

House Resolution 498

By: Representatives Abdul-Salaam of the 74th, Brooks of the 63rd, Beasley-Teague of the 65th, Fludd of the 66th, Williams of the 89th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the initiative known as the "Georgia Second Chance Reintegrating Initiative"
2 and expressing a sincere interest in working in a bipartisan manner to bring about change in
3 this state to reduce the rate of offender recidivism; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, the federal Second Chance Act of 2007, which bears the short title "Community
5 Safety Through Recidivism Prevention," is federal legislation designed to ensure the safe and
6 successful return of prisoners to the community which provides for the expansion of state and
7 local reentry demonstration projects to provide expanded services to offenders and their
8 families for reentry into society, as well as the necessary services to remain productive
9 members of society, and that federal Act serves as a model for states to follow; and

10 WHEREAS, the General Assembly recognizes the hard fact that the rate of offender
11 recidivism is unacceptable in this state and that recidivism exacts a heavy toll in human
12 suffering on the part of the crime victims, the offender's families and the offenders
13 themselves; and

14 WHEREAS, the high rate of recidivism comes with a high economic cost in terms of money
15 spent on public safety, jails, and penal institutions, losses as a result of crime, and, perhaps
16 the greatest loss of all, the wasted potential of the repeat offender who could have been
17 rehabilitated into a productive citizen; and

18 WHEREAS, the Governor is working on alternatives to incarceration, which leaves offenders
19 in the community and offers the opportunity for rehabilitation, but without a network of
20 support those offenders and offenders released from incarceration face nearly insurmountable
21 obstacles in trying to reintegrate into society, including substandard levels of education, lack
22 of job training, substance abuse, alienation from families and loved ones, and the inability
23 to achieve acceptance by the community at large; and

24 WHEREAS, the only hope these offenders have to rise above their condition as
25 "ex-offender" and achieve the status of "citizen" is through second chance reintegration
26 programs provided by the state and local communities and nonprofit organizations which
27 provide the services needed for men and women to readjust to society after their period of
28 incarceration and avoid the very conditions that lead inexorably back to criminal activity; and

29 WHEREAS, a holistic, coordinated, state-wide second chance initiative will pay dividends
30 in reducing the impact of recidivism in terms of economic cost and human suffering.

31 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
32 the members of this body recognize the initiative known as the "Georgia Second Chance
33 Reintegrating Initiative" and express a sincere interest in working in a bipartisan manner to
34 bring about change in this state to reduce the rate of offender recidivism.

35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of House of Representatives is authorized and
36 directed to transmit appropriate copies of this resolution to the public and the press.