

House Resolution 161

By: Representatives Hugley of the 133rd, Epps of the 128th, Benfield of the 85th, Brooks of the 63rd, Millar of the 79th, and others

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Compensating Mr. John Jerome White; and for other purposes.

- 2 WHEREAS, in 1979, a man forcibly entered the home of a 74 year-old woman in
3 Meriwether County and robbed, beat, and raped her; and

- 4 WHEREAS, a young man named Mr. John Jerome White was convicted of the crimes,
5 largely on eyewitness testimony, and sentenced to life in prison; and

- 6 WHEREAS, he was paroled in 1990, but subsequent convictions caused him to be returned
7 to prison to serve out the life sentence; and

- 8 WHEREAS, DNA tests conducted at the urging of the Georgia Innocence Project led
9 authorities to identify the actual perpetrator of the crimes, a man with whom law enforcement
10 was familiar and who was in the lineup at the time the witness mistakenly identified Mr.
11 White as the perpetrator; and

- 12 WHEREAS, on December 10, 2007, Mr. White was released after his 1979 indictment was
13 nol-prossed; and

- 14 WHEREAS, Mr. White, now 48 years old, lost almost three decades of his life and is now
15 the longest serving of the nation's exonerees due to post-conviction DNA testing; and

- 16 WHEREAS, Mr. White has suffered loss of liberty, personal injury, lost wages, injury to
17 reputation, emotional distress, and other damages as a result of his 28 years of incarceration
18 and expenses in trying to prove his innocence totaling \$3 million; and

- 19 WHEREAS, the conviction, incarceration, and subsequent loss of liberty and other damages
20 occurred through no fault or negligence on the part of Mr. White, and it is only fitting and
21 proper that he be compensated for his loss.

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
23 GEORGIA that the Department of Corrections is authorized and directed to pay the sum of
24 \$2 million to Mr. John Jerome White as compensation as provided above. Said sum shall be
25 paid from funds appropriated to or available to the Department of Corrections and shall be
26 in full and complete satisfaction of all claims against the state arising out of said occurrence.