

Senate Resolution 779

By: Senators Hickman of the 4th, Dixon of the 45th, Gooch of the 51st, Esteves of the 6th and Sims of the 12th

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing March 4, 2024, as Reach Out and Read Day at the state capitol to recognize the
2 power of reading to young children every day; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Reach Out and Read's early literacy intervention began in 1989 at Boston
4 Medical Center and has expanded to 50 states, serving 5.7 million families today. Georgia's
5 affiliate office launched in 2012 and now serves 177,045 children and families in 78 counties
6 and at 205 hospitals, pediatric practices, clinics, and home visiting program sites, with 108
7 medical sites that have applications in progress to become Reach Out and Read sites; and

8 WHEREAS, more than 1,000 medical providers and staff have been trained in the
9 evidence-based early literacy intervention program of Reach Out and Read Georgia, offering
10 each child an opportunity to be read to and to learn to read; and

11 WHEREAS, Reach Out and Read has trained 36,000 pediatricians and medical providers
12 who prescribe reading as a daily activity during wellness checkups; and

13 WHEREAS, over the past 12 months, 354,090 well-child checkups engaging approximately
14 177,045 children and families were conducted across Georgia with pediatricians and
15 providers implementing the Reach Out and Read program; and

16 WHEREAS, in that same time, 228,522 new children's books were distributed through the
17 program's pediatric network to children aged five years old and younger; and

18 WHEREAS, since the program began, more than 2.7 million new children's books have been
19 given to young children in Georgia by pediatric providers, beginning at the very first
20 newborn visit through a child's fifth birthday, and children in the program demonstrate a
21 six-month developmental edge compared to children not enrolled in the program when
22 arriving at kindergarten; and

23 WHEREAS, Reach Out and Read is the only early literacy intervention endorsed by the
24 American Academy of Pediatrics and has the most extensive body of research supporting the
25 efficacy of the program model with 22 studies supporting its work; and

26 WHEREAS, pediatricians prescribe reading as a daily activity and parents take these
27 prescriptions to heart, increasing social and emotional bonds with their children while
28 increasing their exposure to positive interactions and creating special, meaningful moments;
29 and

30 WHEREAS, positive emotional bonding between a parent and child has been demonstrated
31 to help mitigate the damaging effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES); and

32 WHEREAS, pediatric offices implementing Reach Out and Read have cited an increase in
33 wellness visit compliance during the earliest years of life, a time when most immunizations
34 occur; and

35 WHEREAS, Reach Out and Read has the ability to serve as the intersection of education and
36 health care, offering unprecedented access to the pediatric community, children, and families;
37 and

38 WHEREAS, Reach Out and Read Georgia will provide quality, diverse, and developmentally
39 and linguistically appropriate books in 30 languages to medical sites across Georgia; and

40 WHEREAS, medical providers and staff implement the Reach Out and Read Georgia
41 program every day across the state, offering each child an opportunity to be read to and to
42 learn to read; and

43 WHEREAS, medical providers prescribe reading at every wellness visit beginning at birth
44 and continuing through age five

45 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
46 commend the efforts of Reach Out and Read to give young children a foundation for success
47 by incorporating books into the existing pediatric care infrastructure, encourage families in
48 Georgia to read aloud together each and every day, and recognize March 4, 2024, as Reach
49 Out and Read Day at the state capitol.

50 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
51 to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to Reach Out and
52 Read Georgia.