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Georgia House Creates First US Legislative Policy Recognizing the Arts for Mental Health

Bipartisan House Resolution 1007, filed with support by arts and health agency Performance Hypothesis and a consortium of leaders across arts, healthcare, and public health, positions Georgia as a leader in arts and health policy.

ATLANTA — Six bipartisan Georgia House Representatives filed House Resolution 1007 (HR 1007) on January 12, 2025, making Georgia the first state in the nation to formally recognize the arts as a resource for mental health treatment. The resolution aims to raise awareness among healthcare providers and direct future funding toward arts-based mental health programs across the state.

Georgia is facing a mental health crisis that demands innovative solutions. With 33.9 percent of state residents experiencing symptoms of anxiety and depression, outpacing the national rate of 32.3 percent, lawmakers are turning to an evidence-based resource that's been overlooked, the arts.

The resolution will help normalize the arts as a tool to address this challenge. More awareness among key stakeholders such as healthcare providers, mental healthcare professionals, and policymakers is critical to expand use of the arts as a tool for managing health. Long-term, the resolution also aims to help direct funding to support arts access and arts and health initiatives statewide.

“House Resolution 1007 is crucial because it formally recognizes arts-for-health initiatives as credible, evidence-based tools,” said co-sponsor Rep. Kim Schofield of the 63rd District. Schofield continued, “This resolution elevates prevention, community healing, and trauma-informed care as part of our mental health response.” Other co-sponsors include state Reps. Todd Jones of the 25th, Mary Margaret Oliver of the 84th, Katie Dempsey of the 13th, Angie O’Steen of the 169th, and Lydia Glazie of the 67th. HR 1007 will be introduced to the House in the current session.

The resolution is part of growing initiatives in Georgia harnessing the impact of the arts for well-being. “The arts offer a resource that's culturally responsive, community-centered, and proven effective. As mental health challenges continue to impact Georgians, we need innovative, accessible solutions,” said Marcel Foster, chief executive officer of Performance Hypothesis. Performance Hypothesis led the collaborative development of



HR 1007 along with a cadre of dedicated community partners: Woodruff Arts Center, The Carter Center, Morehouse School of Medicine, Emory University, BLKHLTH, Thriving Together Atlanta, R2ISE Theatre, University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine, and the Jameel Arts & Health Lab.

About Performance Hypothesis

Performance Hypothesis is an Atlanta-based arts and health agency. Since 2021, Performance Hypothesis has championed arts and health policy efforts and activated community events, forming partnerships with community organizations, universities, and global arts health organizations across the state along the way.

Performance Hypothesis has supported and is a collaborator for a variety of Georgia initiatives harnessing the arts for well-being including Emory's Goizueta Brain Health Institute (2025); The Arts + Health Laboratory, a Georgia NeuroArts Coalition (2025); High Museum of Art's National Endowment for the Arts, Research Innovation Grant (2025); The City of Atlanta Public Art Challenge grant from the Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge (2023); and Out of Hand Theater, Equitable Vaccines Program (2022).

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