

Senate Resolution 21

By: Senators Kemp of the 46th, Grant of the 25th, Tate of the 38th and Hamrick of the 30th

ADOPTED

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Joint Early Learning Initiative Commission; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, quality early care and learning opportunities for all children, especially for
3 at-risk children from birth to five years of age, are essential to improving school performance
4 for Georgia students; and

5 WHEREAS, the state has invested lottery proceeds, state funds, and federal funds in the
6 Office of School Readiness and Georgia's Pre-K Program, for a total of \$360,959,969.00 in
7 the 2004 budget adopted in the 2004 session; and

8 WHEREAS, there are proposals for delegation of authority and funding over certain federal
9 early learning programs to the states; and

10 WHEREAS, a comprehensive review of early learning opportunities currently available that
11 support health, social and emotional, cognitive and physical well being of children from birth
12 to five years of age and recommendations for improvement of quality early care and learning
13 opportunities would be helpful to the General Assembly in adopting education policies and
14 appropriating funds for the most effective uses.

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
16 GEORGIA that there is created the Joint Early Learning Initiative Commission to be
17 composed of 21 members, including four members of the House of Representatives to be
18 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and four members of the Senate
19 to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Assignments. The Governor shall appoint seven
20 members, including one member with expertise relating to early care and learning programs,
21 one parent with a child enrolled in a pre-kindergarten program, one parent with a child
22 currently enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start, one representative from the child
23 care/early learning center community, one private provider pre-kindergarten instructor, one
24 public school pre-kindergarten instructor, and one Head Start instructor. The Chancellor of

1 the Board of Regents, the Commissioner of the Department of Technical Adult Education,
2 the director of the Georgia Lottery Corporation, the director of the Georgia Student Finance
3 Commission, the Georgia State School Superintendent or her designee, and the commissioner
4 of Bright From the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning shall be ex-officio
5 members of the commission. The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall designate
6 a member of the House and the Senate Committee on Assignments shall designate a member
7 of the Senate who shall serve as cochairpersons of the commission. The commission shall
8 meet at the call of the cochairpersons.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall undertake a study of the following:
10 issues relating to the anticipated action of the federal government in delegating authority
11 relating to Head Start to the state; an examination of federal and state early learning
12 programs to define efficiencies in each; options for combining federal and state programs if
13 authority over federal funds and programs are delegated to the state; an investigation of early
14 learning efforts statewide, including federal, state, and private programs to assess innovative
15 approaches and to recommend effective practices; an investigation to develop and align early
16 learning standards from birth to five years of age and from kindergarten through 12th grade,
17 thus providing Georgia students with a seamless system of learning standards; investigate
18 research that demonstrates that training and credentialing of early care and education teachers
19 is critical to obtaining positive child outcomes and investigate and improve the professional
20 development opportunities/system for early care and learning teachers by the creation of a
21 statewide articulation agreement between community-based, tech school and colleges and
22 universities that support the professional development of Georgia's early care and education
23 teachers; possible expansion of early learning programs for at-risk three-year-olds; the
24 creation of a statewide data base system that ensures a measure of accountability across state
25 programs; an economic impact study that measures and demonstrates the value of federal,
26 state, and local investments made in quality early care and education programs in Georgia;
27 and the impact of an early education income tax credit for families with incomes under 200
28 percent of the federally designated poverty level that would allow low-income families to
29 afford early education options that wealthier families can afford at institutions of their choice.
30 The commission may recommend any actions or legislation which the commission deems
31 necessary or appropriate. The commission may conduct such meetings at such places and at
32 such times as it may deem necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and
33 effectively its powers, perform its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this
34 resolution. The members of the commission shall receive the allowances authorized for
35 legislative members of interim legislative committees but shall receive the same for not more
36 than three days unless additional days are authorized. The funds necessary to carry out the

1 provisions of this resolution shall come from the funds appropriated to the House of
2 Representatives and Senate. The Carl Vinson Institute at the University of Georgia is
3 authorized and directed to provide staff services to the commission. In the event the
4 commission makes a report of its findings and recommendations, with suggestions for
5 proposed legislation, if any, such report shall be made on or before December 31, 2006. The
6 commission shall stand abolished on December 31, 2006.