

Senate Resolution 982

By: Senator Unterman of the 45th

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending the March of Dimes and recognizing February 27, 2014, as March of Dimes
2 Day at the state capitol; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the March of Dimes Foundation is a pioneer in improving the health of infants
4 and women of childbearing age by preventing birth defects, premature birth, and infant
5 mortality; and

6 WHEREAS, the March of Dimes was founded in 1938 to fight polio, and funded the
7 development of two vaccines that virtually eliminated the crippling disease, and in 1958,
8 having achieved its initial mission, shifted its attention from polio to the prevention of
9 preterm birth, the greatest contributing factor to newborns dying within their first month of
10 life; and

11 WHEREAS, nearly half a million babies are born preterm every year in the United States,
12 and over 18,300 preterm births occurred in Georgia in 2010, contributing to a preterm birth
13 rate in Georgia of 12.7 percent, a percentage which is higher than the national average of
14 11.5 percent; and

15 WHEREAS, these statistics were a major reason for Georgia's receiving a grade of "C" in a
16 2013 report by the March of Dimes on premature birth rates among the states in the nation;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, the March of Dimes supported the Association of State and Territorial Health
19 Officials (ASTHO) Challenge calling for an 8 percent reduction in preterm births in Georgia
20 by 2014, and healthier starts in the lives of thousands of infants; and

21 WHEREAS, as of 2013, the March of Dimes has helped Georgia achieve this goal resulting
22 in a 10 percent reduction among all births and 16.5 percent reduction in singleton births, and

23 with the continued support from the March of Dimes, Georgia will continue along this
24 current trajectory, achieving a 15 percent decrease in preterm birth by 2014; and

25 WHEREAS, volunteers and staff of the March of Dimes will be at the capitol on February
26 27, 2014, to raise awareness among legislators about the serious consequences of preterm
27 birth and to advocate for policies to address this significant public health challenge.

28 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
29 commend the efforts of the March of Dimes and its selfless volunteers for their past, present,
30 and future work on behalf of mothers and babies in this state, throughout the nation, and
31 around the world, and recognize February 27, 2014, as March of Dimes Day at the state
32 capitol.

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
34 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the March of Dimes Georgia Chapter.