

Senate Resolution 578

By: Senators Unterman of the 45th, Reed of the 35th, Johnson of the 1st, Stephens of the 51st, Balfour of the 9th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 To promote health education and physical activity in Georgia schools; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, schools are identified as a key setting for public health strategies to decrease
4 and prevent overweight and obese children and most children spend much of their time in
5 school; and

6 WHEREAS, schools provide many opportunities to engage children in healthy eating and
7 physical activity and to reinforce healthy diet and physical activity messages; and

8 WHEREAS, any public health approach to healthy eating habits and regular physical activity
9 should include schools, families, and communities; and

10 WHEREAS, schools can help build awareness among teachers, food service staff, coaches,
11 nurses, and other staff about the contribution of proper nutrition and physical activity to the
12 maintenance of lifelong healthy weight; and

13 WHEREAS, parents, teachers, and staff play a critical role in teaching our children about the
14 importance of physical activity and nutrition; and

15 WHEREAS, the Surgeon General of the United States issued a report in December, 2001,
16 calling on every child in grades K-12 to receive 30 minutes of physical activity every day;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, the American Heart Association recommends that all children ages five and
19 older should participate in at least 30 minutes of enjoyable, moderate-intensity activities
20 every day and should also perform at least 30 minutes of vigorous physical activities at least
21 three to four days each week to achieve and maintain a good level of cardiorespiratory (heart
22 and lung) fitness; and

1 WHEREAS, national studies have reported that an increase in physical activity to three to
2 five days per week translates into 20 percent improvement in physical fitness, 15 to 20
3 percent improvement in self esteem, 20 percent improvement in school attendance, 20
4 percent improvement in school grades, 50 percent reduction in smoking, and 60 percent
5 reduction in drug and alcohol use; and

6 WHEREAS, in 2002, approximately \$50 million in grants were distributed through the
7 Physical Education for Progress (PEP) program to support innovative approaches to health
8 and physical activity in schools and communities throughout the United States; and

9 WHEREAS, in 2003, approximately \$10 million in grants were distributed to states through
10 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Coordinated School Health Program to
11 support school health.

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
13 GEORGIA that Georgia schools should provide age-appropriate and culturally sensitive
14 instruction in health education that helps students develop the knowledge, attitudes, skills,
15 and behaviors to adopt, maintain, and enjoy healthy eating habits and a physically active
16 lifestyle.

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Georgia schools should provide 30 minutes per day of
18 structured moderate to vigorous physical activity for children in grades K-12.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that meals offered through the school breakfast and lunch
20 programs should meet nutrition standards and that a variety of food options should be
21 provided in venues within the school's control.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Georgia schools should encourage all children from
23 pre-kindergarten through grade 12 to participate in healthy eating habits and daily physical
24 education that helps develop the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and confidence needed to be
25 healthy and physically active for life.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education and the Department of
27 Human Resources should work together to seek funding for physical activity in schools
28 through federal grants such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Coordinated
29 School Health Program and identify ways to encourage Georgia schools and communities
30 to apply for Physical Education for Progress grants.