

The House Committee on Agriculture and Consumer Affairs offers the following substitute to HR 473:

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on Safety and Consumer Protection in the Tree Care
2 Industry; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Georgia has a rich and robust tree care industry; and

4 WHEREAS, currently, tree care providers in Georgia have no specific licensing or
5 registration requirements and there are no standards or regulations in this state concerning
6 the training of tree care providers, use of equipment in providing tree care services, or
7 insurance requirements in the tree care industry; and

8 WHEREAS, a 2020 report from the United States Occupational Safety and Health
9 Administration (OSHA) states that "the tree care industry's fatality rate for tree care
10 operations makes tree trimming and pruning among the most hazardous occupations in the
11 country"; and

12 WHEREAS, the 2020 OSHA report further indicates that the fatality rate for tree trimmers
13 and pruners may be as high as 1 per 1,000, which is nearly 30 times higher than the national
14 average fatality rate of 3.5 per 100,000 for all workers; and

H. R. 473 (SUB)

15 WHEREAS, a 2017 report by the Tree Care Industry Association indicates that Georgia has
16 the third highest rate of reported incidents in the tree care industry, with only California and
17 Florida having higher rates of reported incidents; and

18 WHEREAS, in 2018, the U.S. Better Business Bureau (BBB) received 1,506 complaints
19 concerning tree care services, of which only 45 percent were settled while the average
20 settlement rate across all business complaint categories received by the BBB is 78 percent;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, in 2019, the Georgia Arborist Association conducted a survey of its
23 membership that indicated there was broad support for licensure requirements in the tree care
24 industry; and

25 WHEREAS, study is needed to develop potential legislation or other action that would help
26 prevent incidents leading to injuries and fatalities in the tree care industry and protect the
27 health and safety of those working in the tree care industry, as well as those receiving tree
28 care services in Georgia.

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

30 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Study Committee
31 on Safety and Consumer Protection in the Tree Care Industry.

32 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of five members of the
33 House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of
34 Representatives. The Speaker shall designate a member of the committee as chairperson
35 of the committee.

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

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

43 (5) **Allowances and funding.** The legislative members of the committee shall receive
44 the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia
45 Annotated. The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any
46 member of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized.
47 Funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
48 appropriated to the House of Representatives.

49 (6) **Report.**

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

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

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

- 61 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Clerk of the
62 House of Representatives a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu
63 thereof.
- 64 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2024.