

Senate Resolution 754

By: Senators Anderson of the 43rd, Jones II of the 22nd, Seay of the 34th, Davenport of the 44th, Jones of the 10th and others

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Creating the Senate Cumulative Impact of Pollution on Economic Development and Growth
- 2 Study Committee; and for other purposes.

- 3 WHEREAS, pollution negatively impacts the health of a community and its economic
- 4 prospects, thus furthering cycles of poverty; and

- 5 WHEREAS, a concentration of industrial facilities in a community leads to blight and limited
- 6 amenities that contribute to lower property values and less funding for public schools, also
- 7 furthering cycles of poverty; and

- 8 WHEREAS, proximity to a facility that needs a risk management plan is associated with
- 9 significantly lower home values; and

- 10 WHEREAS, employers and businesses such as grocery stores, food services, healthcare
- 11 providers, hotels, and professional service centers prefer to not be located near industrial
- 12 centers, thus limiting the job prospects for community residents and furthering cycles of
- 13 poverty; and

14 WHEREAS, Georgia's leading economic engine, agriculture, is put at risk by air, soil, and
15 water pollution that can potentially stunt crop growth and affect both Georgia's economy and
16 the food security of all Georgians; and

17 WHEREAS, in Georgia there are more than 1 million resident anglers who collectively spend
18 8.7 million days a year on the water, and more than 650,000 hunters who collectively spend
19 8.9 million days a year in the field. The combination of these activities accounts for over \$2
20 billion in retail sales, \$3 billion in ripple effects, and more than 38,000 jobs; this vital
21 economic engine is also put at risk by pollution; and

22 WHEREAS, conditions such as severe asthma, nervous system damage, cardiovascular
23 disease, dangerous pregnancy outcomes, heart disease, and various forms of cancer can
24 cluster in polluted areas, areas near highways, and areas near industrial plants; addressing the
25 environmental causes of disease is important for the health of communities, but also for the
26 economic prosperity of the state; and

27 WHEREAS, in 2020 the average life expectancy in the United States was 77 years of age,
28 but in Georgia, the average life expectancy was 75.6 years of age, which constitutes the
29 fifteenth worst life expectancy of any state in the nation; and

30 WHEREAS, Georgia tied for second among states with the highest prevalence of childhood
31 asthma in 2021, with 9.7 percent of Georgia's children suffering from the condition, and the
32 total cost of asthma related hospitalizations among Georgia children totaled \$41.6 million;
33 and

34 WHEREAS, studies have shown that simply reducing heavy-duty truck traffic by half could
35 decrease air quality warning days, thus allowing 16,000 more Georgians to play outside,
36 eliminate 2,700 sick days, and overall provide \$200 million in annual economic benefit; and

37 WHEREAS, flooding of infrastructure such as concrete and overburdened storm-water and
38 waste-water systems, which are typically found in highly industrialized areas, is another
39 source of pollution and negative economic impact on communities; and

40 WHEREAS, all citizens of this state should have access to clean air, water, and sustainable
41 infrastructure; and

42 WHEREAS, careful study is necessary to determine policy and legislative solutions for
43 sustainable, economically viable and healthy communities.

44 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE:

45 (1) **Creation of Senate study committee.** There is created the Senate Cumulative
46 Impact of Pollution on Economic Development and Growth Study Committee.

47 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of 11 members to be
48 appointed by the President of the Senate:

49 (A) Five members of the Senate;

50 (B) One representative of the Environmental Protection Division;

51 (C) One representative of the Department of Agriculture;

52 (D) One representative of the Department of Human Services;

53 (E) One representative of academia or the nonprofit or scientific community who
54 specializes in the study of pollution;

55 (F) One individual who represents a nonprofit entity with knowledge relative to
56 Georgia pollution impacts; and

57 (G) One community member who sits at the intersection of pollution and economic
58 development.

59 The President shall designate a legislative member of the committee as chairperson of the
60 committee.

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

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

68 (5) **Allowances, expenses, and funding.**

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

71 (B) Members of the committee who are state officials, other than legislative members,
72 or who are state employees shall receive no compensation for their services on the
73 committee, but they may be reimbursed for expenses incurred by them in the
74 performance of their duties as members of the committee in the same manner as they
75 are reimbursed for expenses in their capacities as state officials or employees.

76 (C) Members of the committee who are not legislators, state officials, or state
77 employees shall receive a daily expense allowance in an amount the same as that
78 specified in subsection (b) of Code Section 45-7-21 of the Official Code of Georgia
79 Annotated, as well as the mileage or transportation allowance authorized for state
80 employees.

81 (D) The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any member
82 of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized. Funds
83 necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
84 appropriated to the Senate; except that funds for the reimbursement of the expenses of
85 state officials, other than legislative members, and for the reimbursement of the
86 expenses of state employees shall come from funds appropriated to or otherwise
87 available to their respective agencies.

88 **(6) Report.**

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

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

96 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
97 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
98 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
99 the Secretary of the Senate.

100 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Secretary
101 of the Senate a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu thereof.

102 **(7) Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2024.