

Senate Resolution 163

By: Senators Jackson of the 2nd and Carter of the 1st

A RESOLUTION

1 Supporting the development, construction, and implementation of a cruise ship terminal
2 facility in the Savannah Harbor; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, tourism is Savannah's major industry, with 6.33 million visitors last year who
4 spent \$1.9 billion and supported 22,000 jobs; and

5 WHEREAS, this industry could grow exponentially if the city were to capture a portion of
6 the nation's \$38 billion cruise ship industry; and

7 WHEREAS, 13.2 million passengers cruised in 2008, a five percent increase over 2007, and
8 demand continues to exceed the supply for cruise ship facilities; and

9 WHEREAS, 35 new cruise ships are scheduled to be delivered between 2009 and 2012, with
10 a total of 69,200 new births; and

11 WHEREAS, of the top four cruise destinations, the Caribbean, Alaska, the Bahamas, and
12 Bermuda, Savannah is positioned to serve all but Alaska, and a Savannah based cruise line
13 would serve 85 percent of the most appealing destinations; and

14 WHEREAS, the cruise industry has established 30 North American embarkation ports within
15 a driving distance for 75 percent of their cruise passengers; and

16 WHEREAS, the industry capacity utilization rate for 2008 was 104 percent, and despite the
17 economic downturn in 2009, the cruise industry continues to grow with 13.4 million guests
18 sailing last year and 14.3 million guests projected to sail by the end of this year; and

19 WHEREAS, embarkation ports in North America are becoming crowded, and Miami, Port
20 Everglades, and Port Canaveral are running out of land for expansion while existing facilities
21 are fully utilized; and

22 WHEREAS, the cruise industry has determined that 40 percent of leisure travelers in
23 America are interested in taking a cruise during the next two years, and that number rises to
24 46 percent among leisure travelers who are interested in visiting Georgia, which shows a
25 robust market that is destined to grow in the years ahead; and

26 WHEREAS, cruises still retain greatest appeal among older travelers, and this profile is
27 consistent with the profile of adults who are interested in visiting Savannah, particularly
28 since it is the nation's largest urban historic landmark district, showcasing azaleas, live oak
29 trees, cobblestone streets, and nationally renowned squares; and

30 WHEREAS, there is no embarkation port located in Georgia, and while Jacksonville is
31 Savannah's closest competitor to the South, it does not offer a nationally recognized historic
32 district, which is most appealing to passengers seeking day excursions; and

33 WHEREAS, the Interstate 16 transportation corridor provides easy access to travelers,
34 particularly those from the metropolitan Atlanta and North Georgia areas desiring to embark
35 from a convenient cruise port location in Savannah, thus saving money and travel time and
36 avoiding expensive air fares; and

37 WHEREAS, preliminary estimates indicate that a home cruise ship port in Savannah could
38 create an industry of up to \$100 million a year, with a potential of hundreds of new
39 sustainable jobs and resulting in an economic development potential for Georgia of over
40 \$1 billion during the next decade; and

41 WHEREAS, making Savannah Georgia's cruise port could generate millions of dollars in
42 new state taxes, thus keeping these resources in Georgia versus other neighboring states.

43 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
44 strongly support public and private efforts to make Savannah the first cruise ship port in
45 Georgia.

46 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body is committed to the development of a cruise
47 ship terminal in the Savannah Harbor that will provide new jobs and enhance the overall
48 economic development of Georgia.

49 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
50 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the public and the press.