

Senate Resolution 822

By: Senators Johnson of the 1st, Williams of the 19th, Brown of the 26th, Seabaugh of the 28th, Moody of the 56th and others

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Expressing regret at the passing of former State Senator Rene Kemp; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia lost one of its foremost citizens with the untimely passing
3 of former State Senator Rene Kemp; and
- 4 WHEREAS, he was born July 15, 1935, in Swainsboro, Georgia, and served in the United
5 States Army from 1953 to 1957. He graduated from Georgia Military College and the
6 University of Georgia where he earned his law degree, and he ultimately settled in
7 Hinesville, Georgia; and
- 8 WHEREAS, he was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives and served from 1977
9 through 1982; and
- 10 WHEREAS, while in the House, he sponsored the state's Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt
11 Organizations (RICO) Act, aimed at organized crime and drug trafficking, as well as
12 legislation to allow the wiretapping of the telephones of suspected drug smugglers under
13 certain circumstances; and
- 14 WHEREAS, Senator Kemp was first elected to the Georgia Senate from coastal Georgia's
15 Third Senatorial District in 1992, representing McIntosh and Long Counties and portions of
16 Glynn, Liberty, and Bryan Counties; and
- 17 WHEREAS, a lifelong Democrat, Senator Kemp served as chairman of the Judiciary
18 Committee, chairman of the Youth, Aging and Human Ecology Committee and as
19 vice-chairman of the Natural Resources Committee; he also served on the influential Rules
20 Committee; and

1 WHEREAS, in addition to his standing committee assignments, he also served on the Senate
2 Defense Conversion Strategies Study Committee, which was created to consider new uses
3 for military bases in the state which might be closed in the future. He was chairman of the
4 Senate Study Committee on Motor Vehicle Title Pawn Loans, and during the 1996 interim,
5 he served on the Senate Recycling and Economic Development Committee and the Study
6 Committee on Civil Justice Reform. He was also a member of the Senate Democratic
7 Caucus' Policy Committee; and

8 WHEREAS, Senator Kemp steered legislation through the Senate to update the state's
9 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act. He also authored legislation to prohibit
10 convicted felons from profiting by selling their stories to writers or movie producers. Among
11 the other measures successfully authored by Kemp were bills which increased fines and
12 prison terms for convicted drug smugglers, allowed law enforcement officers to search boats
13 within state waters for drugs, and prohibited members of the General Assembly from serving
14 as an elected official of a city or county. Kemp was also the sponsor of legislation which
15 authorizes the Department of Natural Resources to pay county governments for the services
16 they provide when the agency owns large parcels of land in the county; and

17 WHEREAS, in his last session of the legislature, he pushed through legislation to prohibit
18 the sale of children. At the time, it was illegal to purchase a child, but not illegal to sell a
19 child. The bill was signed into law by Governor Sonny Perdue in May, 2004; and

20 WHEREAS, he was active in community affairs and was a member of the Hinesville-Liberty
21 County Chamber of Commerce; AUSA; AARP; the Georgia Bar Association; the American
22 Bar Association; the Georgia Trial Lawyers Association; and the American Trial Lawyers
23 Association. He was a member of the Jaycees, Lions Club, and Exchange Club and was a
24 member and former chairman of the board of the Cherokee Rose Country Club. In addition,
25 he was an honorary lifetime member of the Georgia Sheriff's Association; and

26 WHEREAS, on September 24, 2004, Senator Kemp abandoned his re-election campaign,
27 saying his struggle with prostate cancer had left him too tired for politics, bringing to a close
28 a long and illustrious political career.

29 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
30 express regret at the passing of former State Senator Rene Kemp and extend condolences to
31 his family and friends.

- 1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
- 2 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the family of former State Senator Rene
- 3 Kemp.