

House Resolution 230

By: Representatives Powell of the 23rd, Murphy of the 18th, McCall of the 90th, Channell of the 111th, Porter of the 143rd and others

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Urging certain actions regarding rural hospitals; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, in 1998, 62 hospitals lost money, 48 of which were rural hospitals; and
- 3 WHEREAS, this is an increase from 1997, when 42 of the 51 hospitals in Georgia that lost
- 4 money were located in rural areas; and
- 5 WHEREAS, funding cuts to rural hospitals by federal and state budget actions have been
- 6 financially devastating; and
- 7 WHEREAS, two rural Georgia hospitals closed in the fall of 1999, and several rural hospitals
- 8 struggled to make payroll in recent weeks; and
- 9 WHEREAS, there are no incentives to spend state collected moneys on health care services
- 10 that can be provided by the tax base from which the moneys were collected; and
- 11 WHEREAS, redirecting moneys already spent by the state elsewhere to local communities
- 12 from which they were collected would be, at most, a budget-neutral issue for the state; and
- 13 WHEREAS, many rural health care rates are cheaper than urban rates, so savings to the state
- 14 may occur by buying services locally; and
- 15 WHEREAS, some rural hospitals are excluded from certain state contracts, such as with the
- 16 Department of Corrections; and
- 17 WHEREAS, when a hospital closes, the economic development of that community is
- 18 basically ended and the general quality of living suffers; and

1 WHEREAS, significant populations of indigent, elderly, and uninsured people live in areas
2 that would be hurt by additional rural hospital closures.

3 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
4 the members of this body urge that, in order not to further jeopardize rural hospitals in
5 Georgia and risk additional hospital closures, all hospitals which are either the sole providing
6 hospital within an individual county or licensed for fewer than 100 acute-care beds:

7 (1) Have eliminated all coinsurance payments from their patients that are required by
8 state health care plans, including Medicaid, State Merit, or other state plans;

9 (2) Be eligible to participate in contracts with the Department of Corrections to provide
10 health care services available in those hospitals to state and local correctional institutions;

11 (3) Be eligible to participate in any other state-wide contracts for health care services if
12 such hospitals agree to such participation at the same rate as other hospitals have agreed
13 to accept under that contract; and

14 (4) Be given priority by departments and agencies of the state and its political
15 subdivisions, including but not limited to county departments of family and children
16 services and boards of health, the University System of Georgia, and the Division of
17 Medical Assistance, in providing health care services available at such hospitals.