

House Resolution 1718

By: Representatives McClain of the 100th, Beasley-Teague of the 65th, and Jones of the 53rd

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Requesting Georgia's congressional delegation to oppose extension of disastrous trade
- 2 policies; and for other purposes.

- 3 WHEREAS, United States' trade deals for the past 25 years have been corporate-driven,
- 4 incorporating rules that skew benefits to economic elites while requiring working families
- 5 to bear the brunt of such policies; and

- 6 WHEREAS, the growing trade deficits and offshoring of jobs, driven by the North American
- 7 Free Trade Agreement, China's accession to the World Trade Organization, and the United
- 8 States-Korea Free Trade Agreement, have displaced 700,000 and 3.2 million, and 75,000
- 9 United States jobs, respectively; and

- 10 WHEREAS, jobs lost due to trade devastate families and entire communities and can
- 11 permanently reduce lifetime earnings for hundreds of thousands of workers, and the State of
- 12 Georgia opposes jeopardizing our economy further with bad, unbalanced trade deals given
- 13 that the state unemployment rate is 6.3 percent and one of every five Georgians already lives
- 14 at or below the poverty rate; and

- 15 WHEREAS, the disproportionate voice of powerful global corporations in the formation of
- 16 United States "free trade" agreements has advanced an agenda that undermines the public
- 17 interest and threatens democracy; and

- 18 WHEREAS, past United States trade agreements and the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership
- 19 (TPP) include special legal rights for foreign investors, known as "investor-to-state dispute
- 20 settlement" (ISDS), that allows foreign firms to bypass state and federal courts to challenge
- 21 local laws, regulations, and administrative decisions before panels of private lawyers; and

22 WHEREAS, foreign investors already have used NAFTA's ISDS provisions to challenge
23 decisions regarding local building permits, environmental regulations, state bans on toxic
24 chemicals, and decisions of state courts; and

25 WHEREAS, promoting economic growth with equity in Atlanta requires an approach that
26 reforms the entire trade negotiation process to ensure that voices of workers, farmers, small
27 businesses, families, and communities are heard and their interests addressed; and

28 WHEREAS, the TPP has been negotiated in secret, effectively shutting state and local
29 governments out of the process, limiting our ability to influence its rules to ensure the people
30 of Atlanta can participate in the benefits of trade; and

31 WHEREAS, given the enactment of fast track trade negotiating authority, states, localities
32 and their citizens will have no opportunity to correct shortcomings in the TPP since its text
33 will not be made public until it is final and no longer can be improved.

34 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
35 that this body calls upon our elected officials in the United States Senate and United States
36 House of Representatives to oppose the TPP and any future trade deals if they fail to
37 restructure skewed policies of the past.

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that our elected officials in the United States Senate and
39 United States House of Representatives are called upon to support new trade deals such as
40 the TPP only if they will: protect and promote traditional state and local prerogatives and
41 authority under our federal system, including by ensuring that states and localities will not
42 be required to comply with certain commitments, including any restrictions on preferences
43 for local, state, or United States goods or services, without prior informed consent of the
44 legislature or local lawmaking body; include enforceable rules against currency
45 manipulation, which countries such as China and Japan have used to tilt the playing field in
46 their favor; exclude investor-to-state dispute settlement (ISDS) and other provisions that
47 favor foreign companies over domestic ones and undermine public choices; ensure that
48 countries cannot undercut United States based producers with weaker labor and
49 environmental laws and enforcement; include strong rule of origin to promote economic
50 growth and job creation in the United States; and put the interests of people and the planet
51 over the interests of private profit.

52 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
53 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to members of the
54 public and the press.