

Senate Resolution 154

By: Senators Mullis of the 53rd, Whitehead, Sr. of the 24th, Hill of the 32nd and Douglas of the 17th

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Creating the Joint Human Services Transportation Study Commission; to provide for the
2 membership, powers, duties, and mission of the commission; to provide for related matter;
3 and for other purposes.
- 4 WHEREAS, there are 103 rural transit systems and 15 urban transit systems in Georgia that
5 provide critical transportation services to the public; and
- 6 WHEREAS, local governments and at least four state agencies have a role in health and
7 social services transportation (including transit) service delivery; and
- 8 WHEREAS, riders in these programs may be transported for such purposes as accessing
9 medical appointments, senior centers, community mental health centers, job training
10 activities, or for general transportation purposes; and
- 11 WHEREAS, the Georgia Departments of Community Health, Human Resources, Labor, and
12 Transportation received nearly \$200 million per year in federal grants to transport individuals
13 who have no other means of accessing services; and
- 14 WHEREAS, the state human services transportation programs frequently contain varying
15 criteria for their operations and differing classifications of riders, both established by the
16 federal agency providing the federal funds, and these differences lead to cost inefficiencies
17 and added pressure on local governments and other service providers; and
- 18 WHEREAS, coordination among these agencies is primarily on an ad hoc basis; and
- 19 WHEREAS, there may be more cost efficient ways for state and local governments to
20 provide these transportation services such as sharing federal funding, vehicles, and facilities,
21 coordination in the acquisition and maintenance of vehicles, and sharing in the use of trip
22 planning technologies; and

1 WHEREAS, in recent years, certain events, including the occurrence of Hurricane Katrina,
2 have led to the rapidly escalating cost of motor fuel and increased the financial burden on
3 local governments and other service providers participating in the various human services
4 transportation programs, and local governments and other service providers participating in
5 the various human services transportation programs have received no increase in funding
6 since 2001 to offset these fuel costs; and

7 WHEREAS, Hurricane Katrina and other disasters have pointed to the acute need for state
8 and local governments to have a highly coordinated and efficient human services
9 transportation delivery infrastructure to quickly evacuate persons affected by these disasters
10 and assist them in accessing health and social services; and

11 WHEREAS, consumers of human services transportation services are increasingly becoming
12 public passengers of transit systems, placing additional pressure on public transit systems in
13 both rural and urban areas; and

14 WHEREAS, it may be beneficial for this state to institute a more centralized, coordinated
15 approach such as a state human services transportation coordinating council with
16 membership from state agencies and representatives of local governments, regional entities,
17 and other service providers; and

18 WHEREAS, in light of the high costs of and demand for providing transportation service to
19 older Georgians, residents in rural, suburban, and urban Georgia, and persons with physical,
20 developmental, and mental disabilities, every possible avenue to achieve cost effectiveness
21 should be explored.

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
23 GEORGIA that there is created the Joint Human Services Transportation Study Commission
24 to be composed of 13 members. The President of the Senate shall appoint two members of
25 the Senate as members of the commission and shall designate one of such members as
26 cochairperson. The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint two members of
27 the House of Representatives as members of the committee and shall designate one of such
28 members as cochairperson. The Governor shall appoint an additional 11 members of the
29 committee as follows: one member shall be an elected county government official, one
30 member shall be an elected municipal government official, two members shall be human
31 services transportation providers, one member shall be a representative of a regional
32 development center, one member shall be a representative of the Department of Human

1 Resources, one member shall be a representative of the Department of Community Health,
2 one member shall be a representative of the Department of Labor, and one member shall be
3 a representative of the Department of Transportation. The appointments of the members of
4 the commission shall be made in such a manner so as to achieve a balance between urban and
5 rural areas and shall be as geographically diverse as possible. The cochairpersons shall call
6 all meetings of the committee.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall undertake a study of the
8 conditions, needs, issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend
9 any action or legislation which the commission deems necessary or appropriate. The
10 commission may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem
11 necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its
12 duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution. The legislative
13 members of the committee shall receive the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8
14 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated. Members of the commission other than
15 legislative members shall receive no compensation for their services on the committee, and
16 they shall not be reimbursed for expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties
17 as members of the commission. All funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this
18 resolution shall come from funds appropriated to the Senate and the House of
19 Representatives. The expenses and allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be
20 received by any legislative member of the commission for more than five days unless
21 additional days are authorized. In the event the committee makes a report of its findings and
22 recommendations, with suggestions for proposed legislation, if any, such report shall be
23 made on or before December 1, 2007. The committee shall stand abolished on December
24 31, 2007.