

Senate Resolution 956

By: Senator Gooch of the 51st

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the Sautee and Nacoochee Valley Historic Districts and dedicating three roads
2 in their honor; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the Nacoochee Valley was the point of intersection of two major trails used by
4 early Native Americans, where a settlement was formed called Little Chota; and

5 WHEREAS, the Unicoi Trail passed through the Valley across Unicoi Gap going to
6 Hiawassee, North Carolina, East Tennessee, and then Kentucky, and the Rabun Trail began
7 with Coosa to Tugaloo River, Sautee Creek, and Bean Creek and then entered the Valley,
8 exiting at Dukes Creek to Dahlonega then Northeast Alabama; and

9 WHEREAS, the Sautee Valley, adjacent to the Nacoochee Valley, has its center point at
10 Highway 255 and Lynch Mountain Road; and

11 WHEREAS, a toll road was constructed by early settlers on the Unicoi Trail through the
12 Cherokee Nation and was called the Unicoi Turnpike; and

13 WHEREAS, gold was first discovered in 1828 in the Valley, then a part of Habersham
14 County, and in 1857, White County was cut out of Habersham; gold mining companies were
15 given permission by the Georgia Legislature in 1858 to put in hydraulic mining techniques
16 in the Valley; and

17 WHEREAS, Governor Hardman acquired the Nichols-Hunnicutt Hardman Estate with a
18 home and the Cherokee Native American Burial Mound in the Nacoochee Valley in 1903,
19 which is still one of the most photographed sites in Georgia; and

20 WHEREAS, massive timber companies operated in the Valley in the early 20th century, and
21 in the 1920s, the Smithsonian Museum excavated the Nacoochee Mound in the Valley and
22 found Cherokee Native American artifacts; and

23 WHEREAS, in the 1970s, the City of Helen was regenerated and turned into an Alpine
24 Village, bringing with it a huge influx of visitors to the Nacoochee Valley; and

25 WHEREAS, the Nacoochee Valley in White County with approximately 25,000 acres was
26 added to the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of Interior
27 in 1980; in 1986, the Sautee Valley with 10,000 acres was added to the National Register of
28 Historic Places; and

29 WHEREAS, the Sautee Nacoochee Community Association was then formed as a private,
30 nonprofit organization with a mission to protect the Valley's preservation and is housed in
31 a schoolhouse on the former Nacoochee Institute site; and

32 WHEREAS, the Sautee and Nacoochee Valleys were designated in the 1980s as one of the
33 100 Best Small Arts Communities in the United States; and

34 WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper that these historic areas and important
35 locations be recognized by dedicating three roads in their honor.

36 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ENACTED BY THE GENERAL
37 ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA that the portion of Georgia 255 North from Georgia 17 to
38 Covered Bridge Road, the portion of Georgia 17 from Joe Brown Pike Bridge to Helen
39 Highway, and the portion of Helen Highway from Dukes Creek Crossing to 7300 Helen
40 Highway in White County are dedicated as the Sautee Nacoochee Arts and Heritage District.

41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation is authorized and
42 directed to erect and maintain appropriate signs dedicating the Sautee Nacoochee Arts and
43 Heritage District.

44 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
45 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to members of the
46 public and to the Department of Transportation.