

House Resolution 1160

By: Representatives Hugley of the 133rd, Smyre of the 132nd, and Buckner of the 130th

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Compensating Mr. Lathan Rydell Word; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, on September 14, 1999, six days before he was scheduled to begin Marine Corps boot camp, Mr. Lathan Rydell Word was informed that the police were searching for him in connection with an armed robbery; and
- 5 WHEREAS, Mr. Word immediately contacted the Columbus Police Department in an attempt to clear his name, but he was arrested and, on September 7, 2000, was convicted of armed robbery and possession of a firearm and sentenced to 15 years in prison; and
- 8 WHEREAS, in March of 2011, his conviction was overturned by the Georgia Court of Appeals and a new trial was ordered, and when he was offered the opportunity to plead guilty for time served, he refused and demanded a new trial to prove his innocence; and
- 11 WHEREAS, at his new trial, the victim of the alleged crime testified that the victim had not been truthful and that Mr. Word was not the man who robbed him, and after nearly 11 years in prison, Mr. Word was exonerated of the crime and released; and
- 14 WHEREAS, Mr. Word has suffered loss of liberty, personal injury, lost wages, injury to reputation, emotional distress, and other damages as a result of his nearly 11 years of incarceration and expenses in trying to prove his innocence; and
- 17 WHEREAS, the conviction, incarceration, and subsequent loss of liberty and other damages occurred through no fault or negligence on the part of Mr. Word, and it is only fitting and proper that he be compensated for his loss.
- 20 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA that the Department of Corrections is authorized and directed to pay the sum of \$2 million to Mr. Lathan Rydell Word as compensation as provided above. Said sum shall

23 be paid from funds appropriated to or available to the Department of Corrections and shall
24 be in full and complete satisfaction of all claims against the state arising out of said
25 occurrence. Said sum shall not be subject to state income taxes and shall be paid in the form
26 of an annuity over a 20-year period with an initial lump sum payment of \$100,000.00.