

Senate Resolution 517

By: Senators Thomas of the 54th and Henson of the 41st

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating a Senate Study Committee on Childhood Obesity in Georgia; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, there is concern over the increasing incidence of childhood obesity, the rate of
4 illness connected with this problem, and the resulting impact on the health of the children of
5 Georgia; and

6 WHEREAS, the obesity prevalence in the United States among children six to 19 years old
7 more than tripled between 1980 and 2003; and

8 WHEREAS, in Georgia, the prevalence is staggering, with 27 percent of two to five year old
9 children, 33 percent of middle school age children, and 26 percent of high school students
10 overweight or at risk for being overweight, and the severity of overweight children in this
11 state is two times higher than the current national average; and

12 WHEREAS, overweight children and adolescents are more likely to become obese as adults,
13 as shown in one study which found that approximately 80 percent of overweight children
14 between the ages of 10 and 15 were obese adults at age 25; and

15 WHEREAS, overweight children are at risk for health problems during their youth and into
16 adulthood, and they are more likely to have risk factors associated with cardiovascular
17 disease such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and type 2 diabetes than are other
18 children and adolescents; and

19 WHEREAS, type 2 diabetes, formerly known as "adult-onset diabetes" and now classified
20 as an epidemic in American children, continues to rise in Georgia, and overweight children
21 are also at increased risk for hypertension, asthma, sleep apnea, and low self-esteem; and

1 WHEREAS, many experts agree that obesity in childhood may affect academic performance,
2 with one study suggesting that overweight children have significantly lower math and
3 reading test scores compared to nonoverweight children in kindergarten; and

4 WHEREAS, the medical costs associated with obesity from childhood to adulthood in
5 Georgia is nearly \$2.1 billion per year due to costs associated with diagnostic and treatment
6 services, lost wages, and reduced productivity due to illness, disability, and premature death;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, due to the epidemic of childhood obesity, many experts believe this may be the
9 first generation of children who will not outlive their parents.

10 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that there is created a Senate
11 Study Committee on Childhood Obesity in Georgia to be composed of three members of the
12 Senate appointed by the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall designate
13 a member of the committee as chairperson of the committee. The chairperson shall call all
14 meetings of the committee.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall undertake a study of the conditions,
16 needs, issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any action
17 or legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate. The committee may
18 conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or
19 convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and
20 accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution. The members of the committee
21 shall receive the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of
22 Georgia Annotated. The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by
23 any member of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized.
24 The funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from the funds
25 appropriated to the Senate. In the event the committee makes a report of its findings and
26 recommendations, with suggestions for proposed legislation, if any, such report shall be
27 made on or before December 15, 2007. The committee shall stand abolished on December
28 15, 2007.