

Senate Resolution 566

By: Senator Unterman of the 45th

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Senate Abusive Billing Practices Study Committee; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, even when Georgia patients make every effort to see doctors in their insurance
3 network, situations arise where they are treated by out of network providers without their
4 knowledge and consent; and

5 WHEREAS, because these out of network providers often charge much higher rates and do
6 not disclose this information to their patients, Georgians often find themselves recovering
7 from a serious disease or illness and dealing with higher than anticipated out of pocket
8 medical costs as a result; and

9 WHEREAS, consumers of health care in Georgia need to know the debt they are incurring;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, these medical costs often result in aggressive collection activity targeted at
12 patients and their families; and

13 WHEREAS, consumers are harmed by damage to their personal credit ratings for years after
14 treatment; and

15 WHEREAS, Georgia currently has weak protections against abusive balance billing practices
16 relative to other states, thus it would be beneficial to study existing practices.

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

18 (1) **Creation of Senate study committee.** There is created the Senate Abusive Billing
19 Practices Study Committee.

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

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

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

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

36 (6) **Report.**

37 (A) In the event the committee adopts any specific findings or recommendations that
38 include suggestions for proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file a report of the
39 same prior to the date of abolishment specified in this resolution, subject to
40 subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.

41 (B) In the event the committee adopts a report that does not include suggestions for
42 proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file the report, subject to subparagraph (C)
43 of this paragraph.

44 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
45 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
46 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
47 the Secretary of the Senate.

48 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Secretary
49 of the Senate a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu thereof.

50 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2015.