

House Resolution 772

By: Representatives Buckner of the 76th, Reece of the 11th, Johnson of the 37th, and Ashe of the 56th

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the University System of Georgia not to hold classes on election day and urging the
2 University System, the Georgia Election Officials Association, and the Secretary of State's
3 Office, Election Division to form a partnership to encourage students in the university system
4 to work at the polls on election day; and for other purposes.

5 WHEREAS, the right to vote is one of our most important and cherished freedoms and is the
6 cornerstone of our liberty; and

7 WHEREAS, a citizen's right to vote is the surest guarantee of a society that embraces
8 diversity and equality by giving each individual a voice in the future of the country; and

9 WHEREAS, it is the goal of the State of Georgia to encourage and to enlarge the numbers
10 of its citizens who actively and regularly participate in the democratic process and who
11 accept with eagerness and enthusiasm the responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic
12 society; and

13 WHEREAS, according to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and
14 Engagement (CIRCLE), national young voter turnout rates are consistently lower than those
15 of adults age 25 and older; and

16 WHEREAS, the Associated Press, the Washington Post, and USA Today have all reported
17 on the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's warning of a potential shortage of poll
18 workers as the nation's World War II generation becomes increasingly unable to serve; and

19 WHEREAS, a shortage of well-trained, educated, and computer literate poll workers could
20 contribute to widespread mistakes at polling booths; and

21 WHEREAS, university students are an ideal population to fill this looming shortage; and

1 WHEREAS, in light of the dramatic increase in voter interest and participation during the
2 last election, which, according to CIRCLE, included the highest levels of youth voter turnout
3 in more than a decade, the younger generation has begun to discover a renewed sense of civic
4 duty and commitment to the election process; and

5 WHEREAS, in 2002, Georgia made the greatest gains in young voter turnout in the nation
6 with a 13 percent rise since 1978; and

7 WHEREAS, this encouraging data is only a starting point, and in the 2002 election, voter
8 turnout among 18 to 24 year old citizens in Georgia was 25 percent compared to 51 percent
9 among those 25 years old and older within the state; and

10 WHEREAS, the University System of Georgia, the Georgia Election Officials Association,
11 and the Secretary of State's Office, Election Division have a unique opportunity at hand to
12 curb remaining young voter apathy and help to foster a sense of pride and patriotism among
13 Georgia's university students, which will result in a higher levels of civic participation among
14 the state's student population; and

15 WHEREAS, by initiating an innovative and effective program to not only encourage young
16 voter participation but also recruit university students to serve as poll workers, Georgia
17 would be a model to other states within the nation.

18 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
19 the members of this body urge the University System of Georgia not to hold classes on
20 election day.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives urges the University
22 System, the Georgia Election Officials Association, and the Secretary of State's Office,
23 Election Division to form a partnership to encourage students in the university system to
24 work at the polls on election day.

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 the Board of Regents of the
27 University System of Georgia, the Georgia Election Officials Association, and the Secretary
28 of State's Office, Election Division.