

Senate Resolution 342

By: Senator Strickland of the 42nd

### A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Senate Study Committee on Certified Peer Specialists, Addiction Recovery  
2 Programs, and Protocols; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, substance use disorders and mental illnesses affect millions of individuals of  
4 all ages, races, and ethnic backgrounds as well as their families, friends, coworkers, and  
5 communities; and

6 WHEREAS, an estimated 46 million Americans experienced a substance use disorder in  
7 2022, and more than one million Georgians are in active addiction to alcohol and illegal and  
8 prescription drugs; and

9 WHEREAS, on average, over 200 people die each day from overdose or fentanyl poisoning,  
10 and over a quarter of a million Americans have died from a fentanyl overdose since 2018;  
11 and

12 WHEREAS, substance use disorders impact not only the individual affected but also  
13 marriages, families, the economy, and the healthcare system; and

14 WHEREAS, studies show a close relationship with an addicted person can become a source  
15 of chaos, emotional upheaval, financial instability, and even violence, and children of parents  
16 with a substance use disorder are at an increased risk of neglect or abuse, social isolation,  
17 disrupted education, and developing a substance use disorder themselves; and

18 WHEREAS, employees who engage in heavy alcohol or illicit drug use are 33 percent less  
19 productive than their coworkers, and addictions cost business owners over \$750 billion each  
20 year in lost revenue, profits, productivity, and healthcare costs; and

21 WHEREAS, statistics for Georgia show increasing numbers of drug overdose deaths, and  
22 there is no significant difference between rates for drug overdose deaths in urban and rural  
23 counties; and

24 WHEREAS, as a result of the addiction epidemic, every community in Georgia is  
25 experiencing rising costs, academic challenges, threats to law enforcement officers and first  
26 responders, impacts on marriages, and challenges for business owners and the workforce; and

27 WHEREAS, everyone deserves a chance at recovery from addiction including, but not  
28 limited to, those in state, county, or city custody with the Department of Corrections or the  
29 Department of Community Supervision, whether incarcerated, paroled, or on probation; and

30 WHEREAS, Georgia is a national leader in developing Certified Peer Specialists who are in  
31 a position to provide returning citizens support during and upon completion of imprisonment  
32 and on reentering the community; and

33 WHEREAS, Georgia should promote programs and protocols for healthcare providers, law  
34 enforcement and first responders, education leaders, faith leaders, business leaders, and local  
35 governments to better address the addiction epidemic; and

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37 WHEREAS, it would be beneficial for policymakers to study ways to embrace clinical and  
38 peer led programs and protocols to enhance awareness of state Certified Peer Specialists to  
39 serve those impacted by addiction through educational programs for healthcare providers,  
40 law enforcement and first responders, education leaders, faith leaders, business leaders, and  
41 local governments to better address the addiction epidemic to enhance collaboration and  
42 integration.

43 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE:

44 (1) **Creation of Senate study committee.** There is created the Senate Study Committee  
45 on Certified Peer Specialists, Addiction Recovery Programs, and Protocols.

46 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of six members of the  
47 Senate to be appointed by the President of the Senate. The President shall designate a  
48 member of the committee as chairperson of the committee.

49 (3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall undertake a study of the conditions, needs,  
50 issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any action or  
51 legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate.

52 (4) **Meetings.** The chairperson shall call all meetings of the committee. The committee  
53 may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or  
54 convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and  
55 accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution.

56 (5) **Allowances and funding.**

57 (A) The legislative members of the committee shall receive the allowances provided  
58 for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

59 (B) The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any member  
60 of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized. Funds  
61 necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds  
62 appropriated to the Senate.

63 **(6) Report.**

64 (A) In the event the committee adopts any specific findings or recommendations that  
65 include suggestions for proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file a report of the  
66 same prior to the date of abolishment specified in this resolution, subject to  
67 subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.

68 (B) In the event the committee adopts a report that does not include suggestions for  
69 proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file the report, subject to subparagraph (C)  
70 of this paragraph.

71 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of  
72 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.  
73 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with  
74 the Secretary of the Senate.

75 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Secretary  
76 of the Senate a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu thereof.

77 **(7) Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2025.