

House Resolution 1589

By: Representatives Collins of the 71st, Cooper of the 45th, and Au of the 50th

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing May 17, 2024 as Necrotizing Enterocolitis Awareness Day; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) is a devastating intestinal disease that can affect
4 premature and medically fragile infants during their first weeks and months of life; and

5 WHEREAS, babies born prematurely with birth weights of less than 4.5 pounds or with a
6 medical complication, like congenital heart disease, are most at risk of NEC; and

7 WHEREAS, thousands of babies develop NEC each year and hundreds of babies die from
8 this complex intestinal condition; and

9 WHEREAS, necrotizing enterocolitis can develop in both premature babies and babies born
10 at term and more data is desperately needed to better understand how and why NEC occurs
11 in preterm and term infants; and

12 WHEREAS, necrotizing enterocolitis causes a severe inflammatory process that can lead to
13 intestinal tissue damage and death and, once NEC is diagnosed, many babies only live for
14 a few hours or days; and

15 WHEREAS, surgery for NEC is not curative, and the babies who survive often have lifelong
16 neurological and nutritional complications; and

17 WHEREAS, necrotizing enterocolitis results in approximately \$5 million of hospitalization
18 expenses per year and roughly 19 percent of neonatal healthcare expenditures in the United
19 States, with an estimated cost of \$200,000.00 or more for each case of surgical necrotizing
20 enterocolitis; and

21 WHEREAS, breast milk is one of the most effective ways to help prevent necrotizing
22 enterocolitis in medically fragile infants, and when the mother's milk is unavailable,
23 pasteurized donor human milk is the next-safest option for babies at risk of NEC; and

24 WHEREAS, formula does not protect against the risk of NEC in medically fragile infants
25 and infants at risk of NEC receive the most protection from their mother's own milk and
26 pasteurized donor milk; and

27 WHEREAS, although the risk of necrotizing enterocolitis cannot be fully eliminated and
28 there are not yet sure ways to stop or cure NEC, preventive measures are effective at
29 reducing risks; and

30 WHEREAS, parents must be trusted and valued as the most important members of their
31 baby's care team, and healthcare providers should partner with families to provide the best
32 care for infants at risk of NEC; and

33 WHEREAS, disparities and variation in care lead to Black infants being disproportionately
34 affected by, and dying from, necrotizing enterocolitis compared to white infants; and

35 WHEREAS, the NEC Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded and led by a
36 bereaved mother from California whose son died from complications of NEC, and the NEC
37 Society is the world's leading charity working to accelerate NEC research, education, and
38 advocacy; and

39 WHEREAS, to build a world without necrotizing enterocolitis and improve outcomes for
40 infants and families, we must bring Georgians together to raise awareness about this
41 devastating neonatal disease.

42 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
43 the members of this body recognize May 17, 2024 as Necrotizing Enterocolitis Awareness
44 Day.

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