

Senate Resolution 743

By: Senators Tolleson of the 20th, Kemp of the 46th, Staton of the 18th, Meyer von Bremen of the 12th, Hill of the 4th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing Community Health Centers Day; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, a large portion of the state's residents reside in federally designated medically
3 underserved areas and do not have access to affordable, quality health care services; and

4 WHEREAS, access to comprehensive primary health care services without regard to income,
5 cultural or ethnic heritage, or disease conditions has been shown to be most effective in
6 improving the health of all people; and

7 WHEREAS, federally funded community health centers are located in over 100 of the state's
8 underserved communities and provide high quality primary and preventive health care for
9 over 226,000 persons, including the working poor, uninsured, underinsured, elderly,
10 homeless, immigrants, and other vulnerable populations; and

11 WHEREAS, the community health centers offer access to a wide range of cost effective
12 primary and preventive medical and dental services and prescription medicines as well as
13 health education, nutrition counseling, translation, community outreach, transportation, and
14 support programs without regard to the patient's ability to pay; and

15 WHEREAS, the health centers have a track record of over three decades of controlling costs,
16 providing quality care, recruiting and retaining excellent health care professionals where they
17 are most needed, and empowering communities to develop long-range solutions to their
18 health care needs while removing economic, cultural, geographic, and other barriers to
19 adequate health care; and

20 WHEREAS, the health centers, which bring over 29 million federal dollars per year to
21 Georgia communities, serve as major safety net providers and help to keep families from
22 falling into poverty while creating jobs and generating economic activity in the economically
23 depressed communities; and

1 WHEREAS, the cost effectiveness of community health centers has been documented in
2 several studies that show that rates of emergency room visits and hospitalization are much
3 lower among health care patients than patients of other providers, and studies that show that
4 community health centers in Georgia save the state Medicaid program at least \$14.4 million
5 per year for care provided to Medicaid patients; and

6 WHEREAS, the community health centers work in partnership with other health providers,
7 local hospitals, health departments, social service agencies, and health related supportive
8 services to maximize resources and assure that services are coordinated to improve the health
9 status of the community; and

10 WHEREAS, Georgia's community health centers and their state organization, the Georgia
11 Association for Primary Health Care, support President George Bush's goal to increase the
12 number of health centers in Georgia and across the nation, and have taken a leadership role
13 in helping to resolve the state's health care access problems, assure continuous quality
14 improvement, and reduce health care disparities among the underserved through participation
15 in the national health disparity collaboratives; and

16 WHEREAS, the community health centers deserve commendation for their outstanding
17 record of service and dedication to improving the health care and health status of all
18 Georgians.

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
20 recognize February 2, 2006, as Community Health Centers Day.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
22 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the Georgia Association for Primary
23 Health Care.