WHEREAS, High quality learning opportunities, beginning at birth, are an essential part of our nation's education system; and

WHEREAS, Young children facing the most significant challenges stand to benefit greatly from comprehensive and consistent early learning experiences; and

WHEREAS, Research demonstrates that investing in early childhood produces outcomes that help ensure children are successful in school and life, such as increased kindergarten readiness, increased high school graduation rates and college attendance, and reduced special education rates; and

WHEREAS, The State of Illinois is a national leader in supporting early care and education programs; and

WHEREAS, Head Start and State-funded early childhood programs in Illinois are required to comply with a set of standards related to ensuring a smooth transition of children out of the program and into kindergarten; and

WHEREAS, Preschool for All programs must have a "written plan to ensure that those children who are age-eligible for
kindergarten are enrolled in school upon leaving the preschool education program"; and

WHEREAS, The Illinois Preschool Expansion Grant requirements and federal Head Start Performance Standards hold these programs to an even higher standard by requiring programs to collaborate with Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to support children and families through the transition to kindergarten; and

WHEREAS, While requiring early childhood programs to coordinate with the school districts into which children transition is a good practice, many LEAs are not familiar with the opportunity presented by potential partnerships with early childhood providers, like the relationships fostered within local early childhood community collaborations; and

WHEREAS, Illinois State law could better support those LEAs by providing a framework that would help LEAs to identify best practices for supporting kindergarten transitions and give LEAs incentives to adopt these practices; and

WHEREAS, This framework would help the state build upon its successful Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge grant; and

WHEREAS, Implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act
(ESSA) provides an opportune moment to develop and put into motion such a framework, as the law specifically authorizes districts to use resources to support joint efforts to address kindergarten transitions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that the P-20 Council in collaboration with the Early Learning Council shall establish an Advisory Committee for the purposes of reviewing kindergarten transitions; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Kindergarten Transitions Advisory Committee shall consist of a diverse group of stakeholders and practitioners, appointed by the Chair of the P-20 Council, and including those from State agencies, early childhood advocacy organizations, education related professional associations, and members of the General Assembly; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Advisory Committee shall submit a report to the Governor, State Board of Education, and General Assembly that includes recommendations aimed at informing the creation of legislation that:

(1) Addresses the value of K-12 educators and administrators partnering with early childhood programs in
their communities, including Head Start, Preschool for All, home visiting, and child care;

(2) Will not be prescriptive and will not place any burdensome requirements on school districts;

(3) Encourages best practices for supporting kindergarten transitions, including aligned professional development, data collection, data sharing, and family engagement, among others;

(4) Could define the capacity needed and potential incentives for LEAs and early childhood programs to implement these practices;

(5) Promotes best practices related to the continuity of care between early childhood (including between infant-toddler programs and programs for preschool-aged children), early childhood special education, and special education in the early elementary grades;

(6) Could define the role of early learning in required school improvement processes, including the role of kindergarten readiness data in school needs assessments and the expansion of high-quality early learning as a school improvement strategy;
(7) Reinforces the State's commitment to the importance of social and emotional learning for children of all ages; and

(8) Promotes best practices for dual language learners, which address the cultural and linguistic needs of young children as they transition into kindergarten and ways in which to engage underserved immigrant and mixed status families; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Kindergarten Transition Advisory Committee shall first meet at the call of the Chair of the P-20 Council; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Kindergarten Transition Advisory Committee shall elect a Chair or Co-chairs at its first meeting; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Kindergarten Transition Advisory Committee shall seek input from stakeholders and members of the public; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the P-20 Council in collaboration with the Early Learning Council shall provide administrative support to the Kindergarten Transition Advisory Committee; and be it
RESOLVED, That the Kindergarten Transition Advisory Committee shall submit its report to the Governor and General Assembly by September 29, 2018; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Kindergarten Transition Advisory Committee is dissolved upon submission of its report; and be it further; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the P-20 Council and the Early Learning Council shall post a copy of this resolution and the Committee's report to its website.