

Senate Resolution 634

By: Senators Hufstetler of the 52nd, Hatchett of the 50th, Burns of the 23rd, Watson of the 1st, Summers of the 13th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the burden of lung cancer in the United States and the State of Georgia;
2 supporting prevention, early detection, and timely intervention to improve patient outcomes;
3 addressing disparities in care; and commending Intuitive for its leadership in advancing lung
4 cancer care through innovations such as the Ion robotic endoluminal system; and for other
5 purposes.

6 WHEREAS, lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer-related death in the United States,
7 taking the lives of nearly 361 Americans each day and accounting for approximately 125,070
8 deaths annually-nearly as many deaths as colorectal (53,010), breast (42,780), and prostate
9 (32,520) cancers combined; and

10 WHEREAS, about every two minutes someone in the United States is diagnosed with lung
11 cancer, and close to 227,000 people were expected to be diagnosed in 2024; and

12 WHEREAS, there are a variety of risk factors associated with lung cancer, including
13 smoking, exposure to radon gas, air pollution, secondhand smoke and military service-related
14 exposure; and

15 WHEREAS, even non-tobacco users get lung cancer, with approximately 20 percent of new
16 cases occurring in people who have never smoked; and

17 WHEREAS, veterans have a higher rate of lung cancer and are 25 percent more likely to
18 receive a lung cancer diagnosis compared to the general population; and

19 WHEREAS, the burden of lung cancer is not distributed equally: people of color, particularly
20 Black and Indigenous Americans, are less likely to be diagnosed early, less likely to receive
21 surgical treatment, and face significantly lower survival rates compared to white Americans;
22 and

23 WHEREAS, lung cancer has one of the lowest five-year survival rates of all major cancers,
24 largely because cases are frequently diagnosed at later stages, when effective treatment
25 options are limited; and

26 WHEREAS, the national five-year survival rate after a lung cancer diagnosis is only 29.7
27 percent, and in Georgia is 26.2 percent-ranking Georgia 30th among 39 states with available
28 data and placing it in the below average tier; and

29 WHEREAS, only 28.1 percent of lung cancer cases nationally are diagnosed at an early
30 stage, when the five-year survival rate rises to 65 percent; unfortunately, 43.1 percent of
31 cases are diagnosed at a late stage, when survival drops to just 10 percent; and

32 WHEREAS, in Georgia, only 26.9 percent of lung cancer cases are diagnosed early, which
33 is lower than the national rate and ranks Georgia 38th among the 50 states, placing it in the
34 average tier for early diagnosis; and

35 WHEREAS, the rate of new lung cancer cases in Georgia is 55.7 per 100,000, higher than
36 the national rate of 52.8 per 100,000 and placing Georgia 29th among all states; and

37 WHEREAS, surgery is the most effective treatment for early-stage lung cancer that has not
38 spread, yet only about 20.7 percent of cases nationally undergo surgery, with rates similarly
39 low in Georgia, partly due to late diagnosis; and

40 WHEREAS, early-stage lung cancers present unique clinical challenges, with over 70
41 percent located in the outer third of the lung, 64 percent in the upper lobes, and 51 percent
42 lacking a leading airway, making them very difficult to reach and biopsy using traditional
43 technology; and

44 WHEREAS, Intuitive's Ion robotic endoluminal system is designed with the smallest outer
45 diameter in its class, maximizing physician reach into the lung periphery and enabling
46 minimally invasive biopsies of small, hard-to-reach nodules, thereby empowering clinicians
47 to overcome anatomical challenges and achieve more accurate, earlier diagnoses; and

48 WHEREAS, Ion has the potential to improve survival rates and reduce overall healthcare
49 costs by increasing the number of patients who can be diagnosed at an early and treatable
50 stage; and

51 WHEREAS, expanding access to cutting-edge technology like Ion and the da Vinci surgical
52 system supports Georgia healthcare teams, including those serving active military and
53 veterans, in their fight against lung cancer, benefits patients regardless of risk factors, and
54 aligns with statewide commitments to elevate patient care and address health disparities.

55 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
56 recognize lung cancer as a critical public health concern and support efforts to improve
57 prevention, early detection, diagnosis, and intervention, while addressing disparities in care
58 and outcomes.

59 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members commend Intuitive for its leadership and
60 innovation in advancing lung cancer diagnostic care through the Ion robotic endoluminal
61 system and surgical care through the da Vinci surgical system.

62 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
63 to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to Intuitive.