

## House Resolution 217

By: Representatives Purcell of the 147<sup>th</sup>, Ray of the 128<sup>th</sup>, Greene of the 158<sup>th</sup>, Floyd of the 138<sup>th</sup>, Pelote of the 149<sup>th</sup> and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the chancellor and Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia to reverse  
2 the decision of the P-16 Council which eliminates agricultural courses and other courses on  
3 the 9-12 list of state funded courses approved by the State Board of Education; and for other  
4 purposes.

5 WHEREAS, Georgia's food and fiber industry employs one in every seven Georgians and  
6 projects double digit job growth in the future; and

7 WHEREAS, Georgia's secondary school agriculture program, the University of Georgia's  
8 College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, and University System of Georgia  
9 institutions with strong agriculture programs, combined with student agriculture oriented  
10 associations, serve as the foundation upon which the success and growth of Georgia's food  
11 and fiber industry has been achieved; and

12 WHEREAS, Georgia's education reform legislation recognizes that a seamless education (P-  
13 16) is essential to realize the potential of an educated populace resulting in sustained  
14 economic growth and quality of life; and

15 WHEREAS, it is recognized that a symbiotic relationship exists between the food and fiber  
16 industry and the agriculture curriculum prescribed by the State Board of Education and  
17 university system institutions; and

18 WHEREAS, the University of Georgia is recognized as the oldest land grant university in  
19 the United States dedicated to the success of agriculture through education and research; and

20 WHEREAS, the federal government has continued to recognize the contribution of this  
21 university and other educational institutions to maintain Georgia's agriculture position in the  
22 international community through funding of the Hatch Act, Smith-Lever Act, Carl Perkins  
23 Act, and other funding sources; and

1 WHEREAS, Georgia's high schools contribute over 1,000 students annually to the College  
2 of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences and over 50,000 students are presently engaged  
3 in middle and high school agriculture education with 17,775 students participating in FFA  
4 with the intention of pursuing agricultural education and interest; and

5 WHEREAS, the P-16 Council, supported by the chancellor and Board of Regents of the  
6 University System of Georgia, has communicated over the past few years, and specifically  
7 this year, that agriculture courses taught in the secondary curriculum would not be accepted  
8 as electives to qualify a student for admission to university system institutions; and

9 WHEREAS, the P-16 Council has further indicated that undergraduate students pursuing  
10 degrees in agriculture would not be allowed to take electives in agriculture that support  
11 career choices and instead must take other courses, such as fine arts and performing arts; and

12 WHEREAS, this decision by the P-16 Council has been appealed by the agriculture  
13 community without success over the past few years; and

14 WHEREAS, the State Department of Education recommended that the use of the prescribed  
15 list of additional academic units be discontinued and that any course on the 9-12 list of state  
16 funded courses (as specified in Rule 160-4-2-.03 of the State Department of Education) be  
17 allowed to count as an elective as appropriate to each student's high school program of study;  
18 and

19 WHEREAS, the P-16 Council has not accepted recommendations from the State Department  
20 of Education, the agriculture community, and others for courses, except for fine arts and  
21 performing arts courses, to be added to the list of academic units required for admission to  
22 public colleges and universities in the State of Georgia and this appears to refute the concept  
23 of a seamless education; and

24 WHEREAS, students involved in agriculture programs have produced test scores in science  
25 and math above the state average according to the Georgia High Schools That Work  
26 assessment; and

27 WHEREAS, the P-16 decision has already negatively impacted student enrollment in high  
28 school and college agriculture programs; and

29 WHEREAS, this fact is documented in the decline of 2,712 students in high school

1 agriculture programs in one year and the decline of 315 students in the undergraduate  
2 program in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences over the past four years;  
3 and

4 WHEREAS, the decline of students attributed to P-16 decisions resulted in lower FTE budget  
5 earnings in agriculture and environmental sciences, which reduces faculty assigned to  
6 instruction and research; and

7 WHEREAS, university policy requires that positions vacated by retiring faculty or departing  
8 faculty shall be eliminated from a college or program experiencing declining enrollment; and

9 WHEREAS, the decline of students, faculty, and resulting research in agriculture and  
10 environmental sciences has serious implications for continued success and economic growth  
11 of the agriculture industry in Georgia, reflective of the P-16 Council decisions.

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
13 GEORGIA that the members of this body strongly advise the chancellor and the Board of  
14 Regents of the University System of Georgia to reverse the decision of the P-16 Council to  
15 prescribe a list of additional academic units which eliminates agriculture courses and other  
16 courses on the 9-12 list of state funded courses approved by the State Board of Education.

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the chancellor and members of the Board of Regents of  
18 the University System of Georgia formally respond to the members of the General Assembly  
19 of Georgia as to the correction of the problem presented in this resolution.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
21 and directed to transmit appropriate copies of this resolution to the chancellor and each  
22 member of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.