKTON, COLONA, TALBOY, CALLOWAY, GRISAMORE AND McNEIL (Co-sponsors).

2370L.021

1 **Whereas**, Missouri's dropout rate in 2008 was 4.2%, the highest level in five years,
2 an increase from a low of 3.3% in 2003; and

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4 **Whereas**, the number and percentage of school districts with a 4% or higher
5 dropout rate had been decreasing from 270 districts (60%) in 1995 to a low of 83 districts (18%)
6 in 2004. In 2008, 104 districts (23%) had a dropout rate in excess of 4%; and

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8 **Whereas**, the rate for minority students increased in 2008 to 8.7%, up from 6.7%
9 in 2007. Data shows a larger decrease in the dropout rate for minority students between 1999
10 and 2004 than for non-minority students; and

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12 **Whereas**, high school dropouts are four times more likely to be unemployed than
13 those who completed four or more years of college; and

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15 **Whereas**, high school graduates earn \$143 more per week than high school
16 dropouts. College graduates earn \$336 more per week than high school graduates; and

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18 **Whereas**, dropouts are more likely to apply and receive public assistance than
19 graduates of high school; and

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21 **Whereas**, dropouts comprise a disproportionate percentage of the nation's prison
22 and death row inmates. 82% of prisoners in America are high school dropouts; and

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24 **Whereas**, today, children are less likely than their parents to graduate high school,
25 and employment and earnings for high school dropouts are at their lowest level; and

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27 **Whereas**, while the reasons why students drop out of school varies from feelings
28 of alienation to uninteresting classes and not doing well academically, whatever the causes,
29 Missouri can no longer afford to have students leaving school without a diploma; and

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31 **Whereas**, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is hosting a
32 statewide Dropout Prevention Summit on Monday, April 20, 2009, to increase awareness,
33 encourage collaboration, and facilitate action in communities that want to improve their
34 graduation rates; and

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36 **Whereas**, while such a summit is one of many steps in reducing the dropout rate
37 and increasing graduation rates, a comprehensive solution requires legislative participation and
38 action:

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40 **Now, therefore, be it resolved** by the members of the House of
41 Representatives of the Ninety-fifth General Assembly, First Regular Session, the Senate
42 concurring therein, that to ensure that thoughtful and necessary steps be taken to reduce the
43 dropout rate among our high school students; and

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45 **Be it further resolved** that the Speaker of the House of Representatives and
46 the President Pro Tempore of the Senate appoint a Joint Interim Committee on Dropout
47 Prevention that is authorized to function during the legislative interim between the First and
48 Second Regular Sessions of the Ninety-fifth General Assembly to comprehensively study and
49 make recommendations regarding school dropout prevention; and

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51 **Be it further resolved** that the Joint Interim Committee shall prepare a final
52 report, together with its recommendations for any legislative action deemed necessary for
53 submission to the General Assembly prior to commencement of the Second Regular Session of
54 the Ninety-fifth General Assembly; and

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56 **Be it further resolved** that the Joint Interim Committee may solicit input
57 and information necessary to fulfill its obligations, including but not limited to soliciting input
58 and information from any state department or agency the Joint Interim Committee deems
59 relevant, schools, child advocates, the courts, and the general public; and

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61 **Be it further resolved** that the staffs of House Research, the Joint
62 Committee on Legislative Research, and Senate Research shall provide such legal, research,
63 clerical, technical, and bill drafting services as the Joint Interim Committee may require in the
64 performance of its duties; and

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66 **Be it further resolved** that the actual and necessary expenses of the Joint
67 Interim Committee, its members, and any staff assigned to the Joint Interim Committee incurred
68 by the Joint Interim Committee shall be paid by the Joint Contingent Fund.

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