WHEREAS, increasing a community’s educational attainment, particularly completion of credentials and degrees after high school, correlates with increased employment, earnings, civic participation, and life expectancy, along with lower levels of poverty, crime, and obesity; and,

WHEREAS, Illinois has a goal of increasing the proportion of adults with a high-quality postsecondary credential to 60 percent by 2025 and reducing educational achievement gaps that are associated with income and race; and,

WHEREAS, students and their families are sometimes unaware of the postsecondary options and financial aid available to them, and they can benefit from guidance through the process of choosing and applying to college and applying for financial aid; and,

WHEREAS, providing students with college planning and financial aid counseling can help ensure that all high school seniors have the opportunity to continue their education if they choose; such guidance can assist students in enrolling in a school that fits their needs and goals, can minimize student debt, and can maximize the chance for completing a degree or certificate program; and,

WHEREAS, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) will be available on October 1, 2018, for students to apply for aid for the 2019-20 academic year; filing this single application allows a student to be considered for the federal Pell Grant, the state MAP Grant, work-study opportunities, federal student loans, and more; and,

WHEREAS, the mission of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) is to help make college accessible and affordable for Illinois students; to help accomplish this, ISAC provides free assistance with college planning and financial aid to Illinois students so that they can better access financial aid and make more informed choices when choosing a postsecondary path; and,

WHEREAS, in recognition of the Bicentennial, 200 Illinois high schools, colleges and universities, and community-based organizations around the state are celebrating that “College Changes Everything” by hosting October events to help students with both college applications and applications for financial aid;

THEREFORE, I, Bruce Rauner, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim October 2018 as COLLEGE CHANGES EVERYTHING® MONTH in Illinois, and encourage students and families to take full advantage of the financial aid and college planning resources available in their communities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.

Done at the Capitol in the City of Springfield,
this TWENTY-SIXTH day of SEPTEMBER , in
the Year of Our Lord, two thousand and
EIGHTEEN , and of the State of Illinois,
two hundredth.

[Signature]
SECRETARY OF STATE

[Signature]
GOVERNOR