

Senate Resolution 414

By: Senators Mullis of the 53rd, Johnson of the 1st, Price of the 56th, Zamarripa of the 36th, Butler of the 55th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the President of the United States and the presidents of the 33 other democratic
2 nations of the Western Hemisphere to locate the Secretariat of the Free Trade Area of the
3 Americas in Atlanta, Georgia, and declaring support; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, the countries of the Western Hemisphere are growing more closely linked now
5 than at any time in history, and Atlanta, Georgia, is poised to serve as an ideal gateway to
6 and from the Americas and a destination of choice for bilateral trade, investment, and
7 tourism; and

8 WHEREAS, the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), a free trade block comprised of
9 the 34 democratic nations of the Western Hemisphere, representing 800 million consumers
10 with an estimated combined goods value of \$14 trillion, is slated for establishment by 2005;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Georgia is the most effective and strategic location for the Secretariat of the
13 FTAA because of our position as a crossroads within the Americas, our strength as a global
14 business center, and our diverse community; and

15 WHEREAS, Georgia's international community includes over 55 consular, trade, or
16 binational chamber of commerce offices and more than 1,600 internationally owned
17 companies representing more than 70 countries; and

18 WHEREAS, Georgia's Hispanic population has grown more than 300 percent in the last
19 decade, making Atlanta the second-fastest growing metropolitan area for Hispanic
20 communities in the United States; and

21 WHEREAS, Atlanta, Georgia, offers the superior transportation, communications, and
22 intellectual infrastructure, diverse business and human resources, and political and cultural

1 environment that the Secretariat of the FTAA must have to serve effectively as the primary
2 hemispheric commercial center and trade headquarters; and

3 WHEREAS, Georgia's varied industry base, wealth of Fortune 500 company headquarters,
4 and world-class universities provide the corporate and educational strengths that will
5 contribute to the effectiveness and success of the FTAA's administrative body or Secretariat;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, Georgia serves as a leading financial and trade hub of the Southeast with
8 cumulative international investments exceeding \$22 billion and annual exports of nearly \$15
9 billion; and

10 WHEREAS, Georgia is a strategic distribution center in the United States and the Southeast's
11 gateway to and from the Americas with 80 percent of the United States market within two
12 hours by air; nonstop flights to 42 international destinations and thousands of flights to 180
13 United States cities from Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport, the busiest in the world
14 serving more than 76 million passengers annually; and two deep-water seaports at Savannah
15 and Brunswick; and

16 WHEREAS, the very significant and permanent impact on Georgia's economy of trade
17 liberalization under the FTAA, plus the direct benefit to Atlanta, the State of Georgia, and
18 to the region of becoming the home of the Secretariat of the FTAA, will total hundreds of
19 millions of dollars and thousands of jobs annually; and

20 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia is a friendly, pro-growth, pro-business state with a strong
21 history of welcoming people from all over the world to enjoy its hospitality and culture as
22 a leading destination for business, trade, investment, and leisure.

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
24 support the selection of Atlanta, Georgia, to serve as the home of the Secretariat of the Free
25 Trade Area of the Americas and direct the International Trade Division of the Department
26 of Industry, Trade, and Tourism, in cooperation with its civic partners and the private sector,
27 to pursue this endeavor aggressively.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
29 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the commissioner of industry, trade, and
30 tourism.