

Senate Resolution 574

By: Senator Rhett of the 33rd

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and commending The Susan Jolley Foundation, the Georgia Cancer Control
2 Consortium (a program of the Georgia Department of Public Health), and Cancer Pathways
3 for their exemplary contributions to cervical cancer education and awareness in Georgia; and
4 for other purposes.

5 WHEREAS, January is designated by the United States Congress as Cervical Cancer
6 Awareness Month; and

7 WHEREAS, The Susan Jolley Foundation, the Georgia Cancer Control Consortium, HPV
8 Cancer Free GA, and Cancer Pathways are steadfastly committed to advancing HPV
9 awareness and cervical cancer elimination, prevention, screening, and education throughout
10 Georgia; and

11 WHEREAS, in recognition of their impactful work, Sharon J Hill and Demetrius Geiger are
12 hereby honored as the 2026 Georgia HPV Community Champions; and

13 WHEREAS, statewide, Georgia's cervical cancer screening (Pap test and/or HPV testing)
14 rate is estimated around 76.5 percent, slightly below the national median of 77.7 percent,
15 leaving approximately one in five women unscreened; and

16 WHEREAS, significant geographical disparities exist within Georgia, including Forsyth,
17 McIntosh, Towns, and Franklin counties reporting cervical cancer screening rates lower than
18 60 percent, underscoring inequities in access and outreach; and

19 WHEREAS, as of 2023, 63 percent of Georgia adolescents (ages 13-17) are "up to date" on
20 the HPV vaccination series—below the Healthy People 2030 target of 80 percent and lagging
21 behind the United States average of 77 percent for at least one dose; and

22 WHEREAS, in Georgia, an estimated 327 new cases of cervical cancer are diagnosed
23 annually, with approximately 204 deaths due to the disease each year; and

24 WHEREAS, cervical cancer is most frequently diagnosed in the 35-44 age group—the
25 average United States age at diagnosis is about 50, and nearly 20 percent of cases occur after
26 age 65. While many guidelines permit cessation of screening after 65 in individuals with a
27 long history of normal results, those lacking such history should continue appropriate
28 surveillance; and

29 WHEREAS, as of recent data, 82 of Georgia's 159 counties have no OB/GYN provider, and
30 15 counties have only one OB/GYN, thereby limiting access to reproductive health and
31 screening services; and

32 WHEREAS, Black and Hispanic women in Georgia experience disproportionately higher
33 incidence and mortality from HPV-associated cervical cancer, reflecting persistent racial and
34 ethnic health disparities; and

35 WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the
36 Georgia Department of Public Health, Black women in Georgia are nearly 1.5 times more

37 likely to be diagnosed with cervical cancer and more than twice as likely to die from the
38 disease compared to other women, due in part to barriers such as limited access to care, lack
39 of insurance, transportation challenges, and under-screening; and

40 WHEREAS, the disparities are further compounded by social determinants of
41 health—including income, geography, and healthcare infrastructure—that limit equitable
42 access to HPV vaccination, early screening, and timely follow-up care in many rural and
43 underserved communities; and

44 WHEREAS, eliminating these disparities requires continued collaboration among state and
45 local health agencies, advocacy organizations, and community leaders to expand prevention
46 programs, improve culturally competent outreach, and ensure that all Georgians—regardless
47 of race, ethnicity, or zip code—benefit from the life-saving potential of HPV vaccination and
48 cervical cancer screening; and

49 WHEREAS, cervical cancer is among the most preventable and treatable cancers due to the
50 availability of effective screening and the HPV vaccine; estimates suggest that up to 95
51 percent of cervical cancers could be avoided through widespread HPV vaccination, regular
52 screening, and timely intervention; and

53 WHEREAS, the HPV-associated cancer rate was 13.7/100,000 persons for both males and
54 females. This rate is significantly higher than the United States national average of 12.6 per
55 100,000 persons. Men in Georgia (12.8) have a significantly higher rate of HPV-associated
56 cancers than the United States average (11.4), and women (14.6) have a significantly higher
57 rate of HPV-associated cancers than the United States average (13.9); and

58 WHEREAS, the efforts of The Susan Jolley Foundation, the Georgia Cancer Control
59 Consortium, and Cancer Pathways have elevated public awareness, improved knowledge of
60 HPV vaccination and screening, and mobilized community action across Georgia; and

61 WHEREAS, this year marks the 11th Anniversary of the advocacy efforts that began as The
62 Susan Jolley Awareness Program and now continues as The Susan Jolley Foundation under
63 the leadership of President Triana Arnold James.

64 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
65 recognize and commend the 2026 Georgia HPV Community Champions for their outstanding
66 leadership, dedication, and impact in promoting cervical cancer prevention and health equity
67 in Georgia.

68 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
69 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to The Susan Jolley
70 Foundation, the Georgia Cancer Control Consortium, HPV Cancer Free GA, and Cancer
71 Pathways.