

Senate Resolution 605

By: Senators Beach of the 21st, Cowser of the 46th, Miller of the 49th, Jones of the 25th, Tolleson of the 20th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Senate Preservation of the HOPE Scholarship Program Study Committee; and
2 for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the Georgia Lottery funds the HOPE scholarship program and Georgia's Pre-K
4 Program, which are critical state programs that have enhanced the education of thousands
5 upon thousands of Georgians; and

6 WHEREAS, the HOPE scholarship program has been essential over the past two decades in
7 helping to make Georgia's higher education system one of the finest in the world; and

8 WHEREAS, the Georgia Lottery has made Georgia's Pre-K Program and higher education
9 accessible to hundreds of thousands of Georgians since its inception; and

10 WHEREAS, lottery revenues have been strained in recent years to maintain program funding
11 levels; and

12 WHEREAS, maintaining and growing lottery funded initiatives such as the HOPE
13 scholarship program and Georgia's Pre-K Program for future generations of Georgians is
14 essential to future economic growth and the continued development of a well-educated state
15 work force; and

16 WHEREAS, the recognized success and steady expansion of the HOPE scholarship program
17 is placing significant pressures on the program's current funding framework; and

18 WHEREAS, it is widely understood that the State of Georgia will have to explore
19 supplemental sources of revenue in order to preserve and expand the HOPE scholarship
20 program for future generations of Georgians; and

21 WHEREAS, legislation proposing the state taxation of casino gaming and pari-mutuel
 22 wagering on horse racing has been introduced in recent years as a source of supplemental
 23 funding for the HOPE scholarship program and Georgia's Pre-K Program; and

24 WHEREAS, for the purposes of assessing the viability of these legislative proposals as a
 25 means to preserve and enhance lottery funded education programs, it would be appropriate
 26 and responsible to study the social and economic issues pertaining to the legalization and
 27 taxation of limited casino gaming and pari-mutuel wagering on horse racing and whether
 28 such proposals should be considered as a means to stabilize the HOPE scholarship program's
 29 overarching fiscal framework for the benefit of current and future Georgians.

30 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE:

31 (1) **Creation of Senate study committee.** There is created the Senate Preservation of
 32 the HOPE Scholarship Program Study Committee.

33 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of seven members of the
 34 Senate to be appointed by the President of the Senate. The President shall designate a
 35 member of the committee as chairperson of the committee.

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

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

43 (5) **Allowances and funding.**

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

46 (B) The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any member
 47 of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized. Funds
 48 necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
 49 appropriated to the Senate.

50 (6) **Report.**

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

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

58 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
59 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.

60 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
61 the Secretary of the Senate.

62 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Secretary
63 of the Senate a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu thereof.

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