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GOVERNOR PERDUE PROCLAIMS 4th ANNUAL BREAST CANCER PREVENTION & AWARENESS DAY

ATLANTA, GA – Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue joined breast cancer survivors and state public health officials today, Thursday, October 12, at the state Capitol to proclaim Wednesday, October 18 the fourth annual Breast Cancer Prevention & Awareness Day to increase awareness about the importance of early detection in the fight against breast cancer.

“Having an annual mammogram can save your life. Georgia is committed to educating every citizen about the importance of breast cancer screening, early detection, and healthy living,” said Governor Sonny Perdue.

In 1994, the Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR) initiated a program that provides free or reduced-cost clinical breast exams and mammograms to low income and uninsured Georgia women ages 40 and older. The BreasTEST & MORE program provides screening services to about 15,000 Georgia women each year, and nearly 150 women learn that they need treatment for cancer.

“The BreasTEST & MORE program has made mammograms and related screening more available to uninsured, low-income Georgia women who might otherwise forego annual exams,” said DHR Commissioner B.J. Walker. “This service provided through our county health departments is continuing to raise awareness about the importance of breast cancer screening and healthy lifestyle choices.”

Nearly 5,900 Georgia women will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, and more than 1,100 women in the state are expected to die from the disease this year. Mammograms have been shown to lower the number of deaths caused by breast cancer by more than 30 percent, according to the American Cancer Society.

“DHR estimates that approximately 26 percent of Georgia women who are 40 and older have not received breast cancer screenings in the past two years. It is important to detect breast cancer as early as possible,” said Stuart Brown director of DHR’s Division of Public Health. “It is the best action that a

woman over the age of 40 can take to detect breast cancer in its early stages when the disease is most treatable. Breast Cancer Prevention and Awareness Day allows us to emphasize the lifesaving benefits of routine mammograms.”

DHR and the American Cancer Society recommend that women over 40 get a mammogram every year. Women who have had breast cancer or breast problems, or those with a family history of breast cancer, may need to begin having mammograms at a younger age. Consult with your health care provider to determine a screening plan that is right for you.

In addition to seeking routine mammograms and undergoing clinical breast examinations, all women should talk to their physician or local health care provider immediately if they find a lump or notice changes in their breasts.

To learn more about breast cancer and the BreasTEST & More Program, call 1-800-4CANCER or visit www.livehealthygeorgia.org. You may also call your county health department and ask for the BreasTEST & More coordinator to find out if you are eligible for the program.