

Senate Resolution 442

By: Senator Price of the 56th

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Senate Study Committee on Georgia Safe Dams; the roles, responsibilities, and
2 accountabilities of all parties involved; the funding and other resources necessary for safe
3 dams; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, 40 Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Districts are sponsors of
5 approximately 350 watershed dams in Georgia, with over 140 designated as Category 1; and

6 WHEREAS, Soil and Water Conservation Districts have state liability for the operational
7 maintenance of watershed dams but have never had an advocate to see that funds would be
8 allocated to fulfill obligations, nor have they been given any legal authority to demand that
9 maintenance be done by landowners; and

10 WHEREAS, many of these watershed dams have not been maintained for a number of years,
11 thus increasing the potential for loss of life and property damage; and

12 WHEREAS, many of the high risk watershed dams have not had a breach analysis done and
13 the clear extent of potential harm downstream is not known; and

14 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia does not require watershed dams to have an "emergency
15 action plan" which increases the potential for community loss of life and serious property
16 damage; and

17 WHEREAS, watershed dam safety has been treated as an expendable department line item
18 during times of state budget cuts; and

19 WHEREAS, the state has Georgia Safe Dams Rules that need to be amended.

20 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that there is created the Senate
21 Study Committee on Georgia Safe Dams. The Senate Committee on Assignments shall

1 appoint five members of the Senate as members of the committee and shall designate one of
2 such members as chairperson. The chairperson shall call all meetings of the committee.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall undertake a study of the Georgia
4 Safe Dams Act and the relevant rules; the roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities of all
5 parties involved in overseeing watershed dam safety; the funding and other resources needed
6 to provide an efficient and effective dam safety program; and other issues related thereto and
7 recommended as an action or legislation which the committee deems necessary or
8 appropriate. During the course of the study, the committee will utilize the expertise of
9 representatives from the following agencies: Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the
10 Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission, the Natural Resource Conservation
11 Service, the EPD Safe Dams Division, the FEMA Mitigation Division, and any others who
12 are deemed to possess knowledge that will aid the study. The committee may conduct such
13 meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or convenient to enable
14 it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and accomplish the
15 objectives and purposes of this resolution. The legislative members of the committee shall
16 receive the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia
17 Annotated. All funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from
18 funds appropriated to the Senate. The expenses and allowances authorized by this resolution
19 shall not be received by any member of the committee for more than ten days unless
20 additional days are authorized. In the event the committee makes a report of its findings and
21 recommendations, with suggestions for proposed legislation, if any, such report shall be
22 made on or before December 31, 2003. The committee shall stand abolished on December
23 31, 2003.