

Senate Resolution 54

By: Senators Tolleson of the 20th, Harp of the 29th, Starr of the 44th, Bulloch of the 11th and Hudgens of the 47th

ADOPTED

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Creating the Joint "Future of Georgia Forestry" Study Committee; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, since 1920, the General Assembly has passed laws relating to forest products,
3 forestry production, and forestry protection; and
- 4 WHEREAS, these laws and subsequent programs form a strong foundation for forest policy;
5 and
- 6 WHEREAS, current stresses to Georgia's forest products markets mandate a reexamination
7 of Georgia's forest policy in Georgia; and
- 8 WHEREAS, forestry is the state's major land use which supports one of Georgia's leading
9 industries in this state, creating 136,000 jobs and contributing a \$20.2 billion economic
10 impact in this state; and
- 11 WHEREAS, Georgia's 23.8 million acres of forest land occupy two-thirds of the state's total
12 land area; and
- 13 WHEREAS, 23.8 million acres of Georgia's forest land, more than that of any other state,
14 are available for commercial use, of which 72 percent is owned by private, nonindustrial
15 landowners; and
- 16 WHEREAS, timber is the highest value crop in this state, and Georgia remains one of the top
17 pulp and paper producers in the nation; and
- 18 WHEREAS, Georgia's forests are not only economically important, but also provide vital
19 environmental and social benefits; and

1 WHEREAS, the Georgia Forestry Commission reports a marked decline in Georgia's forest
2 industry from \$30.5 billion in 2001 to \$20.2 billion in 2003; and

3 WHEREAS, the Georgia Forestry Commission has cited the need to substantially improve
4 the economic performance, research and development, and marketing of the wide range of
5 products and other benefits derived from Georgia's forests; and

6 WHEREAS, in light of the above issues it is now time to prepare a comprehensive plan for
7 Georgia to sustain and expand the benefits of Georgia's forest lands and forest products
8 industries.

9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
10 GEORGIA that there is created the Joint "Future of Georgia Forestry" Study Committee to
11 be composed of 22 members, consisting of four members of the Senate to be appointed by
12 the Committee on Assignments, one of whom shall be the chairperson of the Agriculture and
13 Consumer Affairs Committee; four members of the House of Representatives to be appointed
14 by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be the chairperson of the
15 Committee on Agriculture and Consumer Affairs; and, as ex officio members, the
16 chairperson of the Senate Natural Resources Committee and the chairperson of the House
17 Committee on Natural Resources who shall be cochairpersons of the study committee. The
18 Senate Committee on Assignments shall appoint four additional members, one each from the
19 following: the University of Georgia Warnell School of Forest Resources Center for Forest
20 Business, the Georgia Farm Bureau Federation, the Georgia Forestry Commission, and the
21 Georgia Department of Agriculture. The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall
22 appoint two additional members, one each from the following: the Georgia Forestry
23 Association and the Georgia Agribusiness Council. The Governor shall appoint six members,
24 one of whom shall be from the environmental community and one of whom shall be a county
25 commissioner. Either chairperson may call meetings of the committee. Such appointments
26 shall be made by May 15, 2005, with the first meeting of the study committee to occur by
27 June 15, 2005.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study committee may conduct such meetings at such
29 times and places as it may deem necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and
30 effectively its powers, perform its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this
31 resolution. The legislative members of the study committee shall receive the allowances
32 authorized for legislative members of interim committees but shall receive the same for not
33 more than five days unless additional days are authorized. The funds necessary to carry out

1 the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds appropriated to the Senate and House
2 of Representatives. No allowance shall be paid for other members of the committee. The
3 study committee shall make a report of its findings and recommendations, with suggestions
4 for proposed legislation, if any, prior to December 1, 2005. The study committee shall stand
5 abolished on December 31, 2005.