

House Resolution 144

By: Representatives Cooper of the 41st, Burkhalter of the 50th, Lewis of the 15th, Walker of the 107th, and Millar of the 79th

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring and commending the life and advocacy of family caregivers, especially mothers
2 who are taking care of their children with developmental disabilities; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, families are the core unit of society, and advancing their quality of life and
4 power to control their destinies is consistent with long-established constitutional principles
5 of family autonomy and personal liberty; and

6 WHEREAS, strengthening the self-sufficiency of Georgia's families and helping them
7 protect their vulnerable children by being a resource to their families will make for a stronger
8 Georgia; and

9 WHEREAS, raising a child with a disability is a lifelong commitment that often has
10 increased financial costs, physical and emotional stress, and disruptions in family life; and

11 WHEREAS, children with disabilities are more likely to live with single parents, especially
12 their mothers, than other children; and

13 WHEREAS, mothers spend large amounts of time providing health care at home for their
14 children each week that includes transportation to specialists, doctor appointments, dressing,
15 care of feeding or breathing equipment, and advocating for inclusion in school and work; and

16 WHEREAS, 61 percent of Americans with developmental disabilities live with their families
17 and over 17,000 Georgians with developmental disabilities live with caregivers over the age
18 of 60; and

19 WHEREAS, home and community based care, as compared to institutional care, has been
20 shown to enhance the sense of dignity, autonomy, and choice for individuals with
21 disabilities; and

1 WHEREAS, no parent should have to commit their child to live in an institution or a nursing
2 home when they can live in the community with the good family or in their own home with
3 community support; and

4 WHEREAS, because of the advocacy efforts of parents, especially mothers, in the last 100
5 years, today's expectation for people with disabilities is that they enjoy the opportunity to live
6 independently, benefit from their own self-determination, make choices, contribute to
7 society, and experience full integration and inclusion in the economic, political, social,
8 cultural, and educational mainstream of American society; and

9 WHEREAS, in the 1930s parents of children with disabilities began forming support groups
10 so that they could work together to improve the lives of their children; and

11 WHEREAS, in 1963 President Kennedy's Panel on Mental Retardation recommended that
12 local communities work with federal and state agencies to provide community based
13 services; and

14 WHEREAS, in 1974 President Nixon issued Executive Order 11776, which reaffirmed our
15 country's commitment to returning over 60,000 individuals from institutions to community
16 living; and

17 WHEREAS, in 1990 President Bush's passage of the Americans with Disability Act
18 prohibited discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, public services,
19 accommodations, and in telecommunications; and

20 WHEREAS, in 1999 the Supreme Court in its *Olmstead* decision further affirmed that states
21 are required to follow the ADA's "integration mandate" in long-term community services and
22 supports; and

23 WHEREAS, families who care and support their sons and daughters with disabilities deserve
24 commendation for their tireless work on behalf of the people of Georgia.

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
26 the members of this body join in honoring the valuable work, tireless efforts, and unending
27 self-sacrifice of these families.