

Senate Resolution 781

By: Senators Mullis of the 53rd, Williams of the 19th, Stoner of the 6th, Pearson of the 51st and Seay of the 34th

AS PASSED

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Georgia Department of Transportation to develop a state-wide strategic
2 transportation plan and to take certain other actions; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, in order to allow Georgia's businesses to prosper and its citizens to enjoy a
4 reasonably congestion free lifestyle, a strategic transportation plan should be developed that
5 encompasses the whole state, not just a specific region of the state; and

6 WHEREAS, federal, state, and local governments are facing funding shortfalls for the
7 building and maintenance of transportation infrastructure; and

8 WHEREAS, the deteriorating condition of existing roads, bridges, and other transportation
9 facilities, along with the delays in building new facilities, causes safety issues, gridlock, and
10 congestion and reduces the public's ability to move about the state; and

11 WHEREAS, the Joint Study Committee on Alternative Transportation Funding has studied
12 the myriad issues surrounding transportation in all corners of this state and proposes the
13 following items be considered and included in a state-wide transportation plan:

14 1. Georgia must begin to utilize public-private initiatives (PPIs) to raise capital to start and
15 maintain transportation facilities, when a project meets the criteria for a PPI. A PPI allows
16 necessary projects to be constructed at a much faster pace with less of a financial burden
17 on the government and the costs of the project can be leveraged against future revenues to
18 be generated by the project;

19 2. Georgia should implement, as soon as practicable, high occupancy toll lanes (HOT
20 lanes) to electronically toll drivers who desire to travel in low congestion lanes for a price.

21 3. Georgia must begin to attract private capital into the transportation arena by preparing
22 and implementing proposals to have private companies build and maintain transportation
23 facilities on behalf of the state. The private companies will be offered concessions (such
24 as toll revenue) in order to make the deal palatable to investors; and

1 4. Georgia must realize that it will be impossible to build highways fast enough to handle
2 the demand for mobility that the future is sure to bring. A public transit system that is
3 accessible, fast, and safe must be included in any viable transportation plan. Whether by
4 express buses, light or heavy rail, or mag-lev train, or any combination thereof, Georgia
5 must fund and construct a modern public transit system in order to continue the dynamic
6 economic growth of this state.

7 WHEREAS, the first step to assuring Georgians of a bright and mobile future is the
8 development of a state-wide strategic transportation plan to accomplish this goal. A
9 state-wide plan should eliminate construction of transportation projects based on political
10 expediency and promote construction based on recognized project criteria that are set forth
11 in the state-wide strategic transportation plan.

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
13 GEORGIA that this body urges the Department of Transportation to develop a state-wide
14 strategic transportation plan, including the elements set forth in this resolution, to assure all
15 Georgians of a mobile and prosperous future.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body urges the Department of Transportation to
17 report to the General Assembly by December 31, 2008, on its progress in developing a
18 state-wide strategic transportation plan.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
20 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the Commissioner of the Georgia
21 Department of Transportation and to each member of the State Transportation Board.