

House Resolution 768

By: Representatives Chandler of the 105th, Ballinger of the 23rd, Welch of the 110th, Quick of the 117th, Dickerson of the 113th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Georgia's mandatory reporting law was created in 1965 and has not been
4 substantially rewritten since 1990; and

5 WHEREAS, the protection of children is of utmost importance to this body and society; and

6 WHEREAS, mandatory reporters include individuals working in health care, education, law
7 enforcement, and child welfare, and it is critical for mandatory reporters to identify what
8 needs to be reported and to whom and for there to be uniformity in the process of reporting
9 child abuse; and

10 WHEREAS, Georgia law requires certain individuals who have "reasonable cause to believe
11 that a child has been abused" must report such abuse, and there may be some confusion as
12 to when abuse should be reported; and

13 WHEREAS, schools and health care facilities may have different policies regarding reporting
14 child abuse, and there may be a need for consistent policies; and

15 WHEREAS, there may need to be a systematic state-wide confirmation process to verify that
16 the Department of Human Services has received a report of child abuse; and

17 WHEREAS, the Department of Human Services, prosecuting attorneys, and law enforcement
18 all have an interest in ensuring that child abuse is properly reported.

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

20 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Study Committee
21 on Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse.

22 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of five members of the
23 House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of
24 Representatives. The Speaker shall also appoint an additional two nonlegislative
25 members of the committee. The Speaker shall designate one of the legislative appointees
26 as chairperson of the committee.

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

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

34 (5) **Allowances, expenses, and funding.**

35 (A) The legislative members of the committee shall receive the allowances provided
36 for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

37 (B) Members of the committee who are not legislators, state officials, or state
38 employees shall receive a daily expense allowance in an amount the same as that
39 specified in subsection (b) of Code Section 45-7-21 of the Official Code of Georgia
40 Annotated, as well as the mileage or transportation allowance authorized for state
41 employees.

42 (C) The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any member
43 of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized. Funds
44 necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
45 appropriated to the House of Representatives.

46 (6) **Report.**

47 (A) In the event the committee adopts any specific findings or recommendations that
48 include suggestions for proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file a report of the
49 same prior to the date of abolishment specified in this resolution, subject to
50 subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.

51 (B) In the event the committee adopts a report that does not include suggestions for
52 proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file the report, subject to subparagraph (C)
53 of this paragraph.

54 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
55 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
56 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
57 the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

58 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Clerk of the
59 House of Representatives a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu
60 thereof.

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