

Senate Resolution 445

By: Senators Butler of the 55th, Miles of the 43rd, Adelman of the 42nd, Jones of the 10th and Henson of the 41st

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring and commending Dr. Jacquelyn M. Belcher, outgoing president of Georgia
2 Perimeter College; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Dr. Jacquelyn M. Belcher was the first minority president of a nonminority
4 institution and the first minority female president in the University System of Georgia; and

5 WHEREAS, under Dr. Belcher's leadership, Georgia Perimeter College has transformed
6 from a localized community college into a vibrant urban institution of higher education that
7 boasts an enrollment of more than 21,000 students yet still maintains its small campus,
8 hometown college appeal; and

9 WHEREAS, Dr. Belcher has helped to define the mission of Georgia Perimeter College as
10 placing learning first in order to provide accessible and affordable high quality undergraduate
11 credit and noncredit programs for students seeking to complete an associate degree, transfer
12 to a senior college or university, prepare for immediate entry into a career, pursue personal
13 goals or enhance workplace skills, and express the college's stated purpose to the Atlanta
14 community; and

15 WHEREAS, under this mission, Georgia Perimeter College offers a curriculum that
16 specializes in liberal arts and professional preparation, promotes international and
17 intercultural understanding, and serves the broader community as an educational, cultural,
18 and economic resource; and

19 WHEREAS, Dr. Belcher has assembled an administrative team that has significantly
20 impacted the college's growth, creating plans and funds for new campuses and immensely
21 increasing scholarships, community partnerships, academic resources, and faculty
22 development; and

1 WHEREAS, she has vastly expanded the Georgia Perimeter College Foundation and Alumni
2 Association, making them fully operational with expanded membership, many more donors,
3 and increased discretionary funds; and she has established a grants office that has greatly
4 augmented funding for student and faculty needs; and

5 WHEREAS, Dr. Belcher has presided over an academic team that continually reviews the
6 curriculum and adds new programs to address the needs of the communities served by the
7 college, including the proliferation of partnerships between hospitals and the college's
8 nursing program to address Georgia's nursing shortage; and

9 WHEREAS, she has so improved the quality of educational services at Georgia Perimeter
10 College that the college received an outstanding reaccreditation report from the Southern
11 Association of Colleges and Schools, a commendation, and only ten recommendations for
12 improvement, an almost unheard-of superior rating; and

13 WHEREAS, during her tenure, the college has provided the largest number of transfers to
14 the University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, and Georgia State; and its joint enrollment program
15 has been the largest in the state with some students receiving their associate degree in the
16 same year they graduate from high school; and

17 WHEREAS, becoming a first-choice institution because of quality, multiple locations, cost,
18 and access to senior institutions in the University System of Georgia and undertaking
19 ambitious physical expansions, Georgia Perimeter College has experienced a phenomenal
20 burst of enrollment under Dr. Belcher's skillful leadership; and

21 WHEREAS, as a result of her tireless efforts, the college's name is associated locally,
22 statewide, nationally, and internationally with excellence, innovation, and community
23 outreach; and

24 WHEREAS, she established an award-winning annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday
25 Celebration that brings together diverse communities to celebrate and recommit to the legacy
26 of Dr. King, furthering social justice and community service; and

27 WHEREAS, she has seized the opportunity and responsibility to build P-16 programs to form
28 a seamless transition for high school students entering college and has actively encouraged
29 diversity among students, faculty, and staff as evidenced by a current enrollment that

1 includes students from approximately 140 nations and with 54 percent of students and 28
2 percent of faculty of minority background; and

3 WHEREAS, she has expanded the college's athletics program, which has won five national
4 championships and a national runner-up trophy, and has encouraged a culture among the
5 coaching staff that promotes student-athletes in the classroom and the development of life
6 skills as well as skills on the playing field; and

7 WHEREAS, she has met the challenge of major changes at Georgia Perimeter College,
8 reorganizing the college governance structure to provide full service campuses with chief
9 operating officers, or provosts, on each campus, resulting in the flexibility to meet the needs
10 of the individual communities and students at each location with unique strategies while
11 allowing widespread participation in policy development, decision making, budgeting,
12 priority development, and strategic planning; and

13 WHEREAS, under her tenure, the college has amplified its role as a major employer,
14 providing 7,338 jobs, and an important component of the Atlanta metropolitan economy with
15 a total economic output of \$820.7 million; and

16 WHEREAS, as a result of her outstanding management over the past decade, Georgia
17 Perimeter College will continue to grow in enrollment, reputation, program availability, and
18 many other areas of excellence while continuing to respond to the emerging needs of the
19 communities it serves; and

20 WHEREAS, because of Dr. Belcher's dedication, Georgia Perimeter College is prepared to
21 continue the legacy of the great mission she has established and achieve recognition as one
22 of the nation's preeminent two-year institutions.

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
24 join in honoring and commending Dr. Jacquelyn M. Belcher, outgoing president of Georgia
25 Perimeter College, for her innumerable contributions to improving the quality of education
26 received in Georgia's institutions of higher education and extend their sincere best wishes
27 for her continued success.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
29 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Dr. Jacquelyn M. Belcher.