

## Senate Resolution 421

By: Senators Henson of the 41st, Tate of the 38th, Miller of the 49th, Bethel of the 54th, Butler of the 55th and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Commending the Georgia based American Association of Adapted Sports Programs, the  
2 Georgia High School Association, and their collective school system members for their  
3 national leadership in the area of standardized adapted athletics for students with disabilities;  
4 and for other purposes.

5 WHEREAS, the American Association of Adapted Sports Programs (AAASP) was founded  
6 in 1996 by Georgia educators, Beverly Vaughn and Tommie Storms; and

7 WHEREAS, the organization has been honored as the "model for the nation" by the Atlanta  
8 Paralympic Youth and Education Committee and three times named National Program of the  
9 Year by the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance; and

10 WHEREAS, the AAASP formed a historic alliance with the Georgia High School  
11 Association in 2001, making it possible for every Georgia student with a physical disability  
12 to participate directly with his or her school team in track and field and for the AAASP  
13 wheelchair basketball championship game to be included in the GHSA basketball finals; and

14 WHEREAS, participating students have been afforded the opportunity to letter in their sport  
15 and compete both locally and at the state level, just as their nondisabled peers; and

16 WHEREAS, parents of children who participate in the program noted reductions in  
17 secondary health complications, improvement in academics, the ability to play school sports  
18 that their children would otherwise never have, and active engagement with others; and

19 WHEREAS, these programs have served over 4,000 Georgia student-athletes with physical  
20 disabilities in school based athletic adapted sports programs, trained hundreds of officials and  
21 coaches, and held nearly 1,600 sanctioned interscholastic competitions in the wheelchair  
22 sports of handball, basketball, football, and track and field; and

23 WHEREAS, during the program's 16 year history, many Georgia school districts have  
24 participated along with Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation, Henry County  
25 Parks and Recreation Department, and several YMCA departments across this state; and

26 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights has recently  
27 handed down best practices guidelines to the nation's schools that closely mirror the health  
28 and educational opportunities pioneered in Georgia through the AAASP/GHSA Alliance,  
29 encouraging all schools to include persons with disabilities in their athletic programs where  
30 appropriate and to add adapted programs to include all physically disabled students in  
31 athletics following their excellent example.

32 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
33 commend the American Association of Adapted Sports Programs and the Georgia High  
34 School Association for superb achievements in education and inclusive athletic programs for  
35 students with physical disabilities.

36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
37 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the American Association of Adapted  
38 Sports Programs and the Georgia High School Association.