WHEREAS, Reliable, clean, and affordable electricity is vital to Illinois' economic growth, jobs, and the overall interests of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, Illinois' nuclear power plants provide over half of the State's total electricity generation and are licensed to generate affordable electricity for Illinois families and businesses for decades into the future; and

WHEREAS, Nuclear energy was a prime contributor to Illinois having the eighth lowest average price of electricity in the United States in 2013, and the State's low-cost energy resources give it a significant advantage for attracting and retaining businesses of all kinds and provide reliable electricity to Illinois families; and

WHEREAS, The premature closure of nuclear power plants could increase prices for families and businesses; and

WHEREAS, Illinois' nuclear power plants provide over 92% of Illinois' emissions-free and carbon-free electric generation and are the only greenhouse gas (GHG) free source of predictable, non-intermittent, and reliable electric generation; and
WHEREAS, Illinois' nuclear power plants produce enough electricity to power 4 cities the size of the City of Chicago, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year; and

WHEREAS, Illinois' nuclear power plants are an enormous economic engine for the State, employing more than 5,300 workers across 43 counties in high-paying jobs that average 36% above local wage rates, with a total direct payroll in Illinois of $550 million a year; and

WHEREAS, Every year, the State's nuclear power plants employ an additional 1,300 temporary employees periodically throughout the year, which reflects an additional total annual payroll of over $200 million; and

WHEREAS, The economic activity generated by the 6 Illinois nuclear power plants supports more than 13,000 additional jobs across virtually every sector of the State's economy, resulting in hundreds of millions of dollars in expenditures at thousands of local and State businesses; and

WHEREAS, The State's nuclear power plants contribute nearly $130 million to local property taxes, which are used to fund school districts and other community projects, and these plants also pay over $26 million in Illinois payroll taxes and
WHEREAS, According to the United States Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration, Illinois' investment in nuclear, wind, and solar clean energy resources makes it the nation's top producer of emissions-free electricity; and

WHEREAS, On June 25, 2013, the President of the United States ordered the United States Environmental Protection Agency to propose GHG regulations for existing power plants by no later than June 1, 2014 and to finalize those regulations by no later than June 1, 2015; and

WHEREAS, Illinois and all other states will be required to submit compliance plans to meet the new federal requirements by June 1, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Nuclear energy has played a substantial role in the achievement of GHG emission reduction goals to date, and continued operation of Illinois nuclear power plants is vital to Illinois' ability to economically meet new federal regulations and provides an essential counterbalance to emissions from carbon-emitting generating plants, thereby allowing the State to maximize its fossil fuel advantage and
achieve average GHG emission rate requirements; and

WHEREAS, Various industry analysts and consultants, academic analyses and studies, and market publications have concluded that some Illinois nuclear power plants, like others around the country, are at risk of premature shutdown due to a variety of electric transmission and economic factors as well as the failure of competitive wholesale markets and energy policy to recognize nuclear power for its reliability and clean energy attributes; the premature shutdown of one or more of these valuable assets will most likely cause economic, social, reliability, and environmental harm to Illinois families and businesses; and

WHEREAS, The United States Department of Energy, grid operators, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission commissioners have cautioned that the premature shutdown of nuclear power plants could jeopardize both the nation's electric reliability and the ability to address climate change; and

WHEREAS, In November 2013, 4 of the world's preeminent climate and energy scientists, Dr. Ken Caldeira of the Carnegie Institution for Science, Dr. Kerry Emanuel of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Dr. James Hansen of Columbia University, and Dr. Tom Wigley of the National Center for
Atmospheric Research, released an open letter calling on world leaders to support nuclear energy, concluding that "in the real world there is no credible path to climate stabilization that does not include a substantial role for nuclear power"; and

WHEREAS, Closing even a few nuclear power plants could make achieving State and national carbon reduction goals difficult or impossible; after the January 2012 shutdown of a nuclear power plant in California, the state's carbon dioxide output increased by 35% in the first year, according to the California Air Resources Board, and increased generation costs in the state by about $369 million, equivalent to a 15% increase in total generation costs, during the 12 months following the January 2012 shutdown, according to a working paper issued by the Energy Institute at Haas; and

WHEREAS, Germany embarked upon an energy policy that was designed to eliminate reliance upon nuclear power and, at the same time, reduce GHG emissions; however, with the dramatic reduction of reliance upon nuclear power in Germany, GHG emissions are rising, not falling, while electricity costs have skyrocketed; and

WHEREAS, It is of the highest importance that the State of Illinois preserve its existing clean energy resources as a means of complying with federal laws, keeping electricity costs
stable and affordable, ensuring grid reliability, and continuing its national leadership in the generation of reliable and clean energy; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we urge the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, PJM Interconnection, LLC, and the Mid-Continent Independent Systems Operator to expeditiously adopt market rules and policies, including transmission expansion rules and policies, that will ensure the continued operation of the existing fleet of nuclear power plants in Illinois; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to immediately adopt rules that treat low-carbon resources, like nuclear power plants, equally, regardless of age or fuel source; provide flexibility to the State; and require actions to secure the continued operations at Illinois' nuclear power plants as a compliance mechanism to meet any new federal GHG regulations and, further, to adopt rules that allow the State to offset and balance emissions from fossil fuel electric generation with emissions-free nuclear generation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge the appropriate State agencies to review these impending rules in order to adopt policies to take
advantage of this State's leadership in clean energy production, to continue to provide thousands of high-paying direct and indirect jobs across Illinois, to support hundreds of millions of dollars of economic activity for the Illinois economy, to encourage continued investment in these assets, to provide jobs for the building trades and others, and to provide a strong tax base for local communities throughout Illinois; and be it further

RESOLVED, That in order to take advantage of Illinois' clean energy advantage and to position the State to become a hub of clean energy production for other states, we must further examine existing policies regarding the transmission of electricity to other states; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge the Illinois Commerce Commission to prepare a report examining the State's and grid operators' ability to expand transmissions to allow Illinois to transport clean electricity to other parts of the nation, as well as any legislative impediments, and the impact on residential, commercial, and industrial electric rates from the premature closure of Illinois' nuclear power plants; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge the Illinois Power Agency to prepare a report showing how the premature closure of existing nuclear power plants in Illinois will affect reliability and capacity
for the Midwest region; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to prepare a report showing how the premature closure of existing nuclear power plants in Illinois will affect the societal cost of increased GHG emissions based upon the EPA's published societal cost of GHG; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to prepare a report showing how the premature closure of existing nuclear power plants in Illinois will affect jobs and the economic climate in the affected areas; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge the findings in those reports to include potential market-based solutions that will ensure that the premature closure of these nuclear power plants does not occur and that the dire consequences to the economy, jobs, and the environment are averted; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge the findings from those reports to be presented to the General Assembly and the Governor between November 15, 2014 and adjournment sine die of the 98th General Assembly for consideration and appropriate action; and be it further
RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be delivered to Governor Pat Quinn; the Illinois Congressional delegation; Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Gina McCarthy; Acting Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Cheryl LaFleur; Secretary of the United States Department of Energy, Ernest Moniz; President and Chief Executive Officer of PJM Interconnection, LLC, Terry Boston; and President and Chief Executive Officer of the Mid-Continent Independent Systems Operator, John Bear.