

House Resolution 484

By: Representatives Orrock of the 56th, Smith of the 12th and Allen of the 117th

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Commission on Work Force Security and Enhancement in the New Georgia
2 Economy; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Georgia's employers and employees are reliant upon each other for their mutual
4 economic success; and

5 WHEREAS, the viability of the state's employment security system is dependent upon
6 maintaining a solvent unemployment trust fund supported by fair employer contributions;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, the federal unemployment insurance system was instituted in 1935 as an income
9 support program tailored to meet the needs of the work force and economy prevailing at that
10 time; and

11 WHEREAS, Georgia's employment security system was established to assist job seekers in
12 securing suitable employment and to assist employers in obtaining qualified workers to meet
13 workplace needs; and

14 WHEREAS, the public policy of this state is and has been that economic insecurity due to
15 unemployment is a serious menace to the health, morals, and welfare of the people of this
16 state; that involuntary unemployment requires appropriate action by the General Assembly
17 to prevent its spread and to lighten its burden which so often falls with crushing force upon
18 the unemployed worker or the worker's family and that the achievement of social security
19 requires protection against this greatest hazard of our economic life by the systematic
20 accumulation of funds during periods of employment to provide benefits for periods of
21 unemployment; and

22 WHEREAS, advances in technology and expansion of international trade have forged a new
23 economy and changed the nature of work; and

1 WHEREAS, the composition of Georgia's work force has become more diverse since the
2 institution of federal and state income support and security programs, with the inclusion of
3 increased numbers of women, minorities, the disabled, and the elderly; and

4 WHEREAS, the composition of the work force has been further changed in recent years as
5 a result of welfare reform, immigration, and other factors to include increasing numbers of
6 new entrants who are low-skilled and low-wage workers and the State of Georgia has a
7 continuing and abiding interest in strengthening the attachment of these individuals to the
8 work force; and

9 WHEREAS, much debate has occurred concerning the role and effectiveness of federal and
10 state income support and economic security programs in facilitating worker and employer
11 adjustment to rapidly changing economic circumstances and the adequacy of the design of
12 such programs; and

13 WHEREAS, any effort to restructure existing income support and economic security
14 programs should include strategies for accommodating the changing needs of workers and
15 employers in a changing economy; and

16 WHEREAS, any effort to restructure existing income support and economic security
17 programs should include careful analysis and consideration of methods that enhance the
18 administration of income support and economic security programs; and

19 WHEREAS, an opportunity should be provided for members of the General Assembly to
20 study and consider these issues and options to address them, with the assistance and advice
21 of employers, labor and other community stakeholders, with the aim of ensuring the
22 continued prosperity of Georgia's economy and its work force; and

23 WHEREAS, such a study should include consideration of strategies for assisting workers and
24 employers in adjusting to changing economic conditions and changes in the mix of
25 employment opportunities; and

26 WHEREAS, only one in five unemployed Georgia workers currently receives unemployment
27 insurance benefits, therefore such a study should include consideration of the need to update
28 provisions of the unemployment security system to address the needs of low-wage, part-time,
29 and women workers and the effect of existing systems and requirements in creating obstacles
30 to receiving unemployment insurance benefits; and

1 WHEREAS, such a study should include consideration of the role of the unemployment
2 insurance system in helping Georgia's working families balance the demands of work and
3 family in the new economy by addressing the effects of undue family hardships on workers,
4 on families, on the economy, and on the society; and

5 WHEREAS, such a study should also include consideration of the role of public-private
6 partnerships in implementing worker education and job training and community assistance;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, the foregoing changes necessitate new strategies for providing workplace
9 education and training to assist workers in acquiring new skills.

10 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
11 GEORGIA that there is created the Commission on Work Force Security and Enhancement
12 in the New Georgia Economy to be composed of 17 members as follows: three members of
13 the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker thereof; three members of the Senate
14 appointed by the President thereof; five members appointed by the Governor, to include
15 representatives of the state Department of Technical and Adult Education, the University
16 System of Georgia, and the public schools, and two members who represent the new diverse
17 members of the work force concerned about the balance between work and family; five
18 members appointed by the Commissioner of Labor from the business, labor, and general
19 community who represent the new diverse members of the work force concerned about the
20 balance between work and family; and the Commissioner of Labor who shall chair the
21 commission. The commission shall meet at the call of the chair.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in addition to normal legislative staff support services,
23 the commission shall make use of staff support services provided by the Department of
24 Labor.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall undertake a study of the
26 conditions, needs, issues, and problems described in this resolution and issues related thereto
27 and may recommend any actions or legislation which the commission deems appropriate.
28 The commission is authorized to conduct meetings at such places and at such times as it
29 considers expedient and to do all other things consistent with this resolution which are
30 necessary or convenient to enable it to fully and adequately exercise its powers, perform its
31 duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution. Departments and
32 agencies of the state are authorized to furnish such assistance to the commission as the

1 commission deems appropriate. Legislative members shall receive expenses and allowances
2 authorized by law for members of interim legislative committees for their services on the
3 commission. Members of the commission who are state officials, other than legislative
4 members, and state employees shall receive no compensation for their services on the
5 commission but shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred by them in the performance of
6 their duties as members of the commission. The funds necessary for the reimbursement of
7 the expenses of state officials, other than legislative members, and their state employees,
8 shall come from funds appropriated to or otherwise available to their respective departments.
9 All other funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from the
10 funds appropriated to or otherwise available to the Senate and House of Representatives.
11 The commission shall make a report of its findings and recommendations, with suggestions
12 for proposed legislation, if any, on or before December 31, 2001. The commission shall
13 stand abolished on December 31, 2001.