

The House Committee on Health offers the following substitute to HR 1360:

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on Alternatives to Opioids for Pain Management; and
2 for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the opioid epidemic, also known as the opioid crisis, is a nationwide problem
4 in the United States that involves the widespread use of painkillers and subsequent popularity
5 of illegal opioids; and

6 WHEREAS, opioids are a class of drugs that includes illegal drugs such as heroin, synthetic
7 opioids such as fentanyl, and pain relievers available legally by prescription. Opioids can
8 help relieve severe pain but, unfortunately, are highly addictive, and withdrawals from them
9 are painful; and

10 WHEREAS, the National Center for Health Statistics at the Centers for Disease Control and
11 Prevention reports that more than 106,000 lives were lost from drug-involved overdoses in
12 2021, and 75 percent of all drug overdose deaths involved opioids; and

13 WHEREAS, the Department of Public Health reports there were 2,390 drug overdose deaths
14 in Georgia in 2021, and 71 percent were attributed to opioids; and

15 WHEREAS, in 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated prescribing
16 guidelines to emphasize the efficacy of nonopioid alternatives for many common types of
17 acute pain and to encourage their use over opioids; and

18 WHEREAS, all 50 states have opioid prescribing guidelines, but only 16 states have
19 statutory requirements mandating prescriber consideration of nonopioid alternatives; and

20 WHEREAS, Georgia should promote and encourage healthcare providers to inform their
21 patients of nonopioid alternatives, discuss with their patients the advantages and
22 disadvantages of the use of nonopioid alternatives, including any elevated risks of controlled
23 substance abuse or misuse, and provide their patients with educational information on
24 nonopioid alternatives; and

25 WHEREAS, it would be beneficial for policymakers to study ways to enhance awareness of
26 nonopioid alternatives, including nonopioid pharmacologic treatment options, through
27 educational programs for healthcare providers and to enhance collaboration and integration
28 of care between all healthcare providers who assist in treating pain.

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

30 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Study Committee
31 on Alternatives to Opioids for Pain Management.

32 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of 14 members to be
33 appointed as follows:

34 (A) Seven members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the
35 House of Representatives, which shall include the chairpersons of the House Special
36 Committee on Healthcare, the House Committee on Health, and the House Committee

37 on Public Health. The Speaker shall designate a legislative member of the committee
38 as chairperson of the committee.

39 (B) Five nonlegislative members appointed by the Speaker of the House of
40 Representatives, which shall include:

- 41 (i) A citizen representative from the Georgia Council for Recovery;
- 42 (ii) A citizen representative who serves in an executive role in the field of criminal
43 justice;
- 44 (iii) A citizen representative who practices medicine as an independent physician
45 whose specialty includes the treatment of acute pain;
- 46 (iv) A citizen representative who has expertise in healthcare costs and works in the
47 insurance industry; and
- 48 (v) A citizen representative who has lost a family member to an overdose; and

49 (C) Two state agency representatives as follows:

- 50 (i) The commissioner of community health, or his or her designee; and
- 51 (ii) The commissioner of behavioral health and developmental disabilities, or his or
52 her designee.

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

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

60 (5) **Allowances, expenses, and funding.**

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

63 (B) Members of the committee who are state officials, other than legislative members,
64 or who are state employees shall receive no compensation for their services on the
65 committee, but they may be reimbursed for expenses incurred by them in the
66 performance of their duties as members of the committee in the same manner as they
67 are reimbursed for expenses in their capacities as state officials or employees.

68 (C) Members of the committee who are not legislator, state officials, or state
69 employees shall receive a daily expense allowance in an amount the same as that
70 specified in subsection (b) of Code Section 45-7-21 of the Official Code of Georgia
71 Annotated, as well as the mileage or transportation allowance authorized for state
72 employees.

73 (D) The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any member
74 of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized. Funds
75 necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
76 appropriated to the House of Representatives; except that funds for the reimbursement
77 of the expenses of state officials, other than legislative members, and for the
78 reimbursement of the expenses of state employees shall come from funds appropriated
79 to or otherwise available to their respective agencies.

80 **(6) Report.**

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

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

88 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
89 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.

90 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
91 the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

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

95 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2024.