

Senate Resolution 508

By: Senators Carter of the 42nd, Bulloch of the 11th, Golden of the 8th, Bethel of the 54th, Henson of the 41st and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending farm to school programs; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, Georgia ranks 2nd in the nation in childhood obesity incidence; with
3 obesity-related healthcare costs to the state estimated at nearly \$2.5 billion annually
4 according to the Georgia Department of Community Health; and

5 WHEREAS, Georgia is the 6th largest producer of fruits and vegetables in the nation yet
6 according to the Centers for Disease Control less than 14% of Georgians consume the
7 recommended daily allowance of fruits and vegetables; and

8 WHEREAS, Georgia's agricultural economy produces some of the finest goods in the world
9 yet few make it onto Georgia tables, with nearly \$16 billion of the \$20 billion spent annually
10 on food going to out-of-state producers; and

11 WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Education serves 1.5 million meals a day and would
12 represent a significant and consistent market opportunity for Georgia producers; and

13 WHEREAS, a recent University of Georgia study estimated a small increase in local
14 purchasing would keep hundreds of millions of dollars in Georgia's local economies,
15 stimulating job growth and protecting our farm economy and agrarian heritage; and

16 WHEREAS, farm to school programs represent an innovative opportunity to address some
17 of the most critical issues facing Georgia through a comprehensive approach that seeks to
18 improve child nutrition – thus improving academic performance and providing local market
19 opportunities for Georgia farmers; and

20 WHEREAS, evidence-based results of farm to school programs include improved changes
21 in personal diets and an increase in revenue staying in the local community – fueling direct
22 and indirect job protection and creation; and

23 WHEREAS, healthier kids means more successful kids, as research indicates healthy
24 students perform better on testing and are absent less often; and

25 WHEREAS, several Georgia school systems are successfully implementing farm to school
26 programs including Atlanta Public Schools, City Schools of Decatur, Cherokee County,
27 Cobb County, Douglas County, and Gwinnett County; and

28 WHEREAS, community partners and local assets are playing a critical role in program
29 success in these communities; and

30 WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly recognizes the importance of these programs
31 and encourages more schools to adopt farm to school programs and the departments of
32 education and agriculture to initiate a joint taskforce to strategize program models that can
33 be used to spread farm to school programs statewide.

34 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
35 commend farm to school as a viable solution to address Georgia's obesity crisis and provide
36 economic opportunity for Georgia farmers.

37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
38 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the Georgia Department of Education.