

House Resolution 1042

By: Representatives Silcox of the 52nd, Cooper of the 43rd, LaRiccia of the 169th, Hatchett of the 150th, Holland of the 54th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life and memory of James Harold Shepherd Jr., cofounder and chairman of the
2 Board of Directors of the Shepherd Center; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia mourns the loss of one of its most distinguished citizens
4 with the passing of James Harold Shepherd Jr. on December 21, 2019; and

5 WHEREAS, James Harold Shepherd Jr. was a native of Atlanta, Georgia, a beloved son of
6 Harold and Alana Shepherd, and a graduate of both the Westminster Schools and the
7 University of Georgia, where he received a bachelor's degree in business administration; and

8 WHEREAS, in 1973, James suffered a near-fatal body surfing accident in Brazil, and after
9 six months of intensive rehabilitation in Denver, Colorado, James regained the ability to walk
10 with a cane and leg brace; and

11 WHEREAS, when he returned to Atlanta in 1975, James cofounded the Shepherd Center
12 with his father, mother, and Dr. David F. Apple to provide medical treatment and
13 rehabilitation for spinal cord injuries; and

14 WHEREAS, originally a six-bed rehabilitation unit, the center is now a world-renowned 152
15 bed facility that specializes in medical treatment, research, and rehabilitation for people with
16 spinal cord injuries, brain injuries, multiple sclerosis, and other neuromuscular conditions;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, from the beginning, James was a tireless advocate who worked to improve
19 accessibility and opportunity for people with disabilities by influencing positive change on
20 both the state and national level; and

21 WHEREAS, James served on numerous boards including the National Rehabilitation
22 Awareness Foundation, the Georgia Institute of Technology's Center for Rehabilitation

23 Technology, the Governor's Spinal Cord and Brain Injury Trust Fund Authority, the
24 accessibility advisory committees of MARTA, the Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport,
25 the Georgia World Congress Center, and the Georgia Dome; and

26 WHEREAS, in 2011, the University of Georgia awarded James an honorary doctor of laws
27 degree in conjunction with the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia to
28 recognize his contributions to health care and the State of Georgia; and

29 WHEREAS, he was recognized with several awards for his service and dedication, and out
30 of all of his accomplishments, he considered building the Shepherd Center with his family
31 to be his finest; and

32 WHEREAS, he was blessed with two remarkable children, Julie and James III, and four
33 wonderful grandchildren, James IV, Josephine, Virginia, and Annie; and

34 WHEREAS, a compassionate and generous man, James will long be remembered for his love
35 of family, friendship, and community and will be missed by all who had the great fortune of
36 knowing him.

37 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
38 the members of this body join in honoring the life and memory of James Harold Shepherd
39 Jr. and express their deepest and most sincere regret at his passing.

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
41 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to the
42 family of James Harold Shepherd Jr.