

## Senate Resolution 826

By: Senators Orrock of the 36th, Jackson of the 41st, Esteves of the 6th, Merritt of the 9th, Sims of the 12th and others

## A RESOLUTION

- 1 Creating the Senate Saving Georgia's Pollinators Study Committee; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, pollinators are essential to the health and vitality of Georgia's agricultural  
3 economy, environment, and ecosystems. Pollinators provide an economic value of nearly  
4 \$500 million annually to the State of Georgia; and
- 5 WHEREAS, Georgia is home to thousands of pollinators, including more than 540 native bee  
6 species, but many pollinator species are in decline or have disappeared from Georgia; and
- 7 WHEREAS, scientists have linked the use of neonicotinoids, a class of neurotoxic, systemic  
8 insecticides that is the most widely used class of insecticides in the world, to the rapid  
9 decline of pollinators and to the deterioration of pollinator health; and
- 10 WHEREAS, systemic insecticides like neonicotinoids are absorbed into treated plants and  
11 distributed throughout their vascular systems and are highly persistent in the environment;  
12 and
- 13 WHEREAS, conclusions from a recent global review of the impacts of systemic pesticides,  
14 primarily neonicotinoids, warn that they are causing significant damage to a wide range of  
15 beneficial invertebrate species, are a key factor in the decline of bees, and pose a global

16 threat to biodiversity and ecosystem services. Another recent global review documented  
17 high levels of freshwater contamination; and

18 WHEREAS, despite recognition of their danger, the use of neonicotinoids is ubiquitous, from  
19 seed coating to applications on fruits and vegetables, grasses and lawns, and backyard  
20 ornamentals; and

21 WHEREAS, governments and agencies around the world have taken action to limit the toxic  
22 impacts of neonicotinoids; and

23 WHEREAS, legislative action to limit exposure of this state's honeybees, native bees, insects,  
24 birds, and other pollinators to neonicotinoid insecticides is necessary to protect these species  
25 and this state's agricultural economy and natural ecosystems.

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

27 (1) **Creation of Senate study committee.** There is created the Senate Saving Georgia's  
28 Pollinators Study Committee.

29 (2) **Members and officers.**

30 (A) The committee shall be composed of five members of the Senate to be appointed  
31 by the President of the Senate.

32 (B) The President shall also appoint an additional four nonlegislative members of the  
33 committee as follows:

34 (i) One representative of the Environmental Protection Division;

35 (ii) One representative of the Department of Agriculture;

36 (iii) One person who is a beekeeper in the State of Georgia; and

37 (iv) One representative of academia or the nonprofit or scientific community with  
38 expertise in the protection of pollinators.

39 (C) The President shall designate a legislative member of the committee as chairperson  
40 of the committee.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

68 (6) **Report.**

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

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

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

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

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