

1 **A RESOLUTION BY THE FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**
2 **AUTHORIZING THE FULTON COUNTY ATTORNEY TO FILE A COMPLAINT WITH**
3 **THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ) REQUESTING THAT IT INVESTIGATE**
4 **WELLSTAR HEALTH SYSTEM FOR HEALTH CARE REDLINING; AND FOR OTHER**
5 **PURPOSES.**

6
7 **WHEREAS**, in May 2022, Wellstar Health System closed the emergency
8 department and hospital beds at its Atlanta Medical Center South hospital that primarily
9 served the citizens of south Fulton County; and

10 **WHEREAS**, Wellstar Health System abruptly closed its Atlanta Medical Center
11 hospital on November 1, 2022, and closed other nearby health care facilities, including
12 primary and specialty care offices and centers, in mid-November 2022; and

13 **WHEREAS**, the Atlanta Medical Center hospital housed 460 hospital beds and
14 was one of only two level one trauma centers in the Atlanta metro-area; and

15 **WHEREAS**, the closure of the Atlanta Medical Center hospital has resulted in a
16 single level one trauma center, Grady Memorial Hospital, remaining to serve the residents
17 of Fulton County; and

18 **WHEREAS**, the closure of Wellstar Health System facilities resulted in a loss of
19 health care providers available to serve the needs of some of the most vulnerable Fulton
20 County citizens; and

21 **WHEREAS**, the closure of the Atlanta Medical Center and Atlanta Medical Center
22 South hospitals and other health care facilities disproportionately and negatively impacts
23 minorities and economically disadvantaged individuals; and

24 **WHEREAS**, the closure of emergency department services by Wellstar Health
25 System, in particular, has caused a strain on other local hospitals and created disparities
26 in emergency services including increased wait times, overcrowding and reduced

27 resources for Fulton County citizens as the Atlanta Medical Center South was the only
28 full-service emergency department in Fulton County south of Interstate 20 ("I-20"); and

29 **WHEREAS**, the closure of the Atlanta Medical Center hospital exacerbated
30 challenges facing pregnant women seeking prenatal care and birth services, and resulted
31 in a significant surge of pregnant women seeking such services at Grady Memorial
32 Hospital; and

33 **WHEREAS**, Wellstar Health System has continued to operate in other areas of
34 Fulton County and is expanding operations in areas outside of Fulton County, specifically
35 in areas with smaller minority and economically disadvantaged populations, evidencing
36 an intent not to serve such populations; and

37 **WHEREAS**, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the
38 basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal
39 financial assistance; and

40 **WHEREAS**, redlining is a discriminatory practice of systematically denying
41 essential services—including mortgages, insurance, and health care—in minority areas;
42 and

43 **WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners does not condone redlining or unlawful
44 discrimination in any form.

45 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Fulton County Board of
46 Commissioners hereby authorizes the Fulton County Attorney to file a complaint with the
47 Department of Justice ("DOJ") requesting an investigation of Wellstar Health System for
48 possible health care redlining, in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, related

49 to its closure of hospitals and primary care networks in south Fulton County and
50 downtown Atlanta, and any other apparent violation of federal laws.

51 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this Resolution shall become effective upon its
52 adoption and that all resolutions and parts of resolutions in conflict with this Resolution
53 are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

54 **PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Board of Commissioners of Fulton County,
55 Georgia this 15th day of March, 2023.

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57 **FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF**
58 **COMMISSIONERS**

59 **Sponsored By:**

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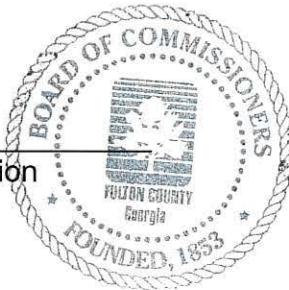
62 Robert L. Pitts, Chairman
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67 **ATTEST:**

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69 Tonya R. Grier, Clerk to the Commission
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72 **APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

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76 Y. Soo Jo, County Attorney
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