

Senate Resolution 326

By: Senators James of the 35th, Seay of the 34th, Tate of the 38th, Davenport of the 44th, Henson of the 41st and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Joint Study Committee on Renewable Energy Industries in Georgia; and for
2 other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, renewable portfolio standards require electric utilities to provide a specified
4 portion of their power generation from renewable resources, such as biomass, solar, and
5 wind, and recoverable resources, such as landfill gases and solid waste; and

6 WHEREAS, at least 29 states and the District of Columbia have mandated renewable
7 portfolio standards, and seven states have voluntary renewable portfolio goals; and

8 WHEREAS, in 2007 Congress enacted the Energy Independence Act designed to increase
9 energy efficiency, enhance the availability of renewable energy, and increase the production
10 of clean renewable fuels, and under that Act the federal Environmental Protection Agency
11 broadened the existing Federal Renewable Fuels Standard, FRS1, into FRS2, increasing the
12 volume of renewable fuel required to be blended into transportation fuel from 9 billion
13 gallons in 2008 to 36 billion gallons by 2022; and

14 WHEREAS, one out of every seven Georgians works in agriculture, and agribusiness
15 contributes over \$67 billion to the state's economy, representing 12 percent of the state's
16 annual economic output; and

17 WHEREAS, more than 65 percent of the geographic area of Georgia is in forest land, and
18 forestry is a \$16.7 billion per year industry in the state; and

19 WHEREAS, Georgia imports more than 98 percent of the fuels used to generate electricity
20 in the state, in the form of coal, natural gas, and nuclear fuel, and the price of coal and natural
21 gas has been rising at an alarming rate; and

22 WHEREAS, while Georgia has no known coal deposits, the state does produce a wide
23 variety of renewable materials which can be used in the production of energy; and

24 WHEREAS, increased use of renewable and recoverable resources to generate electricity and
25 increased energy efficiency could reduce harmful emissions, particularly from existing coal
26 fueled generation plants; and

27 WHEREAS, increased use of biomass for the generation of electric power can be an
28 excellent tool for economic development, particularly in rural areas, where biomass is
29 available; and

30 WHEREAS, it is vital that the legislature recognize the economic, environmental, and fuel
31 diversity benefits of renewable energy resources, encourage the establishment of a market
32 for renewable energy in Georgia using the state's renewable energy resources, and encourage
33 the further development of those resources; and

34 WHEREAS, the General Assembly intends to do everything necessary to lessen this state's
35 dependence on imported coal, oil, and natural gas by encouraging the greater use of
36 renewable energy by establishing goals for electric utility companies in implementing
37 renewable and recoverable portfolio standards.

38 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
39 GEORGIA that there is created the Joint Study Committee on Renewable Energy Industries
40 in Georgia to be composed of 13 members as follows: two members from the general public
41 appointed by the Governor representing the forestry industry; two members from the general
42 public appointed by the President of the Senate representing the farming industry; two
43 members from the general public appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives,
44 at least one of whom shall represent the environmental community; two members of the
45 general public appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, at least one
46 of whom shall be a legal professional; one member of the Public Service Commission
47 selected by the chairperson of the commission; one member of the general public appointed
48 by the Commissioner of Agriculture; the author of this resolution; and one member of the
49 House appointed by the author of this resolution. Such members, after their appointment,
50 shall appoint a chairperson from the general public. All appointees from the general public
51 shall be persons who are professionally involved in the generation of renewable and
52 sustainable resources and the production of renewable energy in, without limitation, farming,
53 forestry, biomass technology, and alternative energy technology.

54 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall undertake a study of the conditions,
55 needs, issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any actions
56 or legislation that the committee deems necessary or appropriate. The committee shall study
57 the implementation of a renewable energy portfolio in Georgia so this state can be
58 competitive in the field of renewable energy industries. The committee may conduct such
59 meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or convenient to enable
60 it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and accomplish the
61 objectives and purposes of this resolution. The members of the committee shall serve
62 without compensation. The Department of Agriculture shall provide administrative
63 assistance to the committee. The committee shall make a written interim report to the
64 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives not
65 later than September 30, 2011, and shall make a final report to such officers not later than
66 February 28, 2012. The committee shall stand abolished on February 28, 2012.