

House Resolution 652

By: Representatives Schofield of the 60th, Park of the 101st, Scott of the 76th, Hutchinson of the 107th, and Davis of the 87th

A RESOLUTION

1 Encouraging the Georgia Department of Public Health and the Georgia Department of
2 Community Health to improve the quality of care for those with HIV on the State of
3 Georgia's Medicaid program; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, according to the most recent data available, the federal Centers for Disease
5 Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that approximately 1.2 million people in the United
6 States are living with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), while the Georgia Department
7 of Public Health (DPH) estimates that over 56,400 people are living with HIV in Georgia;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, the HIV care continuum provides a means of monitoring progress toward the
10 achievement of objectives outlined in the *National HIV/AIDS Strategy for the United States:*
11 *2022-2025* (NHAS); and

12 WHEREAS, the NHAS states that "although the United States is making significant progress
13 in improving HIV outcomes, significant challenges remain. Gaps in the HIV care continuum
14 are driving HIV transmission"; and

15 WHEREAS, the HIV care continuum is useful both as an individual level tool to assess care
16 outcomes as well as a population level framework to analyze the proportion of people with
17 HIV in a given community who are engaged in each successive step; and

18 WHEREAS, the HIV care continuum is a public health model that outlines the steps or stages
19 that people with HIV go through from diagnosis to achieving and maintaining viral
20 suppression, which is a very low or undetectable amount of HIV in the body; and

21 WHEREAS, the HIV continuum tracks the percentage of people with HIV who are
22 diagnosed with HIV, linked to care for the treatment of HIV, retained in care with at least
23 two HIV care visits at least three months apart in a year, and HIV viral suppression; and

24 WHEREAS, the CDC measures HIV viral load suppression as a viral load test result of less
25 than 200 copies of HIV per milliliter of blood at the most recent viral load test during
26 measurement year, meaning that the amount of virus in the body so low that it is
27 undetectable; and

28 WHEREAS, a person with HIV achieves viral suppression by remaining adherent to HIV
29 medicine called antiretroviral treatment (ART) and taking their HIV medicine as prescribed
30 by a health care professional; and

31 WHEREAS, once a person with HIV achieves viral suppression, the HIV virus is not
32 transmittable according to the CDC, National institutes of Health (NIH), and the National
33 Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), also referred to as Undetectable =
34 Untransmittable or U=U; and

35 WHEREAS, preventing additional infections offers significant financial benefit in addition
36 to critical health benefits as studies estimate that each HIV positive person may approach
37 \$338,400 in costs to the health care system over a lifetime; and

38 WHEREAS, while 71 percent of people with HIV in Georgia received health care, only 55
39 percent with HIV in Georgia were retained in care, and only 59 percent achieved HIV viral
40 suppression according to data from the Georgia Department of Public Health; and

41 WHEREAS, regular tracking and reporting of HIV viral suppression rates will assist both the
42 state and the federal government in improving health outcomes for people with HIV and
43 preventing new transmissions; and

44 WHEREAS, Medicaid has played a critical role in HIV care since the epidemic began, and
45 it is the largest single source of health coverage for people with HIV; and

46 WHEREAS, it is imperative to preserve continuous access to comprehensive health care in
47 the Medicaid program, including antiretroviral treatment (ART) for people with HIV to
48 improve health outcomes and reduce new transmissions; and

49 WHEREAS, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) 2022 Core Set of Adult Health
50 Care quality measures for Medicaid (Adult Core Set) represents the health care quality
51 measures that indicate the access to, and quality of, the health care adult Medicaid
52 beneficiaries receive; and

53 WHEREAS, included in CMS' Adult Core Set is the HIV viral load suppression quality
54 measure (HVL-AD), which is the gold standard in HIV quality as it signifies that a person
55 with HIV has achieved the most promising health outcome, viral suppression; and

56 WHEREAS, there is an opportunity to increase reporting of the HIV Viral Load Suppression
57 measure within state Medicaid programs, however, only nine states reported on the HIV
58 Viral Load Suppression measure through the Medicaid Adult Core Set in Fiscal Year 2020:
59 California, Delaware, Iowa, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, New York, Rhode Island, and
60 Texas; and

61 WHEREAS, regularly tracking and reporting viral suppression rates using the HIV viral load
62 suppression measure will help CMS, the State of Georgia, health care providers, community
63 organizations, and patient advocacy groups to identify and better address gaps in care in
64 order to improve viral suppression rates; and

65 WHEREAS, it is imperative for the State of Georgia Medicaid program to prioritize effective
66 HIV care and viral suppression for people with HIV to align with the federal government's
67 National HIV/AIDS strategy.

68 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
69 the members of this body encourage the Georgia Department of Public Health and the
70 Georgia Department of Community Health to work together to improve the care of people
71 with HIV enrolled in the Medicaid program by establishing a process to assess the HIV
72 suppression rates of Medicaid beneficiaries with HIV, making public statewide data on viral
73 suppression rates on at least an annual basis, and reporting on the HIV viral load suppression
74 measure in the Medicaid in the Medicaid Adult Core Set to the Centers for Medicare and
75 Medicaid Services as a strategy to improve health outcomes for Georgia Medicaid
76 beneficiaries who are HIV positive and to prevent transmission of HIV.

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