

House Resolution 712

By: Representatives Park of the 107th, Hugley of the 141st, Miller of the 62nd, Frye of the 122nd, Williams of the 168th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on Protecting Working Families; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia receives approximately \$19 billion from the federal
4 government and any federal budget cuts will require the General Assembly to significantly
5 slash funding, which will negatively affect Georgians' salaries, quality of life, access to
6 healthcare, and ability to access essential services; and

7 WHEREAS, reductions in federal Medicaid and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
8 (SNAP) funding will have a significant negative impact on certain vulnerable populations,
9 small businesses, rural communities, veterans, and first responders in this state; and

10 WHEREAS, according to the Georgia Department of Public Health, nearly 2.5 million
11 Georgians rely on Medicaid, including low-income working families, children, seniors, and
12 people with disabilities, and any reduction in federal Medicaid funding could lead to higher
13 uninsured rates, more expensive health insurance plans for families and employers, and an
14 increased financial strain on hospitals, particularly in rural areas; and

15 WHEREAS, over 1.4 million Georgians depend on SNAP benefits to afford basic nutrition,
16 with working families, single parents, and low-income seniors being among the largest

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17 recipients, and reductions in SNAP funding could result in higher food insecurity rates,
18 increased pressure on food banks, and negative health outcomes for vulnerable populations;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, food insecurity remains a pressing issue in Georgia, with 13.1 percent of
21 residents (approximately 1 in 8) experiencing food insecurity, including 18.4 percent of
22 children (approximately 1 in 5), and the demand for food assistance has surged due to rising
23 grocery prices and economic challenges; and

24 WHEREAS, working families in Georgia already face rising healthcare costs, limited access
25 to health insurance, and disparities in maternal health outcomes, disproportionately affecting
26 women, children, and communities of color; and

27 WHEREAS, Georgia has one of the highest uninsured rates in the country (13.4 percent), and
28 cuts to Medicaid funding could further erode access to affordable healthcare for working
29 families and small business employees; and

30 WHEREAS, Georgia ranks among the worst states for maternal mortality, with Black
31 mothers facing a mortality rate more than twice that of white mothers, and expanded
32 Medicaid access has been shown to improve maternal health outcomes; and

33 WHEREAS, over 152,000 women in Georgia live in maternity care deserts, putting them at
34 greater risk of adverse health outcomes due to lack of accessible and equitable maternal care;
35 and

36 WHEREAS, the loss of SNAP and Medicaid benefits would have cascading economic
37 effects, including reduced consumer spending, financial strain on small businesses and the
38 state, and increased uncompensated care costs for hospitals and healthcare providers; and

39 WHEREAS, strengthening state based protections, such as emergency Medicaid funds, food
40 security programs, and small business tax incentives, can help mitigate the negative impacts
41 of federal policy changes and ensure that working families, first responders, veterans, and
42 vulnerable populations continue to have access to essential healthcare and nutrition; and

43 WHEREAS, the Georgia legislature understands that certain state-driven protections may be
44 necessary to ensure that these individuals, businesses, and communities continue to have
45 access to essential healthcare and food security benefits, including, but not limited to, the
46 following protections:

47 (1) **State emergency Medicaid fund.** The fund would provide healthcare coverage to
48 individuals who lose Medicaid benefits due to federal policy changes;

49 (2) **State food security fund.** The fund would provide grocery assistance benefits to
50 first responders, veterans, and other eligible individuals equivalent to any loss of SNAP
51 benefits due to federal policy changes;

52 (3) **Small business tax credits.** Small business employers would receive tax credits for
53 making certain healthcare contributions related to responding to reductions in Medicaid
54 funding;

55 (4) **Affordable insurance pool for small businesses.** Individuals affected by reductions
56 in Medicaid funding would have the option to participate in and have access to subsidized
57 healthcare coverage;

58 (5) **State funded food purchase program.** The state would purchase and distribute
59 local produce, dairy, and meat to food banks, K-12 schools, senior meal programs, and
60 families with an incarcerated parent or a parent recently released from incarceration;

61 (6) **State funded Medicaid buy-in program.** Individuals who lose Medicaid benefits
62 due to federal policy changes would be permitted to purchase state sponsored coverage
63 at subsidized rates;

64 (7) **State funded maternity care grants.** Pregnant women from low-income
65 households, children in households that lose access to benefits under Medicaid or the

66 Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and low-income mothers denied abortion
67 access due to state restrictions would receive direct financial assistance from the state for
68 maternity healthcare expenses; and

69 (8) **State funded grants to food assistance organizations.** Church-run pantries and
70 religious, nonprofit organizations would receive state dollar-for-dollar matching grants
71 to support their existing efforts of providing food assistance; and

72 WHEREAS, a study is needed to evaluate these protections and others, determine policy
73 goals, and identify appropriate legislative actions to mitigate any adverse impact of federal
74 Medicaid and SNAP funding changes on these individuals, businesses, and communities.

75 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

76 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Study Committee
77 on Protecting Working Families.

78 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of 11 members of the
79 House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of
80 Representatives. The Speaker shall designate a member of the committee as chairperson
81 of the committee.

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

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

89 (5) **Allowances and funding.** The legislative members of the committee shall receive
90 the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia
91 Annotated. The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any

92 member of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized.
93 Funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
94 appropriated to the House of Representatives.

95 **(6) Report.**

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

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

103 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
104 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
105 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
106 the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

107 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Clerk of the
108 House of Representatives a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu
109 thereof.

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