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For Immediate Release

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Georgia Free Clinic Network Seeks \$2 Million Grant

ATLANTA – The Georgia Free Clinic Network is seeking a \$2 million, one-time state grant during the 2008 legislative session to expand services it provides to the poor and uninsured.

The network, which includes more than 100 free or sliding-scale clinics throughout the state, is requesting the grant to spur additional clinics and add services throughout the network such as mental health treatment.

“The Georgia Free Clinic Network is an incredible bargain for the state of Georgia,” said Donna Looper, executive director of the GFCN. “It is much cheaper for the uninsured to use our clinics than to continue to show up at hospital emergency rooms.”

In 2006, the Georgia State Auditor found that the clinics have provided \$200 to \$400 million in charity care to about 1.7 million patients. Doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacists and others who work at the clinics are volunteers.

“Not only do our clinics save the taxpayers and hospitals money, they also are a place where patients can return for routine care,” Looper said.

The GFCN has asked Gov. Sonny Perdue and House budget writers to include the \$2 million in the 2008 supplemental budget or the fiscal 2009 budget.

Georgia’s charitable clinics saw 140,000 low-income patients in 2006, an increase of 25 percent from 2005. Due to lack of capacity, clinics had to turn away an estimated 30,000 Georgians, illustrating the need for the grant and expansion of the network of clinics, Looper said.