

Senate Resolution 560

By: Senators Unterman of the 45th, Burke of the 11th, Hufstetler of the 52nd, Millar of the 40th and Shafer of the 48th

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Creating the Senate Women's Adequate Healthcare Study Committee; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, Georgia historically ranks 49th or 50th in maternal mortality, mothers who die during pregnancy and childbirth, and 45th in delivery of low birth weight babies; and
- 4 WHEREAS, Georgia ranks fourth highest in the nation in repeat teenage pregnancies; and
- 5 WHEREAS, other concerning Georgia statistics include that 45 percent of births are to unwed mothers, and 7 percent of births have no prenatal care; and
- 7 WHEREAS, Georgia has approximately 130,000 births per year, and 60 percent of births annually are covered by Medicaid; and
- 9 WHEREAS, women who receive pregnancy Medicaid become uninsured six to eight weeks after delivery of the pregnancy, leaving them uninsured until onset of the next pregnancy; and
- 12 WHEREAS, more than 40 counties in Georgia have no obstetrical care provider and 31 hospital obstetrical delivery units have closed, leaving large gaps in access to obstetrical care; and
- 15 WHEREAS, Georgia ranks highest in the nation in cases of syphilis and sixth highest in cases of congenital syphilis transference to newborns who can experience serious consequences including death; and
- 18 WHEREAS, in Georgia women who drive more than 45 minutes to the hospital are 1.5 times more likely to deliver preterm at-risk newborns; and

20 WHEREAS, there are only five obstetrics and gynecology residency training programs in
21 Georgia, which do not produce enough new obstetricians and gynecologists to adequately care
22 for Georgia's women, and moreover, due to the current practice climate in this state, many
23 newly graduated OB/GYNs leave Georgia to establish their practices; and

24 WHEREAS, the inadequate number of OB/GYNs in this state is exacerbated by the lack of
25 adequate funding and training slots to meet the demand for these physicians in this state; and

26 WHEREAS, Georgia is one of the largest states east of the Mississippi River and has vast
27 rural areas lacking in adequate healthcare for women.

28 WHEREAS, it would be beneficial for the General Assembly to study the current condition
29 of women's healthcare in Georgia and, in the face of the current women's adequate health
30 care crisis and the growing population currently at risk of inadequate health care, the current
31 areas with existing deficits and the insidious spread of those areas with no obstetrical care.

32 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE:

33 (1) **Creation of Senate study committee.** There is created the Senate Women's
34 Adequate Healthcare Study Committee.

35 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of four members of the
36 Senate to be appointed by the President of the Senate. The President shall designate a
37 member of the committee as a chairperson of the committee.

38 (3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall undertake a study of the conditions, needs,
39 issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any action or
40 legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate.

41 (4) **Meetings.** The chairperson shall call all meetings of the committee. The committee
42 may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or
43 convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and
44 accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution.

45 (5) **Allowances and funding.** The legislative members of the committee shall receive
46 the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia
47 Annotated. The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any
48 member of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized.
49 Funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
50 appropriated to the Senate.

51 (6) **Report.**

- 52 (A) In the event the committee adopts any specific findings or recommendations that
53 include suggestions for proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file a report of the
54 same prior to the date of abolition specified in this resolution, subject to
55 subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.
- 56 (B) In the event the committee adopts a report that does not include suggestions for
57 proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file the report, subject to subparagraph (C)
58 of this paragraph.
- 59 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
60 abolition specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
61 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
62 the Secretary of the Senate.
- 63 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Secretary
64 of the Senate copies of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu thereof.
- 65 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2015.