

Senate Resolution 352

By: Senators James of the 35th, Davenport of the 44th, Seay of the 34th, Henson of the 41st, Butler of the 55th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and commending the Turkish-American community in Georgia and the Istanbul
2 Center, for their contributions to diversity, economic well-being, culture, and the quality of
3 life in the state and designating March 29, 2011, as Turkish-American Day at the Capitol;
4 and for other purposes.

5 WHEREAS, there are an estimated 8,000 Turkish-Americans residing in the State of Georgia
6 and 500 Turkish-American businesses; and

7 WHEREAS, the Turkish-American community makes significant contributions to the
8 cultural diversity, vitality, and economic well-being of the State of Georgia; and

9 WHEREAS, Georgia's trade with Turkey increased by more than 65 percent over the last
10 year through the efforts of the Turkish-American community, the Turkish American
11 Chamber of Commerce of the Southeast United States, and the Istanbul Center; and

12 WHEREAS, the Istanbul Center is a nonprofit organization headquartered in Atlanta that has
13 a branch location in Norcross to provide assistance to the state and other areas of the United
14 States by promoting better understanding and closer relations among various and diverse
15 communities; and

16 WHEREAS, the Istanbul Center has become the premiere representative organization of
17 Turkish culture by disseminating knowledge of the language, history, culture, education, and
18 social life of Turkey in Georgia and other states in the Southeast; and

19 WHEREAS, in facing the challenges of today's world, the Istanbul Center encourages
20 dialogue between the Turkish-American community and the world through educational,
21 cultural, and humanitarian works; and

22 WHEREAS, Istanbul Center promotes programs such as the annually organized Atlanta
23 Turkish Festival, Childrens' Festival, food festivals, cooking classes, art and handcraft
24 exhibits, and music and dance performances that help educate and inform the citizens of
25 Georgia about Turkish culture; and

26 WHEREAS, the annual Atlanta Turkish Festival attracts thousands of Americans and Turks
27 to Atlanta to enjoy Turkish culture, food, art, handicrafts, music, and concerts. Frequently,
28 special guests from Turkey perform music or artistic demonstrations at the festival; and

29 WHEREAS, the Istanbul Center has facilitated greater cultural understanding between
30 Turkish-Americans and the people of Georgia by providing opportunities for dialogue with
31 community leaders, many of whom are of different cultures and faith backgrounds, as
32 evidenced by the center's cultural and educational programming; and

33 WHEREAS, the Turkish-Americans are devoted to improving the lives of others, assisting
34 the Istanbul Center with relief programs for victims of natural and other disasters, organizing
35 donations and food drive programs, and encouraging others in the Turkish-American
36 community to volunteer at the Atlanta Community Food Bank and several area homeless
37 shelters; and

38 WHEREAS, the Istanbul Center reciprocally promotes Georgia and the Southeastern U.S.
39 in Turkey through television programming, interviews, advertisements, and trips to Turkey.

40 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
41 recognize the Turkish-American community of Georgia and the Istanbul Center and
42 commend them for their contributions to the State of Georgia.

43 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that March 29, 2011, is declared Turkish-American Day at
44 the Capitol.

45 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
46 to provide appropriate copies of this Resolution to the public and the press.