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 Legislative Advisory Group regarding COVID-19; and for other purposes.

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

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

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

5 • All employers of businesses deemed essential during the COVID-19 crisis should provide their employees with masks, gloves, and other personal protective equipment (PPE); and

6 • The classification of essential service provider should be extended to all workers in industries that require direct contact with the public, which include, but are not limited to, workers in grocery stores, retail superstores, and convenience stores; bus drivers; and workers in other industries where direct contact with the public is necessary for providing the service; and

7 • All existing statutes that contradict or undermine the public health state of emergency executive order should be suspended; and

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, in the interest of protecting Georgia’s economy, the group recommends the following:

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

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

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

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

• Funding for childcare, food delivery, and other essential services should be provided to essential workers; and
WHEREAS, in the interest of supporting Georgia's hospitals, the group recommends the following:

- The distribution of PPEs and other lifesaving resources to hospitals should be prioritized; and
- Significant federal dollars stemming from the CARES Act, or any other source of federal funding, should go directly to local hospitals to be used at their discretion; and
- All data on COVID-19 contraction and death by race, gender, age, ethnicity, county, city, insured, and any other metric that offers greater detail towards providing health officials additional data for determining who is most susceptible to the disease should be disaggregated and strategies should be developed that target our most vulnerable populations to provide testing, treatment, and isolation facilities where needed to prevent spread of COVID-19 and halt another outbreak; and

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

- A dashboard should be created to inform Georgians on federal and state dollars spent to combat COVID-19; the dashboard should also include how and where the dollars are allocated, who is receiving vendor contracts, and how these expenditures are assisting in state efforts; and
- The public should be allowed access to all reports from the five committees established by the governor to address the COVID-19 crisis; and
- An audit of the state response to the COVID-19 crisis should be conducted to assess responsiveness, communications, service delivery, and other metrics to ensure better deployment of state resources, thereby protecting Georgia's residents and industries more effectively and efficiently in the future.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that the members of this body support the policy recommendations set forth by the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus Legislative Advisory Group regarding COVID-19.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the
public and the press.