

## Senate Resolution 348

By: Senators Burke of the 11th, Unterman of the 45th, Watson of the 1st, Kirk of the 13th and Harper of the 7th

## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing February 24, 2015, as "Community Health Centers Day"; and for other  
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, federally qualified community health centers located in over 156 medically  
4 underserved communities provide high quality primary and preventive health care to 500,000  
5 people in the State of Georgia, including over 150,000 Medicaid recipients and 225,000  
6 uninsured, the working poor, and a large number of underinsured, elderly, homeless, and  
7 other vulnerable populations, without regard to income status, cultural or ethnic heritage, or  
8 disease conditions; and

9 WHEREAS, community health centers add \$375 million per year to Georgia's economy  
10 through indirect and induced economic activity, including \$150 million in household income  
11 and 2,900 Georgia jobs, that saves the Georgia Medicaid program up to 33 percent in annual  
12 spending per Medicaid beneficiary; and

13 WHEREAS, community health centers recruit and retain over 1,350 health care professionals  
14 where they are most needed and offer access to a wide range of cost-effective medical and  
15 dental services, behavioral health services, prescription medicines, health education, nutrition  
16 counseling, translation services, community outreach, transportation, and other support  
17 programs; and

18 WHEREAS, community health centers have a track record spanning over four decades of  
19 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 services to maximize resources and assure that services are coordinated to improve the health  
25 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 Association for Primary Health Care, have worked diligently to increase the number of  
31 community health centers in Georgia and have taken a leadership role in establishing more  
32 centers in underserved communities to help resolve this state's health care access problems,  
33 demonstrating commendable efforts in continuous quality improvement, reduction of health  
34 disparities among the underserved, the implementation of new health care initiatives such as  
35 health services integration, and utilization of the latest technology to improve both operations  
36 and delivery of services to more Georgians; and

37 WHEREAS, community health centers deserve commendation for their valuable  
38 contributions in expanding access to health care, their outstanding record of service, and their  
39 dedication 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 recognize February 24, 2015, as "Community Health Centers Day."

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