

**Columbus Consolidated Government  
Council Meeting Agenda Item**

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Councilors
<b>AGENDA SUBJECT:</b>	<b>2022 Legislative Agenda</b>
<b>AGENDA SUMMARY:</b>	Approval is requested of the resolution for the 2022 Legislative Session of the Georgia General Assembly, which the Mayor and Council deem appropriate.
<b>INITIATED BY:</b>	Isaiah, Hugley, City Manager

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**Recommendation:** Approval is requested of the resolution for the 2022 Legislative Session of the Georgia General Assembly, which the Mayor and Council deem appropriate.

**Background:** Each year elected and appointed officials of the Columbus Consolidated Government develop a list of issues important to the citizens of Columbus that requires action by the Local Legislative Delegation. Once approved, a meeting will be held with the Delegation to explain the rationale behind these issues and to solicit their support. The Hometown Connection and Legislative Agenda meeting will be held on October 15, 2021.

**Analysis:** Staff, elected and appointed officials were asked to present issues they felt were important to the operation of city government. Research and justification for these issues were presented to the City Manager and a list was prepared for presentation to the Mayor/Council.

**Financial Considerations:** The City is expected to receive additional revenues if many of the issues are passed by the Georgia General Assembly.

**Recommendations/Actions:** Approve those resolution, which the Mayor and Council deem appropriate.

**1. COUNTY SPECIAL LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX MAINTENANCE RESERVE:**

The Columbus Council is requesting that the legislative delegation consider amendments to the County Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax imposed by Part 1 of Article 3 of Chapter 8 of Title 48 of the official Code of Georgia Annotation to allow consolidated governments to expend up to 5% of the tax levied to be spent for future maintenance of the capital outlay projects approved by the referendum levying the tax. *(Request of Councilors John House and Judy Thomas/Carry Over From Previous Years)*

**Explanation:**

Previous capital outlay projects in the Columbus Consolidated Government have demonstrated that when tax funds are expended on significant capital infrastructure, a maintenance reserve would greatly assist in improving the useful life and efficiency of such facilities and allow the better and more timely upkeep of projects built with taxpayer funds.

**2. RECIPROCAL SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY:**

The Columbus Consolidated Government is requesting that the local legislative delegation encourage all possible legislative actions which would encourage negotiations with Alabama and other neighboring states to provide that the laws of each State would be amended to provide for reciprocal sovereign immunity so that local governmental officials carrying out duties and operating vehicles in neighboring States would have the same or similar sovereign immunity protections that they have under Georgia Law. *(Request of Councilor John House and Fire Chief Scarpa/Carry Over From Previous Years)*

**Explanation:**

Currently, CCG officials, including law enforcement who take vehicles into adjoining states are not protected by Georgia sovereign statutes. Given the proximity to Alabama, and the particular provisions of Alabama law on the subject this creates a significant risk that influences decisions with respect to both emergency and routine business duties which may be most efficiently carried out by driving across state lines. Hopefully, the General Assembly, with the guidance of the State Attorney General, will consider a Resolution to study this issue and enter into discussions with Alabama and other adjoining states where it would be beneficial to Georgia local governments.

**3. REQUESTING THAT THE LOCAL LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION INTRODUCE A LOCAL ACT THAT WILL UPDATE AND REDEFINE HEALTHCARE PURPOSES FOR THE HEALTH CARE LEVY OF UP TO THREE MILLS OF AD VALOREM TAX:**

The Consolidated Government is requesting that the local delegation support a local act which will amend Ga. L. 1949, p. 801 and Section 7-102 of its Charter in order to update the healthcare purposes for which three mills of property tax may be levied. *(Request of Councilor Judy Thomas)*

**Explanation:**

Ga. L. 1949, p.801 authorized an ad valorem tax levy of up to 3 mills in order for health care to be provided to citizens through a City Hospital and also support a nursing school and dorms. In 1971 this tax levy provision was incorporated in the Charter and now is found in Section 7-102 of the current Charter. Since 1991, the three-mill levy has been dedicated to a thirty year agreement with the Medical Center Hospital Authority which was created in 1963 and took over the operation of the City Hospital which later became known as the Medical Center. That contract will end on June 30, 2021, and this Council is requesting that the Georgia General Assembly revise the historic references to the City Hospital and nursing school in Ga.L.1949, p.801 to allow for the use of up to three mills of healthcare funding to provide public healthcare in Columbus, Georgia through any number of the healthcare facilities and service providers that may best serve the needs of its underserved citizens.

**4. RESCHEDULING OF PRIMARY AND NONPARTISAN ELECTIONS:**

The Muscogee County, Georgia Board of Elections has asked the Council to express its support of Resolution No. 2021-01 of the Georgia Association of Voter Registrars and Election Officials (GAVREO) which asks the General Assembly to extend the 2022 primary and nonpartisan election date from May 24, 2022 to June 28, 2022. (*Request of Muscogee County Board of Elections*)

**Explanation:**

The 2022 election cycle is a reapportionment year, and receipt of the census results which are necessary before reapportionment can be achieved were delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. County election officials throughout the State are asking their governing authorities to join in requesting that the General Assembly change the election date from May 24, 2022, to June 28, 2022.

**5. FUNDING FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, ADDICTIVE DISEASES AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES:**

The Columbus Consolidated Government is requesting that the legislative delegation advocate for support of a robust system of care for behavioral health, addictive diseases and developmental disabilities, and additional funding for crisis intervention teams throughout the state. (*Request of Councilor Toyia Tucker*)

**Explanation:**

The Columbus Consolidated Government recognizes the need for a robust system of care that supports recovery and independence for people living with mental illness, addictive disorders and developmental disabilities. Locally provided state services to individuals living with disabilities are critical to providing an appropriate safety net and an alternative to incarceration. There should be an adequate number of crisis intervention teams around the state to help public safety officials manage critical situations as needed. These services also help people meaningfully contribute to and participate in the life of our communities.

**6. MAKE THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup> PUBLIC SAFETY WEEK:**

The Columbus Consolidated Government is requesting that the legislative delegation introduce or support legislation that would make the week of September 11<sup>th</sup> Public Safety Week in Georgia each year. (*Request of Councilor Charmaine Crabb*)

**Explanation:**

In light of the exemplary service and sacrificed lives of so many Public Safety responders during the September 11, 2001 attacks, it is appropriate to designate that week each year as a time to honor the service of public safety organizations and employees throughout Georgia.

**7. CALL FOR STATE-WIDE NON-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION:**

The Columbus Council requests that the General Assembly consider and adopt a state-wide non-discrimination ordinance. (*Request of Councilor Charmaine Crabb*)

**Explanation:**

In studying the possible implementation of a non-discrimination ordinance in Columbus, it was noted that there are only federal protections against certain types of discrimination, and many Georgia local governments have passed local non-discrimination ordinances which all vary in their content and enforcement mechanisms. The purpose of this request is to urge the General Assembly to adopt state-wide protections against discrimination that will be meaningful and uniform throughout the State and consistent with federal law.

**8. SUPPORT FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS ASSISTING FOR SENIORS:**

The Columbus Consolidated Government supports medical assistance for senior through three legislative actions:

- 1) Make funding for Home and Community Based Services a budget priority;
- 2) Support legislative priorities which make Medicaid funding more available in assisted living communities; and
- 3) Study the Certificate of Need and licensing procedures for skilled nursing facilities to provide more nursing home options in the State. (*Request of Councilor Jerry "Pops" Barnes*)

**Explanation:**

- 1) Home and Community Based Services provide support for older Georgians to remain at home as long as possible by providing home modifications, personal assistance, meals, transportation, and other services. These services cost far less than staying at a nursing home and can help seniors stay independent longer.

2) This legislation would allow older adults with limited means to have access to care provided in Assisted Living facilities. Legislation would amend Ga's Assisted Living community statute by removing the requirement that an assisted living community must have a minimum of 25 beds and deleting the prohibition of Assisted Living Communities enrolling as a Medicaid provider and receiving Medicaid funds. These changes will expand choices for older Georgians allowing seniors to live in Assisted Living Communities and to take advantage of home and community-based services under Georgia's Elderly and Disabled Medicaid Waiver.

3) Georgia's Department of Community Health's regulations for licensing new Skilled Nursing Facilities are subject to the Certificate of Need requirements that cover all health facilities. This item supports the creation of a legislative study committee to consider possible changes to Certificate of Need requirements to encourage innovative models of person-centered care.

**9. SUPPORTING GEORGIA'S ABUSED AND NEFLECTED CHILDREN:**

The Columbus Consolidated government is requesting that the local legislative delegation introduce legislation to increase to increase per diem funding for residential care and treatment of Georgia's abused and neglected children. (*Request of Councilor Judy Thomas*)

**Explanation:**

Because of COVID 19 pandemic and increasing inflation, Georgia's residential treatment facilities have lost personnel and reduced needed services for abused and neglected children. The per diem for residential care and treatment of such children funded by the General Assembly needs to be addressed and increased immediately so that adequate care and treatment can be provided to these Georgia children.

**A RESOLUTION**

No. \_\_\_\_\_

**A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE LOCAL LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO AMEND THE COUNTY SPECIAL PURPOSE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX (SPLOST) TO ALLOW THAT CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENTS MAY ALLOCATE UP TO 5% OF THE TAX LEVIED TO THE MAINTENANCE OF THE CAPITAL OUTLAY PROJECTS APPROVED BY THE REFERENDUM**

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council have identified the significant burden placed on the Columbus to provide for ongoing maintenance of CCG facilities which may be financed as SPLOST projects; and,

**WHEREAS**, the General Assembly could amend Section 48-8-111.1 to provide that a consolidated government may use up to five percent of the tax levy as a maintenance reserve fund for newly approved SPLOST projects thus enabling the timely upkeep of those facilities and prolonging their useful lives and efficiency.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY RESOLVES:**

We hereby respectfully request that the Local Legislative Delegation to the Georgia General Assembly introduce legislation at the 2022 Session to amend O.C.G.A 48-8-111.1 so that a maintenance reserve fund not to exceed five percent of the authorized tax levied would become a permitted use of funds levied pursuant to the SPLOST authorized by Part 1 of Article 3 of Chapter 8 of Title 48 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated when a consolidated government is imposing the tax.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the council of Columbus, Georgia, held the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2021 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of \_\_\_\_\_ members of said Council.

- Councilor Allen voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor Barnes voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor Crabb voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor Davis voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor Garrett voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor House voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor Huff voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor Thomas voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor Tucker voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor Woodson voting \_\_\_\_\_.

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Sandra T. Davis, Deputy Clerk of Council

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B.H. "Skip" Henderson, Mayor

**A RESOLUTION  
NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE LOCAL LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION SUPPORT LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS THAT WILL ENCOURAGE NEGOTIATIONS WITH ALABAMA TO PROVIDE FOR RECIPROCAL SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY.**

**WHEREAS**, officials of the Columbus Consolidated Government including local law enforcement officers who carry out official duties and take vehicles across the State line into Alabama are not protected with the immunity that they have when carrying out their duties and operating official vehicles within the State of Georgia; and,

**WHEREAS**, the proximity of Columbus to the State of Alabama has created situations where Columbus officials have had to carry out parts of their official duties or render mutual aid outside of the State; and,

**WHEREAS**, the General Assembly, with the assistance of the State Attorney General, will need to negotiate with Alabama to reach satisfactory terms of reciprocal sovereign immunity which can then be adopted by each State’s legislature.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY RESOLVES:**

We hereby request that the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly support legislative efforts that will facilitate the negotiation and legislative adoption of provisions governing reciprocal sovereign immunity between the State of Georgia and the State of Alabama.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia, held on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmation vote of \_\_\_\_ members of Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
Councilor Baker voting	_____.
Councilor Barnes voting	_____.
Councilor Davis voting	_____.
Councilor Garrett voting	_____.
Councilor House voting	_____.
Councilor Huff voting	_____.
Councilor Thomas voting	_____.
Councilor Tucker voting	_____.
Councilor Woodson voting	_____.

**A RESOLUTION**  
**NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE LOCAL LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION INTRODUCE A LOCAL ACT THAT WILL UPDATE AND REDEFINE HEALTHCARE PURPOSES FOR THE HEALTH CARE LEVY OF UP TO THREE MILLS OF AD VALOREM TAX.**

**WHEREAS**, Ga. L. 1949, p. 801 authorized an additional ad valorem tax levy of up to 3 mills in order for health care to be provided to citizens through a City Hospital and also support a nursing school and dorms; and,

**WHEREAS**, in 1971 this tax levy provision was incorporated in the Charter and now is found in Section 7-102 of the current Charter; and,

**WHEREAS**, the three-mill levy has been dedicated to a thirty-year agreement with the Medical Center Hospital Authority which was created in 1963 and took over the operation of the City Hospital which later became known as the Medical Center, and that contract will end on June 30, 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, this Council desires modernized the language allow for the use of up to three mills of healthcare funding to provide public healthcare in Columbus, Georgia through any number of the healthcare facilities and service providers as may best serve the needs of its underserved citizens.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY RESOLVES:**

We hereby request that the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly introduce local legislation that will amend Ga. L. 1949, p. 801 and the Columbus Charter section 7-102 to provide that the current levy of up to three additional mills of property tax for the City Hospital will be revised to state that the additional ad valorem tax which may be levied in an amount of up to three (3) mills may be levied for public health care purposes as may be determined by Council.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.



Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia, held on the 12th day of October, 2021 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmation vote of \_\_\_\_ members of Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
Councilor Baker voting	_____.
Councilor Barnes voting	_____.
Councilor Davis voting	_____.
Councilor Garrett voting	_____.
Councilor House voting	_____.
Councilor Huff voting	_____.
Councilor Thomas voting	_____.
Councilor Tucker voting	_____.
Councilor Woodson voting	_____.

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Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

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B.H. "Skip" Henderson, Mayor

**A RESOLUTION  
NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE REQUEST OF THE GEORGIA  
ASSOCIATION OF VOTER REGISTRARS AND ELECTION OFFICIALS TO  
RESCHEDULE THE 2022 PRIMARY AND NONPARTIASAN ELECTIONS.**

**WHEREAS**, the Muscogee County, Georgia Board of Elections has asked the Council to express its support of its Resolution No. 2021-01 adopted by the Georgia Association of Voter Registrars and Election Officials (GAVREO) which asks the General Assembly to extend the 2022 primary and nonpartisan election date from May 24, 2022 to June 28, 2022; and,

**WHEREAS**, the 2022 election cycle is a reapportionment year, and receipt of the census results which are necessary before reapportionment can be implemented was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic; and,

**WHEREAS**, this Council is sympathetic to the burden that will be placed on its local election officials if the primary and nonpartisan election date remains set for May 24, 2022.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY  
RESOLVES:**

We hereby express our support for the attached Resolution No. 2021-01 adopted by GAVERO, and request that the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly support the establishment of June 28, 2022, as the 2022 primary and non-party election date .

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia, held on the 12th day of October, 2021 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmation vote of \_\_\_\_\_ members of Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
Councilor Baker voting	_____.
Councilor Barnes voting	_____.
Councilor Davis voting	_____.
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Councilor Huff voting	_____.
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Councilor Tucker voting	_____.
Councilor Woodson voting	_____.

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Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

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B.H. "Skip" Henderson, Mayor

**A RESOLUTION  
NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE SUPPORT OF FUNDING FOR  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, ADDICTIVE DISEASES AND DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES.**

**WHEREAS**, this Council recognizes the need for a robust system of care that supports recovery and independence for people living with mental illness, addictive disorders and developmental disabilities; and

**WHEREAS**, locally provided state services to individuals living with disabilities are critical to providing an appropriate safety net and an alternative to incarceration; and

**WHEREAS**, there should be an adequate number of crisis intervention teams around the state to help public safety officials manage critical situations as needed; and

**WHEREAS**, these services also help people meaningfully contribute to and participate in the life of our communities.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY  
RESOLVES:**

This Council requests that members of the local delegation to the General Assembly join in advocating for support for a robust system of care for behavioral health, addictive diseases and developmental disabilities, and additional funding for crisis intervention teams throughout the state.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia, held on the 12th day of October, 2021 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmation vote of \_\_\_\_\_ members of Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
Councilor Baker voting	_____.
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Councilor Garrett voting	_____.
Councilor House voting	_____.
Councilor Huff voting	_____.
Councilor Thomas voting	_____.
Councilor Tucker voting	_____.
Councilor Woodson voting	_____.

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Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

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B.H. "Skip" Henderson, Mayor

**A RESOLUTION  
NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE DESIGNATION OF THE WEEK OF  
SEPTEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup> AS PUBLIC SAFETY WEEK.**

**WHEREAS**, in light of the exemplary service and sacrificed lives of so many Public Safety responders during the September 11, 2001 attacks, it is appropriate to designate that week each year as a time to honor the service of public safety organizations and employees throughout Georgia.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY  
RESOLVES:**

This Council requests that the legislative delegation introduce or support legislation that would make the week of September 11<sup>th</sup> Public Safety Week in Georgia each year.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia, held on the 12th day of October, 2021 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmation vote of \_\_\_\_ members of Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
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Councilor House voting	_____.
Councilor Huff voting	_____.
Councilor Thomas voting	_____.
Councilor Tucker voting	_____.
Councilor Woodson voting	_____.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
B.H. "Skip" Henderson, Mayor

**A RESOLUTION  
NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE ADOPTION OF A STATEWIDE NON-DISCRIMINATION ORDINANCE.**

**WHEREAS**, it is the purpose and intent of the Columbus Council to protect and safeguard the right and opportunity of all persons to be free from all forms of discrimination, and to ensure that all persons within Columbus have equal access to employment, housing, and public accommodations; and

**WHEREAS**, in studying the possible implementation of a non-discrimination ordinance in Columbus, it was noted that there are no statewide protections against certain types of discrimination, and many Georgia local governments have passed local non-discrimination ordinances which all vary in their content and enforcement mechanisms; and

**WHEREAS**, this Council would urge the adoption of a statewide non-discrimination law that would provide protections against discrimination that will be meaningful and uniform throughout the State and consistent with federal law.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY RESOLVES:**

That the local delegation to the General Assembly introduce or support the adoption of a state-wide non-discrimination ordinance.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia, held on the 12th day of October, 2021 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmation vote of \_\_\_\_ members of Council.

- Councilor Allen voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor Baker voting \_\_\_\_\_.
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- Councilor Huff voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor Thomas voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor Tucker voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor Woodson voting \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
B.H. "Skip" Henderson, Mayor

**A RESOLUTION  
NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS ASSISTING SENIORS.**

**WHEREAS**, Home and Community Based Services provide support for older Georgians to remain at home as long as possible by providing home modifications, personal assistance, meals, transportation, and other services for far less than staying at a nursing home and can help seniors stay independent longer; and

**WHEREAS**, legislative priorities which make Medicaid funding available in assisted living communities, particularly those with twenty-five beds or less will expand choices for older Georgians allowing seniors to live in Assisted Living Communities and to take advantage of home and community-based services under Georgia’s Elderly and Disabled Medicaid Waiver; and

**WHEREAS**, legislative study the Certificate of Need and licensing procedures for skilled nursing facilities could provide more nursing home options in the State.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY RESOLVES:**

That the local delegation to the General Assembly is requested to support the following initiatives which can support the quality of life for senior citizens of limited means:

1. Make the support of Home and Community Services a budget priority;
2. Support legislation that increases the availability of Medicaid funding for those seniors living in assisted living facilities; and
3. Support legislative study of the Certificate of Need Process for skilled nursing facilities to increase their availability for seniors.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia, held on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2021 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmation vote of \_\_\_\_\_ members of Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
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Councilor Tucker voting	_____.
Councilor Woodson voting	_____.

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Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
B.H. “Skip” Henderson, Mayor

**A RESOLUTION**  
**No. \_\_\_\_\_**

**WHEREAS**, the treatment and care of Georgia’s abused and neglected children in a residential setting ranks as one of the top priorities for our local, state and federal elected representatives;

**WHEREAS**, the costs associated with such treatment and care of children in a residential setting has steadily increased during the COVID-19 pandemic and with the recent rise in inflation;

**WHEREAS**, residential care facilities across Georgia such as the Anne Elizabeth Shepherd Home, a campus of Twin Cedars in Columbus, have suffered losses of personnel due to the pandemic and such increased costs, resulting in the provision of less needed care and treatment of these children;

**WHEREAS**, this Council desires that the local legislative delegation to the Georgia General Assembly consider immediate increases in the per diem funding appropriated by the General Assembly for the residential care and treatment of these children.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY RESOLVES:**

We hereby respectfully request that the local legislative delegation to the Georgia General Assembly introduce legislation to provide immediate increases in the per diem funding appropriated by the State of Georgia for the residential care and treatment of our abused and neglected children.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

\_\_\_\_\_

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021, and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of \_\_\_\_\_ members of Council.

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- Councilor Tucker voting \_\_\_\_\_.
- Councilor Woodson voting \_\_\_\_\_.