

## House Resolution 1340

By: Representatives Manning of the 32<sup>nd</sup>, Parsons of the 29<sup>th</sup>, Coleman of the 65<sup>th</sup>, Sinkfield of the 50<sup>th</sup>, Cooper of the 30<sup>th</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Commending SafePath Children's Advocacy Center, Inc., and inviting representatives of  
2 SafePath to appear before the House of Representatives; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, child abuse and neglect are a significant problem in the United States and the  
4 effects of child abuse can be traumatic and long lasting; and

5 WHEREAS, in the State of Georgia, one child is the victim of confirmed abuse every 30  
6 minutes, and one out of every four girls and one out of every six boys is sexually abused  
7 before the age of 18, and of these victims, approximately one-third are age five or younger;  
8 and

9 WHEREAS, in the past, the system designed to deal with child victims of abuse could be  
10 fragmented, adult oriented, and insensitive to the needs of the child, and professionals from  
11 child protection, investigative, legal, medical, and mental health systems would meet and talk  
12 with a child separately and repeatedly in facilities designed for adults; and

13 WHEREAS, it became apparent that this fragmented and adult oriented response to child  
14 abuse cases was not meeting the needs of the children and their families; and

15 WHEREAS, child abuse is a community problem and professionals throughout the field of  
16 child abuse agree that no single agency, individual, or discipline has all the necessary  
17 knowledge, skills, or resources to provide all the assistance needed by abused children and  
18 their families; and

19 WHEREAS, SafePath Children's Advocacy Center, Inc., is a private, nonprofit organization  
20 founded by the Coalition for Child Abuse prevention and governed by a volunteer board of  
21 directors; and

1 WHEREAS, SafePath Children's Advocacy Center, Inc., is dedicated to improving the lives  
2 of child victims of abuse by reducing the trauma to children and their nonoffending  
3 caregivers by providing a comprehensive, multidisciplinary team approach to the  
4 intervention in and investigation, prosecution, and treatment of child sexual and severe  
5 physical abuse allegations; and

6 WHEREAS, SafePath Children's Advocacy Center, Inc., provides a neutral, child-friendly,  
7 comprehensive services location where professionals and agencies can work as a  
8 multidisciplinary team to create a child focused yet professional approach to abuse cases; and

9 WHEREAS, the benefits of SafePath are immediate: consistent and fast follow-up to abuse  
10 reports; medical and mental health referrals that more effectively help the child and the  
11 child's family; and a dramatic reduction in trauma experienced by the child; and

12 WHEREAS, SafePath Children's Advocacy Center, Inc., is recognized on the national level  
13 by the National Children's Alliance and on the state level by the Children's Advocacy Centers  
14 of Georgia, Inc., as a mentor site for new, developing, and existing child advocacy centers  
15 around the country; and

16 WHEREAS, SafePath Children's Advocacy Center, Inc., under the guidance, dedication, and  
17 vision of a volunteer board of directors comprised of prominent professionals and citizens,  
18 has enabled SafePath to provide approximately 5,000 child victims and their nonoffending  
19 caregivers over 10,000 units of service since its inception.

20 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
21 this body recognizes and commends SafePath Children's Advocacy Center, Inc., and invites  
22 the designated representatives of this outstanding organization to appear before the House  
23 of Representatives at a time to be fixed by the Speaker of the House.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
25 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to SafePath Children's  
26 Advocacy Center, Inc.