

House Resolution 1326

By: Representative Mangham of the 75th

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Commission on Fairness for Prisoners' Families; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, the General Assembly finds and declares that reducing the barriers facing
3 Georgia citizens seeking to maintain contact with their incarcerated child, sibling, parent, or
4 loved one will strengthen important community and family contacts, thereby improving
5 prisoner behavior in correctional facilities, increasing safety when prisoners return to their
6 communities, and reducing recidivism.

7 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY that there is
8 created a Commission on Fairness for Prisoners' Families which shall be responsible for
9 examining and reporting on state policies which impact the tens of thousands of adults and
10 children in Georgia who have a family member in prison or a youth detention center.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission on Fairness for Prisoners' Families
12 shall consist of 16 members as follows: three members shall be appointed by the chairperson
13 of the State Senate Corrections, Correctional Institutions and Property Committee; three
14 members shall be appointed by the chairperson of the State House of Representatives State
15 Institutions and Property Committee; one member shall be a member of the House of
16 Representatives and shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; one
17 member shall be a member of the Senate and shall be appointed by the President of the
18 Senate; the remaining members shall be appointed by the Governor and shall include at least
19 three advocates for prisoners' family members recommended by groups which have
20 addressed the problems faced by prisoners and prisoners' family members, and at least three
21 persons who have or have had a family member incarcerated in a Georgia prison, and at least
22 two persons who have or have had a child detained in a Georgia youth detention center.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the term of appointment shall be for 12 months from the
24 date of the first commission meeting, renewable for a second 12 month term by the original

1 appointing official. All vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term by an appointee of
2 the original appointing official.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall elect a chairperson, vice
4 chairperson, and a reporter from among its members. It shall be the responsibility of the
5 reporter to keep minutes of all commission meetings.

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall hold regular meetings, open to the
7 public, at least once every month. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson or a
8 majority of the members of the commission. The commission shall meet at such times and
9 at such designated places in the state as it may determine. A quorum for transacting business
10 shall be determined by the members of the commission.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall have the following duties:

12 (1) To study and report on the role of family and community contacts in helping released
13 offenders reintegrate into the community and avoid returning to prison;

14 (2) To study and evaluate impediments for families attempting to maintain meaningful
15 contact with loved ones in prison or a youth detention center;

16 (3) To study and evaluate state policies on mail, visitation, and telephone access at
17 prisons and other detention facilities in Georgia;

18 (4) To examine and report on programs in other states designed to maintain and improve
19 family contact and support;

20 (5) To examine and report on the security risks posed by family contact and methods for
21 minimizing those risks;

22 (6) To seek out and encourage input and participation by persons with family members
23 incarcerated in a Georgia prison or detained in a youth detention center; and

24 (7) To recommend ways to improve fairness, consistency, and uniformity in policies on
25 mail, visitation, and telephone access at prisons and youth detention centers in Georgia,
26 including, but not limited to, legislation, changes to standard operating procedures, public
27 education materials, new visitation programs, or through other methods.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission has the power to hold meetings and
29 public hearings, conduct studies and surveys, collect data, or take any other action the
30 commission deems necessary to fulfill its responsibilities.

31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall write and disseminate a report and
32 recommendations to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the community, no later than

- 1 March 15, 2003, or at some other date determined by majority vote of the commission. The
- 2 commission shall be terminated no later than 12 months after the issuance of the report.