

Senate Resolution 597

By: Senators Shafer of the 48th, Henson of the 41st, Jackson of the 24th, Jones II of the 22nd, Beach of the 21st and others

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Honoring the life and memory of Governor Carl Sanders; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia mourns the loss of one of its most distinguished citizens
3 with the passing of Governor Carl Sanders on November 16, 2014; and
- 4 WHEREAS, Governor Carl Sanders was born on May 15, 1925, in Augusta, Georgia, and
5 attended the Academy of Richmond County, where he excelled in athletics and was later
6 named to the school's Hall of Fame; and
- 7 WHEREAS, he attended the University of Georgia on a football scholarship, but World War
8 II interrupted his studies; in 1943 he enlisted in the Army Air Corps where he was
9 commissioned to pilot B-17 heavy bombers; and
- 10 WHEREAS, after the war, he completed his degree and entered the University of Georgia
11 Law School; in 1947, he received his LL.B. degree and was admitted to the bar; and
- 12 WHEREAS, while practicing law in Augusta, Sanders was active in civic and community
13 affairs and served as a deacon and Sunday school teacher at Hill Baptist Church; in 1955, the
14 Augusta Chamber of Commerce elected him Young Man of the Year, and in 1959, the
15 Georgia Jaycees named him one of the five Outstanding Young Georgians; and
- 16 WHEREAS, his political career began in 1954 when he was elected to the Georgia House
17 of Representatives, and two years later he advanced to the State Senate, where he was elected
18 President Pro Tempore; in 1962, Sanders ran for Governor, and in a hard-fought campaign,
19 defeated Marvin Griffin, a former governor; and
- 20 WHEREAS, Sanders' victory over Griffin marked a turning point in Georgia's political
21 history; following the demise of the county unit system, Sanders was the first Georgia

22 governor chosen by popular vote, the first from an urban area to be elected since 1916, and,
23 at age 37, the youngest governor in the country; and

24 WHEREAS, Governor Sanders' image as a progressive governor during the turbulent period
25 of the 1960s developed due to his strong political advocacy for keeping Georgia's public
26 schools open when many Southern leaders favored closing schools to avoid implementing
27 court orders to desegregate, and although he lived and came of age in a rigidly segregated
28 society, he developed a moderate position on race issues in contrast to a number of other
29 Southern governors of that period; and

30 WHEREAS, he befriended and worked with Leroy Johnson, the first African American to
31 serve in the Georgia Senate; worked quietly to remove vestiges of the Jim Crow system from
32 the state capitol and other state facilities; and appointed the first African Americans to serve
33 in the Georgia State Patrol, the Governor's Commission to Improve Education, and the
34 Georgia delegation to the Democratic National Convention; and

35 WHEREAS, Sanders made education the first priority of his administration and directed
36 nearly 60 cents of every tax dollar into education, added 10,000 new teachers, established
37 a master plan for education, and set minimum standards for public schools; in addition, he
38 began the Governor's Honors Program for exceptional students, developed an extensive
39 educational television network, encouraged school consolidation, and greatly expanded
40 vocational training; and

41 WHEREAS, within the University System, enrollment doubled during Sanders'
42 administration as the state's modest system of community colleges, then known as junior
43 colleges, was expanded with the addition of colleges in Brunswick, Albany, Kennesaw,
44 Dalton, and Gainesville, Georgia, and in Clayton, Bibb, and Floyd Counties; and

45 WHEREAS, several of these community colleges established under Sanders' leadership have
46 grown into major colleges within the University System, such as the Georgia Medical
47 College with its addition of a dental school; during his tenure, University System salaries
48 increased by 32 percent, moving Georgia from tenth to fourth among Southern states; and

49 WHEREAS, with the support and inspiration of his wife, Betty, who is an accomplished
50 artist, Sanders established the first Georgia Council of the Arts and Humanities and was
51 responsible for the addition of four new fine arts buildings on Georgia college campuses;

52 Governor Sanders later served as President of the University of Georgia Alumni Society and
53 received the Bill Hartman award, which honors former student athletes at the University; and

54 WHEREAS, Sanders was instrumental in funding the construction of new and enlarged
55 facilities for the University of Georgia School of Law, which today offers students a popular
56 leadership program known as the Sanders Leadership Forum, which brings state and national
57 political leaders to the campus; and

58 WHEREAS, the Sanders administration also reorganized the State Highway Department,
59 Welfare Department, and Health Department; built the current Governor's mansion;
60 established the State Water Quality Control Board as the state's first environmental
61 regulatory agency; created a police academy; had the top-ranked airport development
62 program in the nation, with 42 airports being built during Sanders' term; and at the end of his
63 term, left \$140 million in the State Treasury, the largest amount ever left to a succeeding
64 governor up to that time; and

65 WHEREAS, Governor Sanders served as Chairman of the Southern Governors Conference;
66 after leaving office, he continued as the Conference's legal counsel and argued a landmark
67 case in the United States Supreme Court that struck down the last vestiges of freight rate
68 discrimination that had hampered industrial growth in the South; and

69 WHEREAS, as governor, he also worked with Atlanta Mayor Ivan Allen to bring
70 professional baseball and football to Atlanta, and after leaving the Governor's office, Sanders
71 assisted Atlanta developer Tom Cousins in bringing professional basketball to Atlanta; and

72 WHEREAS, shortly after his election as governor, Sanders made a successful personal
73 appeal to President John Kennedy to reject a Pentagon recommendation that would have
74 drastically reduced the mission of Augusta's Fort Gordon, and Sanders also developed a close
75 political and personal friendship with President Lyndon Johnson and chaired the Rules
76 Committee of the 1964 Democratic National Convention; and

77 WHEREAS, after leaving the Governor's office in 1967, Sanders founded the law firm now
78 known as Troutman Sanders, LLP, which has grown into an international firm with more
79 than 600 attorneys; he managed the firm for 25 years and continued to serve the firm as
80 Chairman Emeritus and as a partner, continuing to come to the office most days until his
81 passing; and

82 WHEREAS, his career in business included service as Chairman of the Board of Directors
83 of the First Georgia Bank and service on the boards of directors of First Railroad and
84 Banking Corporation, Fuqua Industries, Inc., Cousins Mortgage & Equity Investors,
85 Healthdyne Technologies, and Matria Health Care, Inc.; and

86 WHEREAS, Sanders was a member of the Augusta National Golf Club, Peachtree Golf
87 Club, and Piedmont Driving Club; served on the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games;
88 was inducted into the Georgia Aviation Hall of Fame in 1997; was a long time member of
89 the Board of Directors of the YMCA of Metropolitan Atlanta; and was a long time member
90 of the Second Ponce de Leon Baptist Church; and

91 WHEREAS, he was united in love and marriage to Betty, and the couple was blessed with
92 two remarkable children, Betty and Carl, Jr.; six wonderful grandchildren, Michael, Alyssa,
93 Caroline, Carl III, Keaton, and Austin; and two beloved great-grandchildren, William and
94 Montgomery.

95 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
96 join in honoring the life and memory of Governor Carl Sanders and express their deepest and
97 most sincere regret at his passing.

98 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
99 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the family of
100 Governor Carl Sanders.