

House Resolution 533

By: Representatives LaHood of the 175th, Bonner of the 72nd, Taylor of the 173rd, Kirby of the 114th, and Petrea of the 166th

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on Innovative Financial Options for Senior Living; and
2 for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the proportion of the Georgia population that is 65 and older will grow
4 substantially from 1.3 million in 2016 to 2.9 million in 2040, with the greatest rate of growth
5 among those 85 and older; and

6 WHEREAS, the problem for too many older adults is a lack of affordable independent living
7 with supportive services when residents can no longer remain in their own home; and

8 WHEREAS, according to a 2018 national survey from the Employee Benefit Research
9 Institute, only 16 percent of current retirees are "very confident" that they will have enough
10 money to pay for long-term care; and

11 WHEREAS, in 2016 the number of adults in Georgia age 65 or older and living below the
12 poverty level was 134,000 or 10 percent and the number living below 250 percent of the
13 poverty level was 540,000 or 40 percent; and

14 WHEREAS, due to declining birth rates in the United States, there are a growing number of
15 senior "orphans" with no immediate family to help with their support; and

16 WHEREAS, census projections indicate 29 percent of Georgians age 75 or older live alone;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, in studies, older adults who live alone and had multiple chronic conditions were
19 more likely to be hospitalized than were those adults living in senior housing facilities; and

20 WHEREAS, older adults who lack access to supportive living and who qualify for Medicaid
21 often turn to costly nursing home care when their health declines, costing state taxpayers a
22 share of these expenses; and

23 WHEREAS, studies have found that pairing affordable housing and healthcare services
24 significantly improved access to primary care and cut emergency department visits while also
25 lowering Medicaid costs; and

26 WHEREAS, low-income older adults forced to spend a high percentage of their income on
27 housing will often cut back on what they spend on food or health care, resulting in costlier
28 emergency room and hospital admittance; and

29 WHEREAS, older adults who rent housing face a wealth gap compared to those who own
30 their homes, and this gap impedes their ability to afford assisted living; census estimates
31 calculate that 31 percent of Georgians age 65 or older who live alone are renters; and

32 WHEREAS, the current wait list for non-Medicaid home and community services in Georgia
33 exceeds 7,000 older adults; and

34 WHEREAS, Georgia law prohibits assisted living licensed facilities from receiving funds
35 paid pursuant to Title XIX of the Social Security Act from Medicaid, creating a barrier to
36 expansion of supportive housing for low-income older adults; and

37 WHEREAS, in 2016, 46 states and the District of Columbia used Medicaid waivers to
38 provide some level of supportive assistance for individuals in assisted living; and

39 WHEREAS, options can be explored to use low-income housing tax credits with supportive
40 housing criteria included in qualified allocation plan regulations; and

41

42 WHEREAS, opportunities exist to expand affordable supportive housing through faith-based
43 organizations; and

44 WHEREAS, options are available to set state funded service provider rates at appropriate
45 levels to meet demands.

46 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

47 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Study Committee
48 on Innovative Financial Options for Senior Living.

49 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of five members of the
50 House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
51 The Speaker shall designate a member of the committee as chairperson of the committee.

52 (3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall undertake a study of the conditions, needs,
53 issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any action or
54 legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate.

55 (4) **Meetings.** The chairperson shall call all meetings of the committee. The committee
56 may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or
57 convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and
58 accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution.

59 (5) **Allowances and funding.** Members of the committee who are members of the
60 General Assembly shall receive the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the
61 Official Code of Georgia Annotated. The allowances authorized by this resolution shall
62 not be received by any member of the committee for more than five days unless additional
63 days are authorized. Funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall
64 come from funds appropriated to the House of Representatives.

65 (6) **Report.**

66 (A) In the event the committee adopts any specific findings or recommendations that
67 include suggestions for proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file a report of the
68 same prior to the date of abolishment specified in this resolution, subject to subparagraph
69 (C) of this paragraph.

70 (B) In the event the committee adopts a report that does not include suggestions for
71 proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file the report, subject to subparagraph (C) of
72 this paragraph.

73 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
74 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
75 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
76 the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

77 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Clerk of the
78 House of Representatives a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu
79 thereof.

80 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2019.