

House Resolution 615

By: Representatives Dempsey of the 13th, Dickey of the 145th, Bentley of the 150th, Mathiak of the 74th, Ehrhart of the 36th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing March 23, 2023, as Reach Out and Read Day at the state capitol to recognize
2 the power of reading to young children every day; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Reach Out and Read's early literacy intervention began in 1989 at Boston
4 Medical Center and has expanded to 50 states, serving 5.7 million families today. Georgia's
5 affiliate office launched in 2012 and now serves 189,700 children and families in 72 counties
6 at 193 hospitals, pediatric practices, clinics, and home visiting program sites with 122
7 medical sites that have applications in progress to become Reach Out and Read sites; and

8 WHEREAS, over 1,000 medical providers and staff have been trained in the Reach Out and
9 Read Georgia program, offering each child an opportunity to be read to and to learn to read;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Reach Out and Read has trained 36,000 pediatricians and medical providers
12 who prescribe reading as a daily activity during wellness checkups; and

13 WHEREAS, over the past 12 months, 379,400 well child checkups (approximately 189,700
14 children) were conducted across Georgia with pediatricians and providers implementing the
15 Reach Out and Read program; and

16 WHEREAS, in that same time, 215,793 new children's books were distributed through the
17 program's pediatric network to children aged five years old and younger; and

18 WHEREAS, over two million new children's books have been given to young children in
19 Georgia by pediatric providers beginning at the very first newborn visit through a child's fifth
20 birthday, and children in the program demonstrate a six-month developmental edge
21 compared to children not enrolled in the program when arriving at kindergarten; and

22 WHEREAS, Reach Out and Read is the only early literacy intervention endorsed by the
23 American Academy of Pediatrics and has the most extensive body of research supporting the
24 efficacy of the program model with 22 studies supporting its work; and

25 WHEREAS, pediatricians prescribe reading as a daily activity and parents take these
26 prescriptions to heart, increasing social and emotional bonds with their children while
27 increasing their exposure to positive interactions and creating special, meaningful moments;
28 and

29 WHEREAS, positive emotional bonding between a parent and child has been demonstrated
30 to help mitigate the damaging effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES); and

31 WHEREAS, pediatric offices implementing Reach Out and Read have cited an increase in
32 wellness visit compliance during the earliest years of life, a time when most immunizations
33 occur; and

34 WHEREAS, Reach Out and Read has the ability to serve as the intersection of education and
35 healthcare, offering unprecedented access to the pediatric community, children, and families;
36 and

37 WHEREAS, Reach Out and Read Georgia will provide quality, diverse, and developmentally
38 and linguistically appropriate books in 30 languages to medical sites across Georgia; and

39 WHEREAS, 1,500 medical providers and staff implement the Reach Out and Read Georgia
40 program every day across the state, offering each child an opportunity to be read to and to
41 learn to read; and

42 WHEREAS, medical providers prescribe reading at every wellness visit beginning at birth
43 through age five.

44 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
45 the members of this body commend the efforts of Reach Out and Read to give young
46 children a foundation for success by incorporating books into the existing pediatric care
47 infrastructure, encourage families in Georgia to read aloud together each and every day, and
48 recognize March 23, 2023, as Reach Out and Read Day at the state capitol.

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 Reach
51 Out and Read Georgia.