

House Resolution 723

By: Representatives Dreyer of the 59th, Jackson of the 64th, Kausche of the 50th, Hutchinson of the 107th, and Howard of the 124th

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the mission of the Children's Freedom Initiative (CFI) to ensure that all children
2 live with families in permanent, loving homes – NOT in nursing facilities, institutions, or
3 other congregate settings; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, the Children's Freedom Initiative was established in 2005 to halt the practice
5 of admitting Georgia's children who experience disabilities into institutions and since then
6 has worked closely with families and stakeholders to advocate for access to home and
7 community based services so children who experience disabilities may remain with family
8 or live in another permanent, loving home; and

9 WHEREAS, there are approximately 2,000 children with disabilities in DFCS custody and
10 approximately 32 children with disabilities living in institutional settings in Georgia; and

11 WHEREAS, decades of research have shown that institutionalization of children under age
12 22 results in profound developmental delays across nearly all domains, including cognitive,
13 social, and physical development; and

14 WHEREAS, 49.8 percent of Georgia families raising children with special health care needs
15 report that they have had to leave the work force completely or reduce work hours to provide
16 care for their child; and

17 WHEREAS, people who live in the community are less likely to experience abuse, neglect,
18 and victimization; and

19 WHEREAS, it is imperative that there be greater public awareness of how home and
20 community based services provide an invaluable lifeline to children who experience
21 disability in Georgia among parents, policymakers, and other concerned citizens.

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
23 the members of this body recognize June 22, 2019, as the Children's Freedom Initiative Day
24 at the state capitol.

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