

Senate Resolution 155

By: Senators Fort of the 39th, Orrock of the 36th and Tate of the 38th

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 SENATE that the members of this body
31 urge Georgia's district attorneys to stop pursuing the death penalty and invest their time and
32 resources in solving homicides, providing effective public safety programs, and focusing on
33 violence prevention.

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