

Senate Resolution 992

By: Senators James of the 35th, Seay of the 34th, Fort of the 39th, Henson of the 41st, Davenport of the 44th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Encouraging the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia and the Technical
2 College System of Georgia to provide programmatic assistance to students who are foster
3 care and unaccompanied homeless youth; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, this body has found that the growth and development of this state has been and
5 will undoubtedly remain strongly related to the degree to which educational opportunities are
6 provided to all citizens; and

7 WHEREAS, each year more than one million young people in the United States experience
8 homelessness and tens of thousands in the United States leave the foster care system without
9 loving families; some of these young people, known as foster care and unaccompanied
10 homeless youth, will face the challenges of homelessness while living on their own without
11 the support of a caring adult; and

12 WHEREAS, supporting foster care and unaccompanied homeless youth in obtaining a
13 college education enables such foster care and unaccompanied homeless youth to break the
14 cycle of poverty and to move towards a brighter and more stable future; and

15 WHEREAS, foster care and unaccompanied homeless youth face unique challenges of
16 navigating through postsecondary endeavors, such as determining who will sign important
17 paperwork on their behalf, juggling work hours and schoolwork, and determining where they
18 will live during the school year or where they will stay when the dormitories close during
19 holiday and summer breaks; and

20 WHEREAS, institutions of higher education can play a critical role in supporting foster care
21 and unaccompanied homeless youth in their postsecondary endeavors; and

22 WHEREAS, foster care and unaccompanied homeless youth hope to, and do, attend colleges
23 and universities of the university system and technical colleges of the technical college
24 system; and

25 WHEREAS, the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act provides assistance for
26 the support of foster care and unaccompanied homeless youth during their elementary and
27 secondary education, and the provision of a single point of contact, among other measures,
28 assists such youth during their postsecondary education; and

29 WHEREAS, a single point of contact is designed to be a safe and supportive college
30 administrator who is committed to helping foster care and unaccompanied homeless youth
31 successfully navigate the college-going process; and

32 WHEREAS, a single point of contact implements a streamlined process to facilitate
33 communication and quick referral among the admissions, academic advising, financial aid,
34 veteran's affairs, remediation, tutoring, student life, housing, health center, and other
35 departments and services on campus; and

36 WHEREAS, the Constitution of Georgia provides that the government, control, and
37 management of the university system and all institutions of said system shall be vested in the
38 board of regents; and

39 WHEREAS, the leadership, management, and operational control over postsecondary
40 technical education programs is statutorily vested in the Technical College System of
41 Georgia.

42 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
43 join together to encourage the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia and the
44 Technical College System of Georgia to:

- 45 (1) Employ measures assisting students who are foster care and unaccompanied
46 homeless youth as provided for by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act;
- 47 (2) Designate a single point of contact at each institution of the university system to
48 assist and mentor students who are foster care and unaccompanied homeless youth;
- 49 (3) Develop and implement a plan to assist students who are foster care and
50 unaccompanied homeless youth to have access to housing resources during and in
51 between academic terms;

52 (4) Collaborate with child welfare agencies, homeless service providers, and local school
53 boards to identify, conduct outreach to, and recruit foster care and unaccompanied
54 homeless youth to attend institutions of the university system;

55 (5) Examine and publicly report annual educational metrics for foster care and
56 unaccompanied homeless youth, including but not limited to foster care and
57 unaccompanied homeless youth graduating from the university and technical college
58 systems, the average length of time for such students to complete a degree, diploma, or
59 certification program, and the amount of programmatic and tuition support provided by
60 the postsecondary institutions to such students; and

61 (6) Render advice on improving educational attainment rates of students who are foster
62 care and unaccompanied homeless youth.

63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
64 to transmit appropriate copies of this resolution to the Board of Regents of the University
65 System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia.