

Senate Resolution 1001

By: Senators Millar of the 40th, McKoon of the 29th, Orrock of the 36th, Williams of the 27th and Martin of the 9th

ADOPTED

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Senate Study Committee on Higher Education Affordability; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the rising cost of college, coupled with varying federal and state funding and
4 fluctuating need based grant aid, leaves many students to depend on working during school,
5 enrolling in part-time study, and taking on debt to pay for college; and

6 WHEREAS, in the past, HOPE scholarships covered 100 percent of a student's tuition,
7 including fees and a book allowance; HOPE scholarships currently only cover a percentage
8 of a student's tuition as determined annually by the Georgia Student Finance Commission;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, according to a 2015 presentation by the university system, the average cost of
11 attendance in the 2013/2014 fall and spring semesters at an institution of the university
12 system was roughly between \$16,000.00 and \$23,000.00 per year; and

13 WHEREAS, although the average student is paying for college with grants, scholarships, or
14 loans, even with HOPE scholarships and Pell Grants, students in Georgia are still facing a
15 financial gap; and

16 WHEREAS, one of the consequences of financial gaps is increased student debt; and

17 WHEREAS, from 2013 to 2014, between 41 and 61 percent of students borrowing money
18 for college graduated with approximately \$22,000.00 to \$25,000.00 worth of debt; and

19 WHEREAS, a financial gap also leads to fewer students enrolling and some students failing
20 to graduate; and

21 WHEREAS, ensuring affordable tuition for Georgians is imperative, especially to remain
22 globally competitive in the 21st century, and keeping tuition levels as low as possible and
23 helping guide students to a clear path to graduation contributes to a student's success and
24 participation, both in class and on campus.

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

26 (1) **Creation of Senate study committee.** There is created the Senate Study Committee
27 on Higher Education Affordability.

28 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of the chairperson of the
29 Senate Higher Education Committee and eight additional members of the Senate to be
30 appointed by the President of the Senate. The chairperson of the Senate Higher
31 Education Committee shall serve as chairperson of the committee.

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

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

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

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

42 (B) 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 Senate.

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 Secretary of the Senate.

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

60 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2016.