

Senate Resolution 981

By: Senators Unterman of the 45th, Hufstetler of the 52nd, Henson of the 41st, Millar of the 40th, Hill of the 32nd and others

ADOPTED SENATE

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Joint Study Committee on Violence Against Health Care Workers; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Georgia has dedicated emergency departments staffed with extraordinary health
4 care professionals and personnel throughout this state; and

5 WHEREAS, workplace violence is of grave concern to all citizens; over 80 percent of all
6 hospital staff have been assaulted at least once in their career; and

7 WHEREAS, emergency department violence is a significant problem and has a direct
8 relationship to experiences of negative stress, decreased work productivity, recovery time off
9 of the job, decreased quality of patient care, and exacerbation of the shortage of health care
10 professionals; and

11 WHEREAS, workplace violence results in increased costs and diversion of resources for
12 increased hospital security and dedicated police force personnel; and

13 WHEREAS, a significant number of the perpetrators are individuals utilizing the hospital
14 emergency departments suffering from untreated mental illnesses which are exacerbated by
15 their abuse of drugs, the effect of prescription drugs, their failure to take prescribed
16 medication, or a combination of such factors; and

17 WHEREAS, a study of the causes and the solutions to the ever increasing violence
18 committed against emergency department personnel needs to be undertaken.

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
20 that there is created the Joint Study Committee on Violence Against Health Care Workers
21 to be composed of 11 members: three members of the House of Representatives to be
22 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, three members of the Senate to

23 be appointed by the President of the Senate, and five members to be appointed by the
24 Governor. The Governor's appointees shall include the following: one emergency
25 department director from a facility with greater than 500 beds, one emergency department
26 director from a facility with less than 100 beds, one hospital security manager, one
27 behavioral health care professional, and one emergency department registered nurse. The
28 Speaker of the House of Representatives shall designate one of the appointees from the
29 House of Representatives as a cochairperson, and the President of the Senate shall designate
30 one of the appointees from the Senate as a cochairperson. The committee shall meet at the
31 call of the cochairpersons.

32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall undertake a study of the conditions,
33 needs, issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any actions
34 or legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate. The committee may
35 conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or
36 convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and
37 accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution. Legislative members of the
38 committee shall receive the allowances authorized for legislative members of interim
39 legislative committees but shall receive the same for not more than five days unless
40 additional days are authorized. Nonlegislative members shall receive a daily expense
41 allowance in the amount specified in subsection (b) of Code Section 45-7-21 as well as the
42 mileage or transportation allowance authorized for state employees. Any members of the
43 committee who are state officials or employees, other than legislative members, shall be
44 reimbursed for expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties as members of
45 the committee in the same manner as they are reimbursed for expenses in their capacities as
46 state officials or employees. The funds necessary for the reimbursement of expenses of state
47 officials, other than legislative members, and state employees shall come from funds
48 appropriated to or otherwise available in their respective departments. All other funds
49 necessary to carry out the provisions of this part shall come from funds appropriated to the
50 House of Representatives and the Senate. All agencies of the state are directed to provide
51 the committee with such assistance as the committee shall require to perform its assigned
52 duties. In the event the committee makes a report of its findings and recommendations, with
53 suggestions for proposed legislation, if any, such report shall be made on or before
54 December 2, 2014. The committee shall stand abolished on December 2, 2014.