



February 10, 2026

The Honorable Blake Tillery
Committee Chairman
Appropriations Committee
Georgia State Senate
234 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA, 30334

The Honorable Larry Walker III
Senate Pro Tempore
Appropriations Committee
Georgia State Senate
321 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA, 30334

The Honorable Drew Echols
Subcommittee Chairman
Economic Development Subcommittee
Georgia State Senate
305-B CLOB
Atlanta, GA, 30334

The Honorable Donzella James
Committee Member
Appropriations Committee
Georgia State Senate
121-D State Capitol
Atlanta, GA, 30334

Dear Chairman Tillery, Chairman Echols, Senator Walker, and Senator James:

On behalf of Health Students Taking Action Together (H-STAT), we write to strongly support the Governor's Homelessness Response Grant program and to commend Governor Brian Kemp for establishing this important initiative. H-STAT represents the collective voices and interests of healthcare students and trainees across Georgia, with many of us hoping to practice across the state in our professional careers. We urge the Senate Appropriations Committee of the Georgia General Assembly to support the implementation of this grant.

According to the most recent reporting from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, there were an estimated [13,000 people](#) who were homeless in the state of Georgia in 2024. Unfortunately, Georgia is ranked near [the bottom](#) of states in the U.S. in providing homeless youth support, shelters and housing support, and food and health support for the unhoused population in the state. The State Housing Trust Fund has received inadequate annual state appropriations of about \$3 million for decades (with small increases over the past 3 years), despite dramatic increases in homelessness and housing needs. The [lack of support and infrastructure](#) in combatting homelessness translates to increased risk of respiratory infections, mental illness such as anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), higher exposure to threats to safety, and longer periods without housing for people experiencing homelessness. At a systems level, the lack of resources for homelessness prevention can result in a strain on [emergency services](#)

especially amongst police and emergency rooms, increased [public costs](#), overloaded homeless shelters with [long waiting lists](#), and [reduced community trust](#).

As healthcare students and trainees who practice street medicine and provide medical care to the unhoused community in Georgia, we have seen the direct result of lack of investment in homeless services impact our patients. With many of us serving vulnerable patients at Grady Hospital in Atlanta, we witness the dire need for significant investment in addressing the homelessness crisis in Georgia. Our nonprofit partners are at capacity in providing life-saving care to our most vulnerable patients. The Governor's Homelessness Response Grant program would meaningfully expand the capacity of these organizations to provide stable housing, preventive services, and coordinated care that address the root causes of homelessness. By investing upstream through this grant, Georgia can improve health outcomes, reduce avoidable emergency care utilization, and strengthen communities across the state.

Everyone needs a safe and affordable place to call home. Georgia has a massive shortage of housing, with the hardest impact on those with low incomes, seniors, people with disabilities, and veterans. Many cities and nonprofit organizations are ready to offer matching funds to assist Georgians move from homelessness to housing stability with these increased resources

In conclusion, the Governor's Homelessness Response Grant provides necessary, life-saving funding to organizations directly addressing a critical issue in the state. We urge the committee to support the implementation of this grant.

Thank you for your consideration on the issue. We look forward to working with you to promote the health of Georgians. If you have any questions, please contact Nicholas Wilson at nicholas@healthstatgeorgia.org.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Wilson
H-STAT President
Health Students Taking Action Together