

House Resolution 261

By: Representatives Jones of the 47th, Kelley of the 16th, England of the 116th, Carson of the 46th, Bennett of the 94th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and congratulating Dr. Mark P. Becker upon his retirement as president of
2 Georgia State University; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Dr. Mark P. Becker has served with distinction as president of Georgia State
4 University for 12 years, leading the university through a historic period of growth and
5 achievement; and

6 WHEREAS, under his leadership, Georgia State University became recognized as the
7 national leader in introducing innovative initiatives to foster student success and increase
8 graduation rates; and

9 WHEREAS, he has led an institution that has eliminated achievement gaps among students
10 of all races, ethnicities, and incomes, increasing the graduation rate for students seeking to
11 earn a bachelor's degree by 25 points; and

12 WHEREAS, he has made Georgia State University a destination of choice among students,
13 increasing enrollment by more than 20,000 and doubling applications for admission in ten
14 years; and

15 WHEREAS, he has led one of the nation's most diverse institutions, a university that is first
16 in the nation among nonprofit institutions in graduating African American students; and

17 WHEREAS, he has led the largest university in Georgia and one of the largest in the nation;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, he is annually listed by regional news media among Atlanta's most powerful,
20 influential, and admired chief executives; and

21 WHEREAS, Dr. Becker was named one of America's ten most innovative university
22 presidents by *Washington Monthly* in 2015, the winner of the Academic Leadership Award
23 by the Carnegie Corporation of New York in 2017, and the winner of the TIAA Institute
24 Theodore M. Hesburgh Award for Leadership Excellence in 2019; and

25 WHEREAS, he led the successful consolidation of Georgia State University with Georgia
26 Perimeter College in 2016 and has introduced student success programs that have tripled the
27 two-year college's graduation rates in the first five years of the consolidation; and

28 WHEREAS, Dr. Becker has vastly expanded Georgia State University's research enterprise,
29 making it one of the fastest growing research institutions in the United States by expanding
30 sponsored research at more than twice the national average; Georgia State University has
31 doubled its annual research funding during his tenure; and

32 WHEREAS, through his Second Century and Next Generation initiatives, he has focused the
33 university's research efforts in areas that are crucial to the future of the region, nation, and
34 world; and

35 WHEREAS, he introduced and led the most successful fundraising campaign in Georgia
36 State University's history; and

37 WHEREAS, Dr. Becker's personal contribution initiated the university's Panther Retention
38 Grants, a nationally recognized program that provides much needed financial support for
39 students to enable them to complete their education; and

40 WHEREAS, he has led Georgia State University to new heights of national recognition; the
41 university has been recognized as the No. 1 institution in America for its commitment to
42 undergraduate teaching and the No. 2 most innovative university in the country by *U.S. News*
43 *& World Report* magazine; and

44 WHEREAS, Dr. Becker has been a widely recognized catalyst for the revitalization of
45 downtown Atlanta, expanding the university's campus and acquiring the former Atlanta
46 Braves baseball stadium as a centerpiece of rapidly advancing revitalization efforts in the
47 city's Summerhill area; and

48 WHEREAS, he has led a major expansion of Georgia State's facilities, including residence
49 halls to grow the university's on-campus population, the acquisition of Turner Field, the
50 establishment of a major research science center and the Creative Media Industries Institute,
51 construction of advanced labs on the Alpharetta Campus, and the creation of a greenway on
52 the Atlanta Campus; and

53 WHEREAS, he has built a highly successful NCAA Division 1 athletics program that
54 includes an 11-year-old football team that has played in four bowl games in the past six years
55 as well as a men's basketball team that has played in three of the last five NCAA national
56 tournaments.

57 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
58 the members of this body recognize Dr. Mark P. Becker for his efficient, effective, unselfish,
59 and dedicated public service to the State of Georgia; congratulate him upon the grand
60 occasion of his retirement; and extend the most sincere best wishes for continued health and
61 happiness.

62 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
63 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to Dr.
64 Mark P. Becker.