

House Resolution 890

By: Representative Rynders of the 152nd

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing January 16, 2018, as Easterseals Georgia and its Champions for Children
2 Program Day at the state capitol; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, thousands of Americans are impacted by birth defects and disabilities annually,
4 including many Georgians; and

5 WHEREAS, Easterseals and its affiliates, located throughout the state, offer services to
6 individuals with birth defects and disabilities and their families to help improve their physical
7 mobility and employment opportunities and provide them with greater independence for
8 everyday life; and

9 WHEREAS, Easterseals chapters offer a variety of services such as autism services, respite
10 family services including Megan's House, vocational services and job placements, adult day
11 programs, community living supports, Head Start and Early Head Start, and Champions for
12 Children; and

13 WHEREAS, Easterseals began Champions for Children in 2007 with funding provided by
14 the General Assembly; and

15 WHEREAS, for families to participate in Champions for Children, the medically fragile child
16 is required to obtain a denial in participation in the TEFRA/Katie Beckett Medicaid Program;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, the initial appropriation established a \$7.6 million grant fund which in turn
19 leveraged private dollars to help children who did not meet the Katie Beckett Waiver criteria
20 so that families could receive help with their enormous medical costs; and

21 WHEREAS, Easterseals has cautiously stretched, along with philanthropic and state support,
22 the original funds so that the program serves more than 350 children and their families
23 annually; and

24 WHEREAS, an average cost to raise a child from birth to age 18 exceeds a quarter of a
25 million dollars, but these medically needy children are more costly due to additional medical
26 care requirements; and

27 WHEREAS, Champions for Children, since inception, has provided direct financial
28 assistance and support services to Georgia families with medically fragile and special needs
29 children up to the age of 18; and

30 WHEREAS, the children served through Champions for Children funds have autism
31 spectrum disorders, cerebral palsy, down syndrome, and other costly diseases, and their
32 families are awarded up to \$2,000.00 annually to help offset some of their expensive care
33 needs; and

34 WHEREAS, Champions for Children provides respite care to families, hearing aids, special
35 medical foods, dental care, optical care, recreation and therapeutic activities, and a host of
36 other services and items so that these children may live at home with their families; and

37 WHEREAS, staff and volunteers of the Champions for Children program can be known as
38 "angels" because of the tools they provide to many Georgia children so that they can live
39 successful lives.

40 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
41 the members of this body recognize January 16, 2018, as Easterseals Georgia and its
42 Champions for Children Program Day at the state capitol and encourage all citizens to
43 support Easterseals and the Champions for Children program for their past, present, and
44 future efforts to help those with special needs and disabilities.

45 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
46 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to staff
47 and volunteers of Easterseals and its Champions for Children program.