

House Resolution 6

By: Representatives Brooks of the 63rd, Epps of the 128th, Mangham of the 94th, Jones of the 44th, and Thomas of the 55th

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging all law enforcement and correctional agencies in the State of Georgia to suspend the
2 use of all electroshock devices, including stun guns, stun shields, and Tasers, pending the
3 outcome of a rigorous, independent inquiry into the use and effects of such equipment; and
4 for other purposes.

5 WHEREAS, the use of electroshock stun technology in law enforcement to control or subdue
6 unruly prisoners or suspects has proliferated, giving rise to concerns for the protection of
7 human rights; and

8 WHEREAS, international standards encourage the development of nonlethal devices for use
9 by law enforcement in order to decrease the risk of death or injury inherent in the use of
10 firearms or batons; and

11 WHEREAS, these standards state that such new weapons must be "carefully evaluated" and
12 their use "carefully controlled"; and

13 WHEREAS, law enforcement authorities have failed to comply with these standards as the
14 use of electroshock devices has increased in the country's law enforcement agencies,
15 especially at local levels, without rigorous, independent testing, evaluation, and monitoring;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, evidence suggests that electroshock devices may produce harmful or even fatal
18 effects when used on persons—diagnosed or undiagnosed—with heart disease or neurological
19 disorder, or on persons under the influence of drugs; and

20 WHEREAS, within a nine-month period ending in June, 2004, five people in Georgia and
21 26 nationwide had died while in custody after being shocked with Tasers by law enforcement
22 officers; and

1 WHEREAS, although most such deaths have been attributed to other factors, medical experts
2 have expressed concern about the possible health risks associated with the use of
3 electroshock devices, as well as the potential for their misuse; and

4 WHEREAS, it is evident that simply not enough independent research has been done on the
5 use of electroshock devices on humans to prove that such devices provide a less-than-lethal
6 alternative to firearms.

7 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
8 GEORGIA that this body urges all state and local law enforcement and correctional agencies
9 in this state to suspend the use of all electroshock devices until and unless a rigorous,
10 independent, and impartial inquiry, including a thorough exploration of medical risks, can
11 prove that these devices are safe with proper use and will not contribute to a detainee's death,
12 torture, or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment in custody.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
14 and directed to transmit appropriate copies of this resolution to the Board of Corrections and
15 the Board of Public Safety.