

Senate Resolution 28

By: Senators Loudermilk of the 14th, Ligon, Jr. of the 3rd, Heath of the 31st, Crane of the 28th, Hill of the 32nd and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Expressing remorse for the state's past practice of condoning involuntary servitude; and for
2 other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the Founding Fathers of this nation firmly held to the principle that these rights
4 are to be exercised freely by all men, only abridged or constrained as necessary to protect
5 these rights, according to the "laws of nature and of nature's God"; and

6 WHEREAS, any restraint of natural liberty not necessary or expedient to the preservation of
7 these rights is an act of tyranny or oppression; and

8 WHEREAS, according to the Declaration of Independence, "governments are instituted
9 among men to preserve these rights," which include the right to live in liberty and free from
10 oppression, and the right to pursue happiness; and

11 WHEREAS, according to the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of
12 Georgia, it is the responsibility of our government to "secure the blessings of liberty" and "by
13 relying upon the protection and guidance of Almighty God," this government shall "transmit
14 to posterity the enjoyment of liberty"; and

15 WHEREAS, our Founding Fathers recognized, through the Ninth Amendment to the
16 Constitution, that our rights are given, not by the state, but by God and, although certain
17 rights may not be enumerated in the Constitution of the United States, they belong to the
18 people and are to be duly protected; and

19 WHEREAS, James Oglethorpe, who founded the colony of Georgia in 1732, recognized
20 these universal truths and therefore banned the practice of slavery in that colony; and

21 WHEREAS, Georgia remained a free colony until 1751 when, under royal decree, the
22 government departed from the long recognized principles of liberty and justice for all men

23 and, under the growing pressure of plantation owners in other Southern colonies, legalized
24 the involuntary servitude of certain races of humans; and

25 WHEREAS, during the convening of the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia,
26 Pennsylvania, delegates from Georgia opposed the condemnation of slavery, included in the
27 original draft of the Declaration of Independence, which was thereafter removed; and

28 WHEREAS, the practice of slavery was sanctioned, condoned, and perpetuated through the
29 laws of this state until the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment of the United States
30 Constitution on December 18, 1865; and

31 WHEREAS, while even the most abject apology cannot right the transgressions, injustices,
32 and oppressive acts of the past, the spirit of true repentance can promote reconciliation
33 among all people and avert the repetition of past injustices for future generations.

34 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
35 GEORGIA that the State of Georgia hereby acknowledges, as was written in the original
36 draft of the Declaration of Independence, that the act of slavery is a "cruel warfare against
37 human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty"; therefore, this state
38 expresses profound remorse and lamentations for the past practice of involuntary servitude
39 instituted, condoned, and maintained through the laws of this state.

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that through the spirit of repentance and reconciliation "this
41 nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom," and the government of this state shall
42 hitherto commit itself to the preservation and protection of the natural rights of all people and
43 to the propagation of the ideals of liberty and justice for all mankind.