

House Resolution 1549

By: Representatives Bennett of the 94th, Smyre of the 135th, Gordon of the 163rd, Frazier of the 126th, and Bentley of the 139th

A RESOLUTION

1 Supporting the policy recommendations set forth by the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus
2 Legislative Advisory Group regarding COVID-19; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus (GLBC) Legislative Advisory Group, a
4 subcommittee of the Georgia COVID-19 Task Force Community Outreach Subcommittee,
5 has set forth policy recommendations to aid in the fight against COVID-19; and

6 WHEREAS, the GLBC Legislative Advisory Group has recommended these actions in order
7 to protect Georgia's residents and economy, support Georgia's hospitals, and ensure
8 government accountability; and

9 WHEREAS, in the interest of protecting Georgia's residents, the group recommends the
10 following:

- 11 • All employers of businesses deemed essential during the COVID-19 crisis should provide
12 their employees with masks, gloves, and other personal protective equipment (PPE); and
- 13 • The classification of essential service provider should be extended to all workers in
14 industries that require direct contact with the public, which include, but are not limited to,
15 workers in grocery stores, retail superstores, and convenience stores; bus drivers; and
16 workers in other industries where direct contact with the public is necessary for providing
17 the service; and
- 18 • All existing statutes that contradict or undermine the public health state of emergency
19 executive order should be suspended; and

- 20 • A website dedicated to COVID-19 should be developed that houses all pertinent
21 information on state services, provides updates, informs residents of local services, and is
22 sensitive to non-English speaking Georgians; and

- 23 • Additional forms of communicating information should be used to inform Georgians about
24 COVID-19; and

- 25 • COVID-19 testing sites should be placed in easily accessible locations, preferably at
26 centrally located areas, near hot zones, or nearby vulnerable communities where
27 transportation is limited; and

- 28 • Testing and treatment of COVID-19 should be made available to all Georgians regardless
29 of ability to pay; and

- 30 WHEREAS, in the interest of protecting Georgia's economy, the group recommends the
31 following:

- 32 • The domestic production of PPEs should be incentivized to circumvent intense market
33 competition while also creating new jobs and keeping existing companies operational; the
34 initiative can mirror the federal Defense Production Act; and

- 35 • The commissioner of labor and commissioner of the Technical College System of Georgia
36 (TCSG) should be directed to prioritize providing unemployed Georgians training through
37 WorkSource Georgia and/or TCSG, especially in industries of need that include, but are
38 not limited to, growing industries (cleaning services, delivery services, grocery stores, etc.);
39 and

- 40 • Minority and disadvantaged business enterprises should receive a percentage of state
41 contracts pertaining to the COVID-19 crisis; and

- 42 • Minority-owned small businesses should have equitable access to resources and services
43 to remain operational and capable of paying personnel during the COVID-19 crisis; and

- 44 • Funding for childcare, food delivery, and other essential services should be provided to
45 essential workers; and

46 WHEREAS, in the interest of supporting Georgia's hospitals, the group recommends the
47 following:

- 48 • The distribution of PPEs and other lifesaving resources to hospitals should be prioritized;
49 and
- 50 • Significant federal dollars stemming from the CARES Act, or any other source of federal
51 funding, should go directly to local hospitals to be used at their discretion; and

- 52 • All data on COVID-19 contraction and death by race, gender, age, ethnicity, county, city,
53 insured, and any other metric that offers greater detail towards providing health officials
54 additional data for determining who is most susceptible to the disease should be
55 disaggregated and strategies should be developed that target our most vulnerable
56 populations to provide testing, treatment, and isolation facilities where needed to prevent
57 spread of COVID-19 and halt another outbreak; and

58 WHEREAS, in the interest of ensuring government accountability, the group recommends
59 the following:

- 60 • A dashboard should be created to inform Georgians on federal and state dollars spent to
61 combat COVID-19; the dashboard should also include how and where the dollars are
62 allocated, who is receiving vendor contracts, and how these expenditures are assisting in
63 state efforts; and

- 64 • The public should be allowed access to all reports from the five committees established by
65 the governor to address the COVID-19 crisis; and

- 66 • An audit of the state response to the COVID-19 crisis should be conducted to assess
67 responsiveness, communications, service delivery, and other metrics to ensure better
68 deployment of state resources, thereby protecting Georgia's residents and industries more
69 effectively and efficiently in the future.

70 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
71 the members of this body support the policy recommendations set forth by the Georgia
72 Legislative Black Caucus Legislative Advisory Group regarding COVID-19.

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