

Senate Resolution 1236

By: Senators Balfour of the 9th, Shafer of the 48th, Albers of the 56th and Jones of the 25th

A RESOLUTION

1 Requesting the Georgia Secretary of State to look into the feasibility of vote-by-phone in
2 Georgia by conducting a pilot program in the 2014 election for use by overseas and military
3 voters; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, the federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)
5 was enacted by Congress in 1986 to assist military and overseas citizens in the voting process
6 and to increase their ability to cast a valid ballot; and

7 WHEREAS, in a 2009 report commissioned by the Overseas Vote Foundation, it was
8 estimated that the State of Georgia had 141,100 eligible UOCAVA voters in 2008. However,
9 in the 2012 general election, 20,492 UOCAVA ballots were transmitted in Georgia; and

10 WHEREAS, a 2013 nationwide survey of military and overseas voters, also conducted by
11 the Overseas Vote Foundation, found 22 percent of respondents who attempted to vote in
12 2012 could not because they either did not get a ballot or received it too late; and

13 WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly has long been a supporter of our men and
14 women in uniform and has passed numerous pieces of legislation to ensure they have every
15 opportunity to vote in elections. Military voters have several opportunities to receive and cast
16 their ballot, including by some electronic means; and

17 WHEREAS, technology exists that could allow military personnel to cast their ballot in a
18 secure manner, instantaneously, and from anywhere in the world by utilizing vote-by-phone
19 technology; and

20 WHEREAS, vote-by-phone has been tested, approved, and utilized in federal, state, and local
21 elections in Maine, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, Oregon, Oklahoma, and Puerto
22 Rico; and

23 WHEREAS, vote-by-phone has been successfully utilized in elections since 2006. To date,
24 over 10,000 ballots have been securely and successfully cast; and

25 WHEREAS, to date, this technology has been used by blind and disabled voters, providing
26 them with the ability to securely and privately cast a ballot. However, this technology has
27 wide-ranging impact that could open up the opportunity to vote to tens of thousands of
28 military personnel.

29 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
30 GEORGIA that the Georgia Secretary of State is requested to look into the feasibility of
31 vote-by-phone in Georgia by conducting a pilot program in the 2014 election for use by
32 overseas and military voters.

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of State is further requested to report back
34 to the General Assembly the results of the pilot and any recommendation for further use of
35 vote-by-phone.