

House Resolution 880

By: Representatives Maddox of the 127th, Kaiser of the 59th, Smith of the 70th, McCall of the 30th, and Drenner of the 86th

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on Open Loop Geothermal Heating and Cooling
2 Systems; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, it is generally accepted that geothermal heating systems are more
4 environmentally friendly than conventional heating and cooling systems; and

5 WHEREAS, more and more property owners are turning to geothermal heating and cooling
6 systems for increased efficiency to heat and cool their homes and other structures; and

7 WHEREAS, open loop systems are currently not permitted due to the fact that some may use
8 injection wells; and

9 WHEREAS, injection wells are considered by many to be environmentally safe; and

10 WHEREAS, an open loop geothermal system requires one well drilled into one aquifer; and

11 WHEREAS, open loop systems dramatically reduce costs to the consumer; and

12 WHEREAS, open loop systems thermodynamically are extremely efficient; and

13 WHEREAS, open loop systems allow the usage of discharge water for alternative uses, i.e.
14 irrigation, pond renewal, and aeration; and

15 WHEREAS, repairs to open loop systems can be made at the ground surface economically
16 and increases to demand can be met by pump sizing; and

17 WHEREAS, in an open loop system a water well is developed and produces water that is
18 returned to the surficial aquifer in an alternative discharge system and an injection well
19 would allow disposal into its original source; and

20 WHEREAS, in open loop systems modern heat pumps are produced using heat exchangers
21 that are tolerant of a variety of water qualities, even salt water; and

22 WHEREAS, open loop systems are environmentally friendly in that they require little piping,
23 little disturbance to land surfaces, produce a water source that can be used as an alternative
24 for nonpotable uses, and thus reduce demand on drinking water supplies; and

25 WHEREAS, open loop systems and injection wells are approved in most of the states
26 surrounding the State of Georgia.

27 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
28 there is created the House Study Committee on Open Loop Geothermal Heating and Cooling
29 Systems to be composed of five members of the House of Representatives who shall be
30 appointed by the Speaker of the House from the members of the House Committee on
31 Natural Resources and Environment. The Speaker shall designate a member of the
32 committee as chairperson of the committee. The committee shall meet on the call of the
33 chairperson.

34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall undertake a study and analysis of
35 the current status of the approval process of the Environmental Protection Division of the
36 Department of Natural Resources as it relates to open loop geothermal heating and cooling
37 systems and shall conduct a comprehensive analysis of the state's strategic needs for
38 expedited approval of these systems. The committee shall also recommend any action or
39 legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate. The committee may
40 conduct its meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or convenient
41 to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and accomplish
42 its objectives and purposes. The members of the committee shall receive the allowances
43 authorized for legislative members of interim legislative committees but shall receive the
44 same for not more than three days unless additional days are authorized. The funds necessary
45 to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from the funds appropriated to the
46 House of Representatives. The committee is directed to make a report of its findings and
47 recommendations not later than December 31, 2011. The committee shall stand abolished on
48 December 31, 2011.