

House Resolution 177

By: Representatives Long of the 61st, Davis of the 109th, Jordan of the 77th, Davis of the 122nd, Bruce of the 64th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on the Airborne Release of Pentachlorophenol and its
2 Effects on the Health of Georgia Residents; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, pentachlorophenol is devastating to human health and the environment and has
4 been classified by the Environmental Protection Agency as a carcinogen (B2 cancer causing
5 substance) that includes tumors, Hodgkin's disease, soft tissue sarcoma, and acute leukemia;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, it is well documented that exposure to pentachlorophenol damages the liver,
8 kidneys, thyroid, and brain and has been linked to the impairment of the immune system,
9 central nervous system, birth defects, respiratory illness, and cancer; and

10 WHEREAS, many factors increase children's susceptibility to the toxic effects of this
11 chemical and Georgia's children are at a much higher risk than adults of being poisoned or
12 suffering ill health effects from exposure to pentachlorophenol; and

13 WHEREAS, pentachlorophenol is used primarily as a wood preservative and the release by
14 facilities of the toxin into the air during the treatment process is currently unregulated in
15 Georgia; and

16 WHEREAS, those living closest to a wood preservation facility, such as the one in the
17 Atlanta metro area, are at the greatest risk of permanent health damage; and

18 WHEREAS, the effect of pentachlorophenol on air quality and the impact on the health of
19 people exposed to this substance, which is classified by the Environmental Protection
20 Agency as an air pollutant and dangerous toxin, are being continually assessed and studied;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, the federal government does not currently regulate airborne transmission of
23 pentachlorophenol although many states and other countries have set emission limits on the
24 release of the toxin; and

25 WHEREAS, air quality guidelines for pentachlorophenol are currently used in at least 15
26 states and one country: Arizona, California, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, New
27 Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont,
28 Washington, Wisconsin, and Ontario, Canada; and

29 WHEREAS, Georgia has been listed as one of the top five states for the amount of
30 pentachlorophenol released into the environment, and many Georgia residents are currently
31 being exposed to this harmful substance without any limitation on the degree of exposure,
32 thereby placing them at risk of life-threatening illnesses; and

33 WHEREAS, the residents of these communities deserve a remedy for the ongoing presence
34 of pollutants and a thorough study of possible adverse health effects and how they can be
35 ameliorated.

36 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
37 there is created the House Study Committee on the Airborne Release of Pentachlorophenol
38 and its Effects on the Health of Georgia Residents to be composed of five members of the
39 House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
40 The Speaker shall designate one of the House members of the committee to be chairperson
41 of the committee. The chairperson shall call all meetings of the committee.

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall undertake a study of the above
43 issues and recommend any actions or legislation that the committee deems necessary or
44 appropriate. The committee may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as
45 it may deem necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers,
46 perform its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution. The
47 members of the committee shall receive the allowances authorized for legislative members
48 of interim legislative committees but shall receive the same for not more than five days
49 unless additional days are authorized. The funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this
50 resolution shall come from the funds appropriated to the House of Representatives. In the
51 event that the committee makes a report of its findings and recommendations with
52 suggestions for proposed legislation, if any, such report shall be made on or before December
53 31, 2009. The committee shall stand abolished on December 31, 2009.