

House Resolution 740

By: Representatives Townsend of the 179th, Sainz of the 180th, and DeLoach of the 167th

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing Dr. Mary Eleanor Wickersham; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, as the second child of the late Dr. and Mrs. William Rawlings Sr., of
3 Sandersville, Georgia, Dr. Mary Eleanor Wickersham was married to David Wickersham for
4 49 years, and together they raised two children, Eleanor Cates and Dr. Penn Wickersham,
5 and were the proud grandparents of Kay and Will Wickersham and Nora and Rawlings
6 Cates; and

7 WHEREAS, over her career, Dr. Mary Eleanor Wickersham was successful in a variety of
8 endeavors but always with an eye toward serving her community; and

9 WHEREAS, Mary Eleanor and David sold their business in 1993 and owned and operated
10 several small-town Georgia newspapers, including *the Gibson Record*, *the Sandersville*
11 *Progress*, *the Cochran Journal*, and *the Wrightsville Headlight*, of which Dr. Mary Eleanor
12 Wickersham was the editor for many years; and

13 WHEREAS, Dr. Mary Eleanor Wickersham later worked with geriatric providers and
14 nursing homes, developing expertise that led to Governor Sonny Perdue hiring her as his
15 Health and Human Services policy advisor in 2007; and

16 WHEREAS, through her work in the governor's office, she was instrumental in founding
17 S.O.U.R.C.E., an innovative in-home services Medicaid program designed to allow older
18 adults to receive health care services without having to live in a nursing home; and

19 WHEREAS, in 2010, the Arc of Georgia—a nonprofit group that advocates for the rights of
20 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities—named her its Advocate of the
21 Year; and

22 WHEREAS, a life-long learner, Dr. Mary Eleanor Wickersham held a Bachelor of Arts in
23 geology from Emory University, a certificate in clinical health care ethics from Washington
24 University in St. Louis, a master's degree in public affairs from Georgia College and State
25 University, and while in her late 50s obtained her doctorate in public administration from
26 Valdosta State University; and

27 WHEREAS, Dr. Mary Eleanor Wickersham spent a decade teaching and publishing at
28 Valdosta State University and at the College of Coastal Georgia; and

29 WHEREAS, Dr. Mary Eleanor Wickersham built the Bachelor of Science in public
30 management program at the College of Coastal Georgia; and

31 WHEREAS, Dr. Mary Eleanor Wickersham held the title of professor emeritus when she
32 retired from the College of Coastal Georgia in 2017; and

33 WHEREAS, after retiring, she regularly worked as a grant writer and community assessment
34 provider for nonprofits, hospital systems, and Head Start programs across the State of
35 Georgia; and

36 WHEREAS, Dr. Mary Eleanor Wickersham passed away on January 24, 2023, leaving
37 behind an adventure-filled life, a wonderful family, and a tremendous professional and
38 personal legacy.

39 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
40 the members of this body recognize Dr. Mary Eleanor Wickersham for her outstanding
41 accomplishments and dedicated service to the United States and the State of Georgia.

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
43 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the
44 family of Dr. Mary Eleanor Wickersham and to the College of Coastal Georgia.