

House Resolution 1305

By: Representative Stephens of the 164<sup>th</sup>

### A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the CEBLA Water Supply Task Force; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division's May 2013 announcement to  
3 prohibit new groundwater permits in the coastal Georgia counties of Chatham, Bryan,  
4 Liberty, and that portion of Effingham south of Highway 119 (CEBLA) immediately makes  
5 obsolete the 2006 Coastal Georgia Water and Wastewater Permitting Plan for Managing Salt  
6 Water Intrusion (CPP); and

7 WHEREAS, the net impact of the 2013 Floridan Prohibition is that the Coastal Groundwater  
8 Management Strategy must immediately be revisited and modified to reflect the real effect  
9 of this new rule; and

10 WHEREAS, within coastal Georgia, subregion 1 (CEBLA) will experience the highest rates  
11 of growth in population during the next 25 years, with total projected water use for the  
12 CEBLA subregion growing from approximately 75 MGD (2010) to 125 MGD by 2050; and

13 WHEREAS, Bryan and Liberty Counties are completely dependent upon groundwater for  
14 growth with projected groundwater use projected to double by 2050; and

15 WHEREAS, under the 2013 Floridan Prohibition, the CEBLA subregion will have a stunning  
16 water shortage of 50 MGD by 2050; and

17 WHEREAS, approximately 14 percent of Chatham's and 50 percent of Effingham's water use  
18 is currently provided by surface water, and that usage should remain constant through 2050;  
19 and

20 WHEREAS, the permitted water resources and taps that we have in our possession today are  
21 the only resources that we can manage to meet the growth and economic development needs  
22 of the foreseeable future; and

23 WHEREAS, without changes in policy and the development of new management techniques,  
24 we are at the limits of our growth and the economy of CEBLA suffers.

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
26 GEORGIA that there is created the CEBLA Water Supply Task Force, comprising  
27 representatives from local and state governments, citizens, and private stakeholders to begin  
28 the process of identifying funding sources to facilitate the development of infrastructure to  
29 supply our regional needs.

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the CEBLA Task Force is charged to consider all  
31 options which help eliminate the potential of salt water intrusion into the Floridan Aquifer  
32 while providing adequate drinking water supplies for the expected growth in the threatened  
33 counties. Such options shall include, but not be limited to, the following: mandatory  
34 conservation requirements for all users; establishment of goals and a timetable for converting  
35 more current aquifer users to surface water; flexibility in existing permits to reward  
36 conservation and move existing users to surface water sources; identification of funding  
37 sources to encourage conversion of aquifer users to surface water surfaces; identification of  
38 new technology; and revisions of existing statutes and rules, regulations, or policies to allow  
39 greater flexibility in repurposing and deploying permitted resources for consumptive use.

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the membership of the CEBLA Task Force shall consist  
41 of four persons representing county commissions, one appointed by each of the county  
42 commissions of Bryan, Chatham, Effingham, and Liberty Counties; one person representing  
43 the City of Savannah appointed by the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah; three  
44 persons representing municipalities, one selected by the combined mayors within each of  
45 Bryan, Effingham, and Liberty Counties; two persons representing water suppliers, selected  
46 by the combined local delegations in the House of Representatives and the Senate for Bryan,  
47 Chatham, Effingham, and Liberty Counties; and two persons representing industry, selected  
48 by the combined local delegations in the House of Representatives and the Senate for Bryan,  
49 Chatham, Effingham, and Liberty Counties.

50 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members shall serve for the life of the CEBLA Task  
51 Force and vacancies shall be filled in the manner of the original appointments. Members  
52 shall serve without compensation.

53 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the CEBLA Task Force shall convene not later than  
54 May 1, 2014, to study the issues and return a recommendation to the General Assembly not  
55 later than December 1, 2014. The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2014.