

Senate Resolution 1065

By: Senators Burke of the 11th, Kirk of the 13th and Martin of the 9th

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing February 26, 2016, as "Community Health Centers Day"; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, federally qualified health centers located in over 197 medically underserved
4 communities provide high quality primary and preventive health care to 500,000 people in
5 the State of Georgia, including over 150,000 Medicaid recipients and 225,000 uninsured, the
6 working poor, and a large number of underinsured, elderly, homeless, and other vulnerable
7 populations, without regard to income status, cultural or ethnic heritage, or disease
8 conditions; and

9 WHEREAS, community health centers add \$375 million per year to Georgia's economy
10 through indirect and induced economic activity, including \$150 million in household income
11 and 2,900 Georgia jobs, that saves the Georgia Medicaid program up to 33 percent in annual
12 spending per Medicaid beneficiary; and

13 WHEREAS, community health centers recruit and retain over 1,350 health care professionals
14 where they are most needed and offer access to a wide range of cost-effective medical and
15 dental services, behavioral health services, prescription medicines, health education, nutrition
16 counseling, translation services, community outreach, transportation, and other support
17 programs; and

18 WHEREAS, community health centers have a track record spanning over four decades of
19 controlling costs, documented in several studies which show that rates of costly emergency
20 room visits, hospitalizations, and specialty care referrals are much lower among health center
21 patients than patients of other providers; and

22 WHEREAS, community health centers work in partnership with other health care providers,
23 local hospitals, health departments, social service agencies, and health related support

24 services to maximize resources and assure that services are coordinated to improve the health
25 status of the community; and

26 WHEREAS, community health centers have been innovators in the establishment of patient
27 centered medical homes, providing access to quality care and continuity of care for the
28 patients they serve; and

29 WHEREAS, Georgia's community health centers and their state organization, the Georgia
30 Association for Primary Health Care, have worked diligently to increase the number of
31 community health centers in Georgia and have taken a leadership role in establishing more
32 centers in underserved communities to help resolve this state's health care access problems,
33 demonstrating commendable efforts in continuous quality improvement, reduction of health
34 disparities among the underserved, the implementation of new health care initiatives such as
35 health services integration, and utilization of the latest technology to improve both operations
36 and delivery of services to more Georgians; and

37 WHEREAS, community health centers deserve commendation for their valuable
38 contributions in expanding access to health care, their outstanding record of service, and their
39 dedication to improving health care and the health status of all Georgians.

40 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
41 recognize February 26, 2016, as "Community Health Centers Day."

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
43 to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to the Georgia
44 Association for Primary Health Care.