

Senate Resolution 408

By: Senators Harper of the 7th, Wilkinson of the 50th, Walker III of the 20th, Ginn of the 47th, Sims of the 12th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the sustainability and economic importance of Georgia's working forests and
2 forest products industries in honor of the United Nations International Day of Forests on
3 March 21; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia has been blessed with 22 million acres of privately owned,
5 working forests that cover roughly two-thirds of our state's total land area, according to the
6 USDA Forest Service's Forest Inventory Analysis; and

7 WHEREAS, Georgia's private forest landowners have a rich heritage as stewards of their
8 lands, using their own resources to carefully manage healthy forests that benefit every
9 Georgian; and

10 WHEREAS, Georgia has more acres of forests today than it did 80 years ago and the growth
11 of our forests outpaces harvests by 48 percent each year, according to the Georgia Forestry
12 Commission; and

13 WHEREAS, fiber harvested from the state's forests are found in more than 5,000 types of
14 common consumer items, contributing essential needs for the survival and comfort of all
15 Georgians; and

16 WHEREAS, healthy markets for forest products provide a source of revenue for private
17 landowners, resulting in healthy, well-managed forests that are sustainably managed and
18 reforested; and

19 WHEREAS, unmanaged or fallow forests are more prone to disease, insect infestation, and
20 wildfires, which release significant amounts of carbon emissions; and

21 WHEREAS, active forest management, by providing a continuous cycle of planting,
22 growing, and harvesting, optimizes a forest's ability to sequester and store carbon; and

23 WHEREAS, Georgia's privately owned, working forests provide wildlife habitat and clean
24 air and clean water to all 10 million Georgians, creating an estimated \$37 billion annually
25 in ecosystem services, according to research from the University of Georgia; and

26 WHEREAS, according to the Georgia Institute of Technology, working forests have
27 economic benefits by supporting Georgia's forest products industry, which is responsible for
28 the jobs of 147,380 Georgians and generates a \$35.9 billion annual economic impact for our
29 state; and

30 WHEREAS, Georgia's forest products supply chain generated \$970 million in state
31 government revenues, with net revenues exceeding \$97 million for the state budget; and

32 WHEREAS, Georgia leads the nation in the amount of privately owned, working forests, in
33 volume of timber harvested, and in the export of pulp and paper and wood fuel products from
34 the ports in Savannah and Brunswick; and

35 WHEREAS, Georgia is the number one forestry state in the nation.

36 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
37 recognize the environmental, economic, and social benefits that Georgia's sustainable forest
38 products supply chain provides to all 10 million Georgians in honor of the United Nations
39 International Day of Forests on March 21.

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
41 to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to all members of the
42 Georgia General Assembly.