

## House Resolution 250

By: Representatives Benfield of the 85<sup>th</sup>, Morgan of the 39<sup>th</sup>, Henson of the 87<sup>th</sup>, Bell of the 58<sup>th</sup>, Brooks of the 63<sup>rd</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

- 1    Urging Georgia's district attorneys, in light of the fiscal crisis in this state, to invest resources
- 2    in solving homicides, providing public safety programs, and focusing on violence prevention
- 3    instead of seeking the death penalty; and for other purposes.
- 4    WHEREAS, the death penalty has not only been rejected by a large majority of nations and
- 5    most major religions but is also not used by 15 of the states in our nation; and
- 6    WHEREAS, one hundred and thirty-eight innocent people have been freed from death rows
- 7    across the United States after spending years in prison for crimes they did not commit, some
- 8    coming within days or hours of execution; and
- 9    WHEREAS, life is the most valuable possession of a human being, and there has been
- 10   increasing public awareness of individuals wrongfully convicted of murder, in Georgia and
- 11   elsewhere in the nation; and
- 12   WHEREAS, statistics have shown that there are demographic disparities in the application
- 13   of the death penalty; and
- 14   WHEREAS, there is public concern that racial and socioeconomic factors influence decisions
- 15   to seek or impose the death penalty, and no meaningful procedure exists to ensure uniform
- 16   application of the death penalty in each county throughout the state; and
- 17   WHEREAS, in order for the state to protect its moral and ethical integrity, the state must
- 18   ensure a justice system that is impartial, uncorrupted, equitable, and competent, and further
- 19   study is necessary to ensure that the state is fulfilling its obligation in this sense and,
- 20   therefore, a moratorium on administration of the death penalty is warranted; and
- 21   WHEREAS, death penalty cases cost Georgia taxpayers millions of dollars more than
- 22   permanent incarcerations but do not make citizens any safer, and the resources used on death

23 penalty prosecutions could be better used to solve more crimes, expand and improve services  
24 to crime victims, and provide for other effective public safety programs; and

25 WHEREAS, the cities and counties of this state are facing a severe financial crisis and have  
26 had to cut services needed to keep their neighborhoods safe, including furloughing and laying  
27 off law enforcement personnel, and counties could save millions of dollars each year by  
28 choosing to invest resources in proven violence prevention programs instead of directing  
29 such money toward seeking the death penalty.

30 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
31 the members of this body urge Georgia's district attorneys to stop pursuing the death penalty  
32 and invest their time and resources in solving homicides, providing effective public safety  
33 programs, and focusing on violence prevention.

34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
35 and directed to transmit appropriate copies of this resolution to the Prosecuting Attorneys'  
36 Council of the State of Georgia and each of the District Attorneys of this state.