

## House Resolution 399

By: Representatives Brockway of the 102<sup>nd</sup>, Pezold of the 133<sup>rd</sup>, Stover of the 71<sup>st</sup>, Glanton of the 75<sup>th</sup>, Prince of the 127<sup>th</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

- 1 Creating the House Study Committee on Alternatives to Runoffs; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, Georgia presently has an election system which requires that all candidates  
3 nominated in a primary and all candidates elected in an election receive a majority of the  
4 votes cast for their respective offices; and
- 5 WHEREAS, Georgia is one of 11 states that provides for runoffs from general primaries and  
6 may be the only state that requires runoffs from general elections; and
- 7 WHEREAS, as a result of a federal court ruling in 2013, Georgia had to change its election  
8 schedule to allow sufficient time to have absentee ballots ready at least 45 days before a  
9 runoff; and
- 10 WHEREAS, this change has led to a very long period from the time of qualifying until the  
11 election and, for federal candidates, a runoff which does not occur until January of the  
12 following year; and
- 13 WHEREAS, there have been many ideas proposed regarding alternatives to runoffs, such as  
14 plurality elections, "jungle" primaries, and instant run-off or preferential voting methods, and  
15 alternatives to long run-off periods, such as allowing military and overseas citizens to vote  
16 online or through other electronic means; and
- 17 WHEREAS, in light of the experiences from the 2014 election and the dissatisfaction  
18 expressed by many citizens regarding the process, alternatives to the current election  
19 schedule need to be studied to determine if modifications should be made to how Georgia  
20 conducts its elections.

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 Alternatives to Runoffs.

24 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of five 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, 2015.