



For Immediate Release: January 19, 2012

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Cobb Alcohol Taskforce among Hundreds at GA Capitol for Addiction Recovery Day

January 19, 2012, Marietta, GA – Cobb Alcohol Taskforce volunteers were pleased to be among the hundreds of supporters who attended Addiction Recovery Day at the Georgia State Capitol last week. The message was one of hope - real people, sons and daughters, friends, neighbors and co-workers are in long-term recovery from addiction, and their lives and the lives of their families are better for it!

During this time of economic challenges, we encourage Georgia citizens and legislators to work together to find new and effective ways to address addiction by focusing on; 1) investing in prevention and early intervention, 2) increasing opportunities and resources for treatment (in particular to offset federal cuts specific to women’s treatment services), and 3) supporting policies that increase the likelihood of sustained, long-term recovery, such as those recommendations contained in the “Report of the Special Council on Criminal Justice Reform for Georgians, November 2011.”

The Georgia Council on Substance Abuse fundamental facts provides the rationale for this approach:

- Over 80 percent of people with a substance use dependence disorder started using before age 18
- 1 in 4 Americans has a family member who is struggling with addiction
- Addiction affects an estimated 23.5 million Americans, yet only 10 percent are receiving treatment
- 1 in 13 adults in Georgia is under correctional supervision - we lead the nation, and have the 4th largest prison population in the U.S., with most offenders reporting an alcohol or drug problem
- Prevention works - every \$1 spent on substance abuse prevention saves about \$18 per student during his/her lifetime
- Treatment is effective - participation in treatment reduces illicit drug use by half, improves physical and mental health, and reduces criminal activity by as much as 80 percent. For every \$1 spent on treatment, taxpayers save about \$7.46 in other costs.
- People recover - tens of thousands of Georgians are living in recovery, and work, pay taxes, maintain homes and positive relationships, and volunteer in our communities

At the event, many distinguished leaders including Representatives Sharon Cooper and Jay Neal delivered inspirational and supportive speeches. Governor Deal’s speech detailing his commitment to include resources for treatment in his budget, as one important component of criminal justice reform, received the biggest



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cheer of the day from the crowd. Event organizers and advocates left the event hopeful and want to encourage citizens to reach out to their legislators - share what works, remove existing barriers, and work to make addiction prevention, treatment and recovery possible for more Georgians.

Event organizers, *Addiction Recovery Awareness Day Collaborative*, included the Georgia Council on Substance Abuse, Georgia Addiction Counselors Association, Georgia Association of Recovery Residences, Georgia Association of Community Service Boards, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Certification Board of Georgia and Penfield Christian Homes.

About the Cobb Alcohol Taskforce - Cobb Alcohol Taskforce is an alliance of individuals and organizations which mobilizes and challenges Cobb County adults to reduce underage drinking and youth binge drinking, by advancing strategic enforcement, policy and education goals. To learn more, visit www.cobbat.org or call 770-861-5758.

Photo caption: Those in addiction recovery, their family and friends, supporters and advocates of recovery programs gather and raise their voices to encourage legislators to continue funding and supporting this important work – photos courtesy of Marie Sutton

