

Senate Resolution 312

By: Senators Carter of the 1st, Williams of the 19th, Jackson of the 2nd, Staton of the 18th, Cowser of the 46th and others

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Endorsing the efforts to deepen the ports in Savannah, Georgia, and Charleston, South
- 2 Carolina; and for other purposes.

- 3 WHEREAS, deepwater ports in the Southeast are key gateways to international trade and
- 4 must be deepened to adequately accommodate the larger, more efficient container ships
- 5 calling at the ports today; and

- 6 WHEREAS, it is in the interest of the citizens of the Southeastern United States that major
- 7 container ports in Savannah, Georgia, and Charleston, South Carolina, be deepened in order
- 8 to prepare for the new generation of container ships which will begin to dominate ocean
- 9 commerce when the expansion of the Panama Canal is completed in 2014; and

- 10 WHEREAS, public and private terminals at the Ports of Savannah and Charleston are
- 11 primary drivers of the regional economy; and

- 12 WHEREAS, completion of the proposed Jasper Ocean Terminal will be critical to the
- 13 region's future economic prosperity and should be pursued; and

- 14 WHEREAS, the Port of Savannah is the fourth largest and has been the fastest growing
- 15 container port in the United States and is responsible for moving 8.3% of all U.S.
- 16 containerized cargo and more than 18% of all East Coast trade; and

- 17 WHEREAS, the Port of Savannah handled nearly 12% of all U.S. containerized exports in
- 18 FY2010, a total of 1.14 million export TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units), with an export
- 19 ratio of 54%; and

- 20 WHEREAS, approximately 300,000 Georgia jobs and \$1.5 billion in state taxes are directly
- 21 or indirectly dependent on Georgia's ports; and

22 WHEREAS, the larger, more efficient container ships calling at Savannah today, and
23 expected to increase exponentially when the Panama Canal expansion is completed, require
24 channel depths up to 48 feet; and

25 WHEREAS, the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project (SHEP) will assist the nation in
26 successfully meeting the National Export Initiative aimed at doubling United States exports
27 over the next five years, by providing critical infrastructure to accommodate the export
28 growth; and

29 WHEREAS, the SHEP, with significant federal agency collaboration throughout the study
30 process as well as the incorporation of adaptive management, serves as a model for future
31 projects; and

32 WHEREAS, failure to proceed with deepening the Savannah Harbor could irreparably harm
33 the Southeast's ability to serve global commerce and result in a substantial loss of business
34 and jobs; and

35 WHEREAS, vessel transportation and tidal delay costs would increase without deepening
36 of the Savannah navigation channel; and

37 WHEREAS, deepening the harbor will ensure continued growth of the Port and the economic
38 well-being of the Southeast; and

39 WHEREAS, a Tier II Environmental Impact Statement and General Reevaluation Report
40 have been completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers identifying the viability of
41 deepening the Port of Savannah to as much as -48 feet at mean low water.

42 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY that the
43 members of this body endorse the proposed deepening of the federal navigation channel at
44 Savannah Harbor, located in Chatham County, Georgia, to -48 feet mean low water.

45 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the construction of the Savannah Harbor Expansion
46 Project by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should be undertaken expeditiously and in
47 keeping with the authorization of the project by the United States Congress.

48 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
49 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, the

50 Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Secretary of the United States
51 Senate, the Georgia Congressional Delegation, the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil
52 Works), the Chief of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and the Georgia Ports
53 Authority.