

Senate Resolution 297

By: Senator Unterman of the 45th

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing February 24, 2017, as "Community Health Centers Day" and commending the
2 Georgia Association for Primary Health Care; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, federally qualified health centers located in 203 medically underserved
4 communities provide high quality primary and preventive health care to over 500,000 people
5 in the State of Georgia, including over 150,000 Medicaid recipients and 225,000 uninsured,
6 the working poor, and a large number of underinsured, elderly, homeless, and other
7 vulnerable populations, without regard to income status, cultural or ethnic heritage, or
8 disease conditions; and

9 WHEREAS, community health centers add \$287 million per year to Georgia's economy
10 through indirect and induced economic activity, including \$125 million in household income
11 and 2,100 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 280 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 organizations to maximize resources and assure that services are coordinated to improve the
25 health 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 across the nation and have taken a leadership role
32 in establishing more centers in underserved communities to help resolve this state's health
33 care access problems, demonstrating commendable efforts in continuous quality
34 improvement, reduction of health disparities among the underserved, the implementation of
35 new health care initiatives such as integration of clinical and behavioral health services, and
36 utilization of the latest technology to improve both operations and delivery of services to
37 more Georgians; and

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

41 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
42 recognize February 24, 2017, as "Community Health Centers Day" and commend the
43 Georgia Association for Primary Health Care on the celebration of their 40th anniversary.

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