

House Resolution 724

By: Representatives Coleman of the 144th, Stephens of the 164th, Parrish of the 156th, and Casas of the 103rd

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the United States Congress to pass the U.S.-Dominican Republic-Central America
2 Free Trade Agreement; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the U.S.-Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement (DR-
4 CAFTA) presents an important opportunity for Georgia's elected Congressional leaders to
5 make a substantial positive contribution to the state's economic growth, increase worker
6 incomes, and provide new opportunities for those who are seeking work in higher-paying,
7 export-oriented jobs; and

8 WHEREAS, the DR-CAFTA will expand and make reciprocal the market access for goods,
9 services, and agricultural products that the United States Congress has unilaterally granted
10 to Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua
11 for the past 20 years; and

12 WHEREAS, these six countries represent the fifth largest growth market of exports from
13 1999 to 2003, the 13th largest export market and second largest Latin American export
14 market after Mexico, and the largest potential new FTA partner in more than a decade; and

15 WHEREAS, Georgia's exports to the DR-CAFTA countries equaled over \$677 million in
16 2004, making the group Georgia's ninth largest export market; and

17 WHEREAS, according to a study by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the DR-CAFTA
18 would help Georgia's economy increase output across all industries by \$262 million one year
19 after implementation and \$1.4 billion nine years after implementation, increase employee
20 earnings across all industries by \$52 million one year after implementation and \$283 million
21 nine years after implementation, and create 1,516 new jobs one year after implementation
22 and 8,691 new jobs nine years after implementation; and

1 WHEREAS, for Georgia's agricultural producers, who are the sixth largest of state
2 agricultural exporters to the DR-CAFTA market, this legislation will eliminate tariffs on 50
3 percent of U.S. exports immediately, and most remaining duties within 15 years, benefitting
4 Georgia's key exports, including cotton, poultry, peanuts, and meat exports; and

5 WHEREAS, for Georgia's manufacturers, the DR-CAFTA will immediately eliminate tariffs
6 on 80 percent of U.S. exports and all remaining tariffs within ten years, including the up-to-
7 15 percent tariffs on chemical, machinery, paper, and transportation equipment exports; and

8 WHEREAS, for Georgia's textile and apparel industry, this legislation is critical to expanding
9 existing partnerships and giving U.S.-DR-CAFTA goods a competitive edge, especially as
10 global quotas were lifted at the beginning of 2005; and

11 WHEREAS, this legislation will benefit Georgia's service providers by eliminating
12 substantial barriers and providing important access for express delivery carriers and will
13 benefit Georgia's information technology producers by requiring all countries to eliminate
14 tariffs by joining the WTO's Information Technology Agreement, open up information
15 technology services, including telecommunications, promote e-commerce, and protect
16 intellectual property rights; and

17 WHEREAS, by providing greater economic opportunities and stronger rules for the
18 protection of intellectual property rights and investment as well as improved enforcement of
19 labor and environmental protections, this legislation will give nations with an all too recent
20 history of violence and oppression a vital chance to increase their security, stability, and
21 prosperity.

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
23 this body urges the United States Congress to pass the U.S.-Dominican Republic-Central
24 America Free Trade Agreement.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
26 and directed to transmit appropriate copies of this resolution to each member of the Georgia
27 Congressional delegation.