

## House Resolution 293

By: Representatives Hawkins of the 27<sup>th</sup>, Smith of the 134<sup>th</sup>, Mathiak of the 73<sup>rd</sup>, Jackson of the 128<sup>th</sup>, Kelley of the 16<sup>th</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Commending the dentists of Georgia, the Georgia Dental Association, and its Foundation for  
2 Oral Health for their education, advocacy, and volunteer efforts in helping to remove barriers  
3 to dental care for the citizens of this state and recognizing its 2018 Mission of Mercy; and  
4 for other purposes.

5 WHEREAS, the dentists of this state are respected civic leaders and business owners within  
6 their communities who believe that removing barriers to dental care and educating the public  
7 on the benefits of proper oral health are critical for maintaining the overall health of  
8 Georgia's citizens; and

9 WHEREAS, the prevention of dental disease is also a way to prevent complications for  
10 pregnant women and diabetic patients; and

11 WHEREAS, good oral health can also positively impact a person's confidence and enhance  
12 a person's prospects for gainful employment; and

13 WHEREAS, every February is designated as Children's Dental Health Month, during which  
14 members of the Georgia Dental Association (GDA) provide free oral health instruction and  
15 educational activities to pre-K and school aged children throughout the State of Georgia; and

16 WHEREAS, as part of Children's Dental Health Month, one day is designated as Give Kids  
17 a Smile Day, which, in 2018, provided over \$100,000 in free, donated dental services and  
18 oral health education to underserved children throughout Georgia; and

19 WHEREAS, each year, GDA members provide free dental health services at the Georgia  
20 Special Olympics State Summer Games and State Master's Bowling Tournament; and

21 WHEREAS, on August 10 and 11, 2018, the GDA's Foundation for Oral Health hosted a  
22 Mission of Mercy at the James Brown Arena in Augusta, Georgia, where over 1,800

23 low-income and underserved adults from across the state received free dental treatment from  
24 thousands of volunteer dentists and dental health professionals who performed nearly 9,200  
25 procedures, with a donated value of care totaling almost \$1.5 million; and

26 WHEREAS, the GDA established a state-wide Donated Dental Services Program in July,  
27 2016, to provide free, comprehensive dental treatment and labs for Georgia adults with  
28 disabilities or who are elderly or medically fragile, which provided over \$1.5 million in total  
29 donated dental treatment, with an average value of \$5,400 in donated care per patient to date;  
30 and

31 WHEREAS, in 2018, the GDA created its Prescribe with Care initiative to educate its  
32 members on the opioid abuse epidemic in the State of Georgia, which included creating and  
33 offering continuing education courses for dentists on safe and effective prescribing for dental  
34 pain using non-opioid alternatives, administrative rule-making with the Georgia Board of  
35 Dentistry requiring mandatory opioid prescriber continuing education, participation in  
36 state-wide task forces, and formally endorsing the American Dental Association's Statement  
37 on the Use of Opioids in the Treatment of Dental Pain; and

38 WHEREAS, in 2018, the GDA, together with the Georgia Department of Public Health and  
39 the Dental College of Georgia at Augusta University, created a Dental Adjunct Professor  
40 Program, through which dental students may serve a clinical rotation treating patients in  
41 Georgia's public health clinics located in rural and underserved parts of Georgia under the  
42 supervision of a GDA member dentist, who shall serve as adjunct faculty for the dental  
43 school; and

44 WHEREAS, Georgia licensed dentists and members of the GDA consistently volunteer in  
45 the free and charitable dental clinics located throughout the state and also provide free  
46 treatment in their offices to rural, underserved, and low-income patients; and

47 WHEREAS, this state recognizes the members of the GDA for their long-standing  
48 commitment and dedication to promoting the oral health of all of Georgia's citizens and  
49 protecting the safety of their patients.

50 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
51 the members of this body join in recognizing and commending the GDA and its Foundation  
52 for Oral Health's 2018 Mission of Mercy, as well as the valuable role played by the GDA and

53 the thousands of licensed dentists in this state who help remove barriers to dental care  
54 through their volunteer and advocacy efforts.

55 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
56 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the  
57 public and the press.