

Senate Resolution 655

By: Senators Burke of the 11th, Unterman of the 45th, Harper of the 7th, Jackson of the 2nd, Kirk of the 13th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing February 1, 2018, as "Community Health Centers Day" and commending the
2 Georgia Primary Care Association; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, federally qualified health centers located in 207 medically underserved
4 communities provide high quality primary and preventive health care to over 600,000 people
5 in the State of Georgia, including over 200,000 Medicaid recipients and 235,000 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 \$297 million per year to Georgia's economy
10 through indirect and induced economic activity, including \$135 million in household income
11 and 3,458 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 300 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 Primary Care Association, have worked diligently to increase the number of community
31 health centers in Georgia and across the nation and have taken a leadership role in
32 establishing more centers in underserved communities to help resolve this state's health care
33 access problems, demonstrating commendable efforts in continuous quality improvement,
34 reduction of health disparities among the underserved, the implementation of new health care
35 initiatives such as integration of clinical and behavioral health, and utilization of the latest
36 technology to improve operations 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 1, 2018, as "Community Health Centers Day" and commend the Georgia
42 Primary Care Association for laudable service to patients in Georgia.

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