

Senate Resolution 971

By: Senators Orrock of the 36th, Williams of the 39th, Butler of the 55th, Henson of the 41st, Harrell of the 40th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing October 9, 2020, as PANDAS Awareness Day at the state capitol; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, pediatric acute-onset neuropsychiatric syndrome (PANS) and pediatric
4 autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorder associated with streptococcal infection (PANDAS)
5 create the sudden onset of obsessive-compulsive disorder in children, causing previously
6 healthy and emotionally well-adjusted children to experience severe anxiety and emotional
7 disturbances; and

8 WHEREAS, children with PANS and PANDAS experience some or all of the following
9 symptoms: tics or other abnormal movements, severe separation anxiety, generalized anxiety,
10 irritability, aggression, personality changes, attention deficit hyperactive disorder, marked
11 deterioration in learning and school performance, and developmental regression, including
12 regression in handwriting; and

13 WHEREAS, children with PANS and PANDAS may experience a moderate to dramatic
14 improvement with antibiotics, intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG) treatment, or
15 plasmapheresis; and

16 WHEREAS, researchers at leading academic institutions are engaged in extensive research
17 on the disease mechanism of and effective treatments for these disorders; and

18 WHEREAS, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA) is developing a pilot clinic to treat
19 children with PANS and PANDAS; and

20 WHEREAS, the 2019 PANS Study Committee Report of the House of Representatives
21 identified specific policy goals for Georgia regarding insurance coverage for diagnosis and
22 treatment; pediatric provider training in medical, educational, and behavioral health settings;
23 and increased public health surveillance of these disorders; and

24 WHEREAS, the deep medical and bioscience resources in Georgia make our state well
25 situated to meaningfully contribute to best medical practices, research, and medical
26 technology to advance the early diagnosis and treatment of children with PANS and
27 PANDAS; and

28 WHEREAS, expert providers in the PANS consortium estimate that one in 200 children have
29 PANS or PANDAS, meaning these diseases affect roughly 15,000 children in Georgia; and

30 WHEREAS, many general pediatricians, nurse practitioners, and pediatric subspecialists are
31 not familiar with the most current diagnostic criteria and treatment guidelines for these
32 disorders; and

33 WHEREAS, in addition to lack of access to treating providers, many insurers do not cover
34 treatment for PANS and PANDAS, which can cost tens of thousands of dollars, placing the
35 treatment out of reach for most families; and

36 WHEREAS, the Southeastern PANS/PANDAS Association (SEPPA) is a Georgia-based,
37 nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding access to expert, insurance-based care for
38 children and families suffering from PANS and PANDAS in this region; and

39 WHEREAS, it is imperative that there be greater public awareness of this serious health issue
40 among parents, policy makers, and medical providers in Georgia.

41 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
42 recognize October 9, 2020, as PANDAS Awareness Day at the state capitol.

43 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
44 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the public and the
45 press.