

Senate Resolution 434

By: Senator Unterman of the 45th

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending the March of Dimes and recognizing March 13, 2013, as March of Dimes Day
2 at the state capitol; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the March of Dimes Foundation is a pioneer in improving the health of infants
4 and women of childbearing age by preventing birth defects, premature birth, and infant
5 mortality; and

6 WHEREAS, the March of Dimes was founded in 1938 to fight polio, and funded the
7 development of two vaccines that virtually eliminated the crippling disease, and in 1958,
8 having achieved its initial mission, shifted its attention from polio to the prevention of
9 preterm birth, the greatest contributing factor to newborns dying within their first month of
10 life; and

11 WHEREAS, nearly half a million babies are born preterm every year in the United States,
12 and over 19,400 preterm births occurred in Georgia in 2009, a figure which represents one
13 in every eight babies born in this state and a nearly 2 percent increase in preterm births since
14 1999; and

15 WHEREAS, these dire statistics were a major reason for Georgia's receiving a grade of "D"
16 in a 2012 report by the March of Dimes on premature birth rates among the states in the
17 nation; and

18 WHEREAS, the March of Dimes supported the Association of State and Territorial Health
19 Officials (ASTHO) Challenge calling for an 8 percent reduction in preterm births in Georgia
20 by 2014, and healthier starts in the lives of thousands of infants; and

21 WHEREAS, as of 2012, the March of Dimes has helped Georgia achieve this goal resulting
22 in a 10 percent reduction among all births, and with the continued support from the March

23 of Dimes, Georgia will continue along this current trajectory, achieving a 15 percent decrease
24 in preterm birth by 2014; and

25 WHEREAS, volunteers and staff of the March of Dimes will be at the capitol on March 13,
26 2013, to raise awareness among legislators about the serious consequences of preterm birth
27 and to advocate for policies to address this significant public health challenge.

28 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
29 commend the efforts of the March of Dimes and its selfless volunteers for their past, present,
30 and future work on behalf of mothers and babies in this state, throughout the nation, and
31 around the world, and recognize March 13, 2013, as March of Dimes Day at the state capitol.

32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
33 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the March of Dimes Georgia Chapter.