

House Resolution 1610

By: Representatives Parsons of the 44th, Fludd of the 64th, and Willard of the 51st

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Creating the House Study Committee on Crime Victims' Rights; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, the Federal Bureau of Investigation records over 35,000 cases of murder, rape,
3 robbery, and assault in Georgia each year; and
- 4 WHEREAS, Georgia is one of only 18 states that does not guarantee rights to victims of
5 violent crime in their state constitutions; and
- 6 WHEREAS, in 2004, the United States Congress adopted the Crime Victims' Rights Act, 18
7 U.S.C. Section 3771, providing crime victims standing to assert their rights directly; and
- 8 WHEREAS, currently in Georgia, the accused and convicted perpetrators of violent crime
9 are afforded numerous state constitutional rights in the criminal justice system; and
- 10 WHEREAS, state constitutions address a wide array of issues deemed by the states to be of
11 sufficient importance to be included in the constitution rather than in ordinary statutes; and
- 12 WHEREAS, Georgia's Crime Victims' Bill of Rights, Code Section 17-17-1, et seq., does not
13 provide a crime victim standing to enforce their rights; and
- 14 WHEREAS, Georgia should affirm that crime victims' rights, while different from those of
15 the accused or convicted perpetrator, are not less important; and
- 16 WHEREAS, efforts need to be undertaken to protect crime victims and ensure that their
17 welfare, healing, and needs are considered at each phase in the criminal justice process; and
- 18 WHEREAS, these efforts should establish enforceable constitutional rights for victims of
19 crime in a way that would be consistent with and not undermine rights that currently exist
20 in statute.

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

22 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Study Committee
23 on Crime Victims' Rights.

24 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of three members of the
25 House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of
26 Representatives. The Speaker shall designate a member of the committee as chairperson
27 of the committee.

28 (3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall undertake a study of the conditions, needs,
29 issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any action or
30 legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate.

31 (4) **Meetings.** The chairperson shall call all meetings of the committee. The committee
32 may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or
33 convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and
34 accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution.

35 (5) **Allowances and funding.**

36 (A) The legislative members of the committee shall receive the allowances provided
37 for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

38 (B) The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any member
39 of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized. Funds
40 necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
41 appropriated to the House of Representatives.

42 (6) **Report.**

43 (A) In the event the committee adopts any specific findings or recommendations that
44 include suggestions for proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file a report of the
45 same prior to the date of abolishment specified in this resolution, subject to
46 subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.

47 (B) In the event the committee adopts a report that does not include suggestions for
48 proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file the report, subject to subparagraph (C)
49 of this paragraph.

50 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
51 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
52 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
53 the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

54 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Clerk of the
55 House of Representatives a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu
56 thereof.

57 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2016.