

Senate Resolution 685

By: Senators Black of the 8th, Burke of the 11th, Anderson of the 24th, Harrell of the 40th and Payne of the 54th

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending the Georgia Primary Care Association and recognizing February 4, 2020, as
2 Community Health Centers Day at the state capitol; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, federally qualified health centers located in 229 medically underserved
4 communities provide high quality primary and preventive health care to more than 600,000
5 people in the State of Georgia, including more than 225,000 Medicaid recipients and 235,000
6 uninsured, the working poor, and a large number of underinsured, elderly, homeless, and other
7 vulnerable populations, without regard to income status, cultural or ethnic heritage, or disease
8 conditions; and

9 WHEREAS, community health centers contribute more than \$300 million per year to
10 Georgia's economy through indirect and induced economic activity, including \$142 million
11 in household income and 3,730 Georgia jobs, that saves the Georgia Medicaid program up to
12 33 percent in annual spending per Medicaid beneficiary; and

13 WHEREAS, community health centers recruit and retain more than 350 health care
14 professionals where they are most needed and offer access to a wide range of cost-effective
15 medical and dental services, behavioral health services, prescription medicines, health
16 education, nutrition counseling, translation services, community outreach, transportation, and
17 other support programs; and

18 WHEREAS, community health centers have a track record spanning more than five decades
19 of controlling costs, documented in several studies which show that rates of costly emergency
20 room visits, hospitalizations, and specialty care referrals are much lower among health center
21 patients than patients of other providers; and

22 WHEREAS, community health centers work in partnership with other health care providers,
23 local hospitals, health departments, social service agencies, and health related support

24 organizations to maximize resources and assure that services are coordinated to improve the
25 health status of the community; and

26 WHEREAS, community health centers have been innovators in the establishment of patient
27 centered medical homes, providing access to quality care and continuity of care for the
28 patients they serve; and

29 WHEREAS, Georgia's community health centers and their state organization, the Georgia
30 Primary Care Association, have worked diligently to increase the number of community
31 health centers in Georgia and across the nation and have taken a leadership role in establishing
32 more centers in underserved communities to help resolve this state's health care access
33 problems, demonstrating commendable efforts in continuous quality improvement, reduction
34 of health disparities among the underserved, the implementation of new health care initiatives
35 such as integration of clinical and behavioral health, and utilization of the latest technology
36 to improve operations and delivery of services to more Georgians; and

37 WHEREAS, community health centers deserve commendation for their valuable contributions
38 in expanding access to health care, their outstanding record of service, and their dedication
39 to improving health care and the health status of all Georgians.

40 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
41 commend the Georgia Primary Care Association for laudable service to patients in Georgia
42 and recognize February 4, 2020, as Community Health Centers Day at the state capitol.

43 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed to
44 make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to the Georgia Primary
45 Care Association.