

Senate Resolution 1457

By: Senators Hamrick of the 30th, Tolleson of the 20th, Harp of the 29th, Unterman of the 45th, Mullis of the 53rd and others

#### A RESOLUTION

1 Commending the Honorable Dr. Donald R. Thomas on the occasion of his retirement from  
2 the Georgia Senate and declaring him Doctor of the Day, Emeritus; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the Honorable Dr. Donald R. Thomas has diligently and conscientiously  
4 represented the people of the 54th District in the Georgia State Senate with honor and  
5 distinction since 1996; and

6 WHEREAS, in addition to his unyielding dedication and commitment to representing the  
7 best interests of his constituents, Senator Thomas has served as a pillar of support for the  
8 mental, spiritual, and emotional well-being of the staff and his colleagues in the Georgia  
9 General Assembly; and

10 WHEREAS, the esteemed Senator from the 54th is an excellent physician who listens to  
11 what ails you, does not over-medicate, demonstrates an unconditional willingness to treat  
12 you, and has been known to write a prescription for recess so you can go and play, and who,  
13 no matter what the circumstances or the weather, will always greet you with "It's a beautiful  
14 day"; and

15 WHEREAS, Senator Thomas has the best sense of humor and tells the best jokes, and this  
16 body's favorite joke is his one about the polar bear, peas, and the ice hole; and

17 WHEREAS, always the first to laugh when the joke is on him, Senator Thomas enjoys  
18 re-telling the story of the time he drove from Dalton to the capitol for a meeting having  
19 accidentally left his shoes at home, as he goes barefoot at home most of the time, and how he  
20 proudly walked into the capitol with bare feet, borrowed a pair of shoes, went to his meeting,  
21 returned the shoes with a nice thank you note tucked inside, and drove back home barefoot  
22 at the end of the day; and

23 WHEREAS, a native of Whitfield County, Georgia, Senator Thomas still lives on the family  
24 farm he grew up on, raising cows and chickens and honoring the place where his values took  
25 root; and

26 WHEREAS, he earned a bachelor's degree from Georgia Southern University, where he met  
27 and fell in love with his beautiful wife Emma Jean Brock; and

28 WHEREAS, Senator Thomas earned a medical degree from the Medical College of Georgia  
29 and began a family practice with Whitfield Medical Professional Associates in Dalton in  
30 1960, a practice he has maintained now for 50 years; and

31 WHEREAS, after a heart attack threatened to derail his dreams at the age of 36, Senator  
32 Thomas became an early role model for taking a proactive approach to wellness, jogging  
33 several miles each day, a routine which he continues to maintain today at the age of 76; and

34 WHEREAS, this talented physician and generous man began his political career in 1972 with  
35 his election to the Whitfield County School Board and has spent the last 14 years  
36 distinguishing himself as an astute statesman in the Georgia Senate; and

37 WHEREAS, as chairman of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee, Senator  
38 Thomas was instrumental in establishing Georgia's public smoking ban, made cold medicine  
39 used in methamphetamine labs harder to purchase, expanded cervical cancer screening,  
40 required that teenagers pass a driver's education course, and combated childhood obesity; and

41 WHEREAS, a man of strong character and humble nature with a determination to protect  
42 the welfare of Georgians, Senator Thomas passionately fought for legislation to close the  
43 loophole that does not require pickup truck drivers to wear a seatbelt; and

44 WHEREAS, Senator Thomas and his wife, Emma Jean, have been blessed with eight  
45 children, Angela, Melody, Ondray, Mark, Joye, John, Mary, and Robe; 19 grandchildren,  
46 Michael, Caleb, Brock, Abby, David, Emily, Thomas, Sam, Sarah, Jack, Anna, Emma,  
47 Elizabeth, Kelly, Bowen, Brandon, Candace, Annie, and Katie; and three  
48 great-grandchildren, Maggie, Katie Charlotte, and Merriweather; and

49 WHEREAS, despite his many accomplishments, his humble nature endears him to all he  
50 encounters, and his Godly nature and loving countenance reflect a close relationship with  
51 Jesus Christ who leads, guides, and directs his steps; and

52 WHEREAS, a consummate positive influence in the General Assembly, Dr. Don will be  
53 sorely missed upon his retirement, but he will always be in the hearts of his friends at the  
54 capitol and will always be on call to serve all of Georgia.

55 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
56 recognize the amazing political career of the Honorable Dr. Donald R. Thomas, the physician  
57 who champions for Georgia, and declare him Doctor of the Day, Emeritus.

58 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
59 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the Honorable Dr. Donald R. Thomas.