

Senate Resolution 205

By: Senators Thompson of the 5th, Stoner of the 6th, Grant of the 25th, Powell of the 23rd, Walker of the 22nd and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Congress of the United States to amend Title XXI of the Social Security Act to
2 remove exclusions which prohibit enrollment of children of public employees in the
3 PeachCare for Kids Program created under Code Section 49-5-273; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, as part of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, the Congress of the United States
5 created Title XXI of the Social Security Act, the State Children's Health Insurance Program
6 (SCHIP), to address the growing problem of children without health insurance; and

7 WHEREAS, SCHIP was designed as a federal-state partnership, similar to Medicaid, with
8 the goal of expanding health insurance to children whose families earn too much money to
9 be eligible for Medicaid, but not enough money to purchase private insurance; and

10 WHEREAS, under the auspices of the federal legislation creating SCHIP, the Georgia
11 General Assembly enacted the PeachCare for Kids Program under Code Section 49-5-273;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of 42 U.S.C. Section 1397jj of Title XXI of the
14 Social Security Act expressly prohibits children who are members of a family eligible for
15 health benefits coverage under a state health benefit plan on the basis of a family member's
16 employment with a public agency in the state from enrolling in the PeachCare for Kids
17 Program; and

18 WHEREAS, in 2004, the median salary for all full-time state employees was \$28,543.00,
19 which was \$1,500.00 less per year than the 2002 median salary of \$30,000.00 among all
20 private sector full-time workers in Georgia, indicating the disparity between private sector
21 and state employees; and

22 WHEREAS, in 2004, 10 percent of state employees earned less than \$18,875.00 annually,
23 and as a result, the \$180.28 monthly employee premium contribution for family coverage

1 under the most popular enrollment option of the State Health Benefit Plan cost almost 10
2 percent of their annual salary; and

3 WHEREAS, in 2004, over 3,000 state employees lived in families with incomes below 133
4 percent of the federal poverty level, and their minor children may have been eligible to enroll
5 in the Medicaid program; and

6 WHEREAS, in 2004, approximately 12,000 state employees had family incomes between
7 133 and 235 percent of the federal poverty level, and based upon income, their minor
8 children would have qualified for enrollment in the PeachCare for Kids Program had the
9 parent worked for an employer other than the state; and

10 WHEREAS, low and moderate income workers represent almost 19 percent of the state work
11 force; and

12 WHEREAS, an estimated 3,200 children of state employees would gain medical coverage
13 if state employees were eligible for the PeachCare for Kids Program; and

14 WHEREAS, the federal prohibition preventing children of low wage-earning state employees
15 from enrolling in the PeachCare for Kids Program results in too many children of state
16 employees being uninsured because their parents earn too much income to be financially
17 eligible for Medicaid and too little income to be able to afford family coverage under the
18 State Health Benefit Plan; and

19 WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper that these federal restrictions be amended
20 appropriately.

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the United States
22 Congress is urged to take all necessary steps to amend Title XXI of the Social Security Act
23 to remove exclusions which prohibit the enrollment of children of public employees in the
24 PeachCare for Kids Program under Code Section 49-5-273.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
26 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to each member of the Georgia
27 Congressional delegation.