

House Resolution 1549

By: Representative Kelley of the 16th

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the Health Law Partnership (HeLP) for ten years of exemplary service to Georgia's
2 children and their families; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, approximately 50 million Americans live in poverty, of whom over 600,000 are
4 Georgia children; and

5 WHEREAS, children and families living in poverty frequently need legal care in order to
6 remain healthy or to be restored to health; and

7 WHEREAS, leaders at Atlanta Legal Aid Society, Inc., Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, and
8 Georgia State University's College of Law recognized that creating a community
9 collaboration committed to providing legal care as an integrated part of a health care delivery
10 model would be beneficial to the children and families of Georgia; and

11 WHEREAS, in 2004, through a memorandum of understanding, the leaders at Atlanta Legal
12 Aid Society, Inc., Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, and Georgia State University's College
13 of Law created the Health Law Partnership and committed to adding a lawyer to the health
14 care team; and

15 WHEREAS, HeLP is a Medical-Legal Partnership designed to improve the health of
16 low-income children by combining the health care expertise of hospital and health
17 professionals with the legal expertise of attorneys to provide a holistic set of services to
18 address the social and economic determinants of children's health; and

19 WHEREAS, the social and economic conditions in which children live can seriously affect
20 their medical health; for instance, poor housing conditions can exacerbate health conditions
21 like asthma; and

22 WHEREAS, HeLP provides on-site legal services at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta's
23 hospitals to address basic legal needs affecting children's health, such as the need for safer,
24 improved housing, family stability, including custody and guardianship arrangements, and
25 improved access to health care services; and

26 WHEREAS, HeLP provides training programs about the legal, policy, and ethical issues
27 affecting children's health to hospital professionals, including physicians, mid-level
28 providers, social workers, and nurses; and

29 WHEREAS, HeLP provides inter-professional education to law students and graduate
30 professional students in medicine, public health, social work, and bioethics with the goals of
31 fostering respect, understanding, and cooperation between the health care and legal
32 professions and to prepare professionals to deal effectively with the challenges of providing
33 services in the 21st century; and

34 WHEREAS, HeLP addresses systemic problems affecting the health and well-being of
35 Georgia's children by working with community partners to identify issues, research possible
36 solutions, and recommend appropriate solutions to the problems; and

37 WHEREAS, HeLP serves as a demonstration project and a model for developing similar
38 partnerships in Georgia, the region, and the nation at other hospitals, community health
39 centers, legal services providers, and law schools; and

40 WHEREAS, HeLP has assisted over 6,000 families throughout Georgia with legal matters;
41 and

42 WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper that the decade of service provided by HeLP
43 by and through its partners be appropriately recognized.

44 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
45 the members of this body commend the Health Law Partnership for its outstanding services
46 to the State of Georgia and its citizens.

47 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
48 and directed to transmit appropriate copies of this resolution to the Georgia State University
49 College of Law, Atlanta Legal Aid Society, and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.