

Senate Resolution 407

By: Senator Unterman of the 45th

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Joint Study Committee on Preventing Youth Substance Use Disorders; and for
2 other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, drug and alcohol use among Georgia's youth leads to poorer health, diminished
4 productivity, and higher health care costs; and

5 WHEREAS, the vast majority of adults who have a substance use disorder began their use
6 before the age of 18; and

7 WHEREAS, drugs and alcohol are contributors to the three leading causes of teen deaths;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, according to the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System of the Centers for
10 Disease Control and Prevention, 17.7 percent of Georgia high school students have taken
11 prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription and 13.3 percent of Georgia high school
12 students had five or more drinks in one day in the last 30 days; and

13 WHEREAS, opiate addiction and deaths from overdose have increased in recent years; and

14 WHEREAS, the rate of suicide among the teenage population is rising at an alarming rate;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, early detection and treatment of a substance use disorder are much more
17 effective and less costly than dealing with the consequences of addiction or juvenile justice
18 involvement; and

19 WHEREAS, screening is a key step in preventing young people from misusing drugs and
20 alcohol, and reducing incidences of overdose and suicide; and

21 WHEREAS, research supports that early access to screening and counseling can help young
22 people avoid the destructive consequences of drug and alcohol misuse and addiction; and

23 WHEREAS, Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) is an
24 evidence-based public health approach that helps identify alcohol or drug problems and
25 guides follow-up counseling and treatment if a problem exists; and

26 WHEREAS, SBIRT is used in physicians' offices and is becoming part of medical practices
27 in clinics, emergency rooms, trauma centers, and other health care settings; and

28 WHEREAS, the Georgia Basics Program implemented SBIRT in the emergency departments
29 of the Medical Center of Central Georgia and Grady Memorial Hospital and found the
30 program was effective in reducing risky substance abuse; and

31 WHEREAS, it would be beneficial for the General Assembly to study the best pathways to
32 cost-effective prevention and early intervention strategies, to reduce addiction and prevent
33 suicide among Georgia adolescents.

34 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
35 GEORGIA:

36 (1) **Creation of joint study committee.** There is created the Joint Study Committee on
37 Preventing Youth Substance Use Disorders.

38 (2) **Members and officers.**

39 (A) The committee shall be composed of eight members.

40 (B) The President of the Senate shall appoint four members of the Senate as members
41 of the committee and shall designate one of such members as cochairperson.

42 (C) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint four members of the
43 House of Representatives as members of the committee and shall designate one of such
44 members as cochairperson.

45 (3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall undertake a study of the conditions, needs,
46 issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any action or
47 legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate.

48 (4) **Meetings.** The cochairpersons shall call all meetings of the committee. The
49 committee may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem
50 necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform
51 its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution.

52 (5) **Allowances and funding.** The legislative members of the committee shall receive
53 the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia
54 Annotated. The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any
55 member of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized.
56 Funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
57 appropriated to the Senate and the House of Representatives.

58 (6) **Report.**

59 (A) In the event the committee adopts any specific findings or recommendations that
60 include suggestions for proposed legislation, the cochairpersons shall file a report of the
61 same prior to the date of abolishment specified in this resolution, subject to
62 subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.

63 (B) In the event the committee adopts a report that does not include suggestions for
64 proposed legislation, the cochairpersons shall file the report, subject to
65 subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.

66 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
67 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
68 A report so approved shall be signed by the cochairpersons of the committee and filed
69 with the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

70 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the cochairpersons may file with the
71 Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives copies of the
72 minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu thereof.

73 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2015.