

## House Resolution 1608

By: Representatives Jones of the 47<sup>th</sup>, Erwin of the 32<sup>nd</sup>, Dubnik of the 29<sup>th</sup>, Jones of the 25<sup>th</sup>,  
and Gilliard of the 162<sup>nd</sup>

## A RESOLUTION

- 1 Recognizing October 7-11, 2024, as Georgia Pre-K Week; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, Georgia's Pre-K Program was started by Governor Zell Miller in 1992 as a pilot  
3 program serving 750 students and now provides quality early education experiences to more  
4 than half of the state's four-year-old children; and
- 5 WHEREAS, Georgia's Pre-K Program has been formally administered statewide by Bright  
6 from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning since 2004; and
- 7 WHEREAS, Georgia's Pre-K has helped prepare more than two million of Georgia's children  
8 for success in kindergarten and beyond since it began; and
- 9 WHEREAS, findings from the longitudinal study on Georgia's Pre-K being conducted by the  
10 Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute show that children in Georgia's Pre-K  
11 demonstrate significant gains across all learning domains and that these gains are sustained  
12 through the end of first grade; and

13 WHEREAS, multiple studies of Pre-K programs, including Georgia's Pre-K, show that  
14 participation in Pre-K can greatly improve school readiness skills, particularly in high-risk  
15 populations; and

16 WHEREAS, Georgia's Pre-K Program recognizes two outstanding educators—one from a  
17 public school system and one from a private child care center—as Georgia's Pre-K Program  
18 Teachers of the Year for 2023-2024. This award celebrates excellence and strengthens the  
19 Georgia Pre-K teaching force by honoring and recognizing exceptional Pre-K teachers. The  
20 Pre-K Teachers of the Year are Charlotte Richards from Chattahoochee County Pre-K in  
21 Chattahoochee County and Merodie Brown from New Odyssey for Children Mill Creek in  
22 Gwinnett County; and

23 WHEREAS, Georgia's Pre-K Program is ranked eighth best in the nation for access to Pre-K  
24 for four-year-olds; and

25 WHEREAS, there is a growing commitment to improve the quality of child care in Georgia  
26 with more than half of Georgia's Pre-K programs participating in Quality Rated, the  
27 voluntary quality improvement system for child care programs; and

28 WHEREAS, the House Working Group on Early Childhood Education was appointed during  
29 the 2023 legislative session to determine ways in which the system of Pre-K education in our  
30 state could be improved; and

31 WHEREAS, the working group's recommendations include specific areas in need of change  
32 to make the Pre-K program more accessible and effective which include restoring class size  
33 to 20 students, increasing salary for assistant teachers, providing pay parity between Pre-K  
34 and K-12 teachers, increasing operating funds for Pre-K programs, counting Pre-K

35 enrollment in entitlement earnings for public school systems, and equivalent lease payments  
36 for private Pre-K providers; and

37 WHEREAS, Georgia Pre-K programs serve over 73,000 children a year in approximately  
38 3,700 classrooms operating in all 159 counties in Georgia; and

39 WHEREAS, Voices for Georgia's Children and the Georgia Department of Early Care and  
40 Learning will host Georgia Pre-K Week the 14th consecutive year during the first full week  
41 of October.

42 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
43 the members of this body recognize October 7-11, 2024, as "Georgia Pre-K Week"; thank  
44 the hundreds of programs, teachers, aides, and staff who have built a nationally recognized  
45 Pre-K Program and other high-quality early education programs; and encourage parents,  
46 educators, community members, and business leaders to participate in Georgia Pre-K Week  
47 and to support high quality, accessible, and affordable early education for all children in the  
48 great State of Georgia.

49 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
50 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to  
51 Voices for Georgia's Children.