

House Resolution 1770

By: Representative Martin of the 47th

A RESOLUTION

1 Declaring a commitment to education for the blind or visually impaired; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly has continually demonstrated its full support of
4 education for all Georgia citizens through a myriad of educational programs that promote the
5 attainment of the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the demands of the new age work
6 force; and

7 WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of all of Georgia's citizens that persons who are blind
8 or visually impaired be afforded the same and equal access to elementary, secondary, and
9 postsecondary educational opportunities; and

10 WHEREAS, the key component of achieving an education is literacy, and it is widely
11 recognized that persons who are blind or visually impaired use Braille as an essential tool to
12 achieve true literacy; and

13 WHEREAS, instructional materials and textbooks are the primary tools to provide
14 successful educational experiences to students, and access to instructional materials and
15 textbooks in Braille is the primary means to provide successful educational experiences to
16 blind or visually impaired students; and

17 WHEREAS, inaccessibility to such materials in an accessible format denies blind or visually
18 impaired students the opportunity to be successful in their educational pursuits and become
19 competitive, gainfully employed citizens upon graduation; and

20 WHEREAS, legislation has been passed ensuring access to accessible instructional materials
21 for visually impaired or blind elementary and secondary school students, but postsecondary
22 institutions do not presently have a legally enforceable means of ensuring that publishers

1 provide electronic files of textbooks in enough time for the books to be reproduced in
2 alternate formats; and

3 WHEREAS, advancements in technology have made it possible for blind or visually
4 impaired students to access a tremendous amounts of information and compete on terms of
5 equality with their sighted peers, but technology should be recognized as a complement to
6 the use of Braille not a substitute; and

7 WHEREAS, advancements in technology have removed the excuse that Braille formats of
8 instructional materials are too expensive and cannot be readily available, but the denial of
9 accessible instructional materials to the blind or visually impaired still persists to a crisis
10 proportion, leaving many blind or visually impaired persons without the education and
11 training necessary to become gainfully employed.

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
13 the members of this body join together to declare their firm and continuing commitment to
14 developing the capacity to produce and disseminate materials in Braille format and that the
15 resources be made available to promote Braille literacy for the blind or visually impaired.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
17 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the National Federation of
18 the Blind of Georgia.