

House Resolution 36

By: Representatives Hawkins of the 27th, Dempsey of the 13th, Gardner of the 57th, Bennett of the 94th, and Cooper of the 43rd

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing January 16, 2019, 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 chapters throughout the state offer services to individuals with birth
6 defects and disabilities and their families to help improve their physical mobility and
7 employment opportunities and to provide them greater independence for everyday living; and

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

12 WHEREAS, Easterseals began Champions for Children in 2007 with funding provided by
13 the General Assembly in order to help medically fragile children who are not medically
14 eligible to participate in the TEFRA/Katie Beckett Medicaid Waiver Program; and

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

18 WHEREAS, Easterseals, as the fiscal agent, has worked with philanthropic and state support
19 to cautiously stretch the original funds to now serve more than 400 children and their
20 families annually; and

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

24 WHEREAS, Champions for Children, since inception, has provided direct financial
25 assistance and support services to Georgia's families with medically fragile and special needs
26 children up to the age of 18; and

27 WHEREAS, children served through Champions for Children's funds have autism spectrum
28 disorders, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, and other costly conditions; and

29 WHEREAS, Champions for Children has provided such things as respite care to families,
30 hearing aids, special medical foods, dental care, optical care, recreational and therapeutic
31 activities, and a host of other items so that these children may live at home with their
32 families; and

33 WHEREAS, the Champions for Children program can conceivably be known as an "angels"
34 for children program as it provides tools to many of Georgia's children so that they can live
35 successful lives.

36 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
37 the members of this body recognize January 16, 2019, as Easterseals Georgia and its
38 Champions for Children Program Day at the state capitol; extend a warm greeting to its staff
39 and volunteers as well as the individuals and families who are served; and heartily commend
40 them for their past, present, and future work for individuals with special needs and
41 disabilities in this state, throughout our nation, and around the world.

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
43 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to
44 Easterseals and its Champions for Children program.