

## House Resolution 554

By: Representatives Buckner of the 137<sup>th</sup>, Taylor of the 173<sup>rd</sup>, Newton of the 127<sup>th</sup>, Prince of the 132<sup>nd</sup>, Cooper of the 45<sup>th</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Commemorating the 70th anniversary of the nationwide Polio Vaccination Campaign; and  
2 for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, seventy years ago, in 1954, the United States embarked on a historic public  
4 health initiative, the Polio Vaccination Campaign, marking the beginning of the end for a  
5 disease that had long afflicted children and adults, leaving thousands paralyzed or dead each  
6 year; and

7 WHEREAS, polio is a highly infectious disease which has existed for thousands of years,  
8 and primarily affects children under the age of five, causing paralysis and death, and for  
9 which there is no known cure; and

10 WHEREAS, through the groundbreaking work of many physicians and scientists, the  
11 development of the first safe and effective polio vaccine offered hope to millions of families  
12 across Georgia, the United States, and the world; and

13 WHEREAS, Georgia played an important role in the campaign to stop polio, as President  
14 Franklin Roosevelt, who called Georgia "my second home," was himself a victim of polio

15 and sought therapies from the Warm Springs Institute in the 1930s and 1940s, and brought  
16 additional public attention to this dreaded disease; and

17 WHEREAS, in the 1950s, the Talmage Memorial Hospital, now Medical College of Georgia  
18 Hospital, served as a central repository for the entire Southeast of iron lungs, the life-saving  
19 device that enabled paralyzed victims of polio to breathe; and

20 WHEREAS, on April 12, 1955, the largest mass vaccination effort in United States history  
21 began, which ultimately led to the eradication of polio in the United States; and

22 WHEREAS, President Dwight Eisenhower, whose administration played a key role in  
23 funding polio research and ensuring widespread distribution of the vaccine, stated "I think  
24 that this is one of the greatest events of our time"; and

25 WHEREAS, this anniversary serves as a reminder of the power of science, medicine, and  
26 collective action in overcoming such a terrible and devastating disease, which affects  
27 children and stands as one of the greatest public health triumphs of the 20th century.

28 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
29 the members of this body commemorate the 70th anniversary of the nationwide Polio  
30 Vaccination Campaign and acknowledge and salute the tremendous accomplishments of all  
31 the scientists, physicians, public health personnel, parents, and others -many Georgians  
32 among them- who made this remarkable achievement possible.

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