

House Resolution 560

By: Representatives Drenner of the 85th, Abrams of the 89th, Frazier of the 126th, Williams of the 87th, and Jackson of the 64th

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on Public Utility Payment Options for Customers in
2 Need of Assistance; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, public utility companies that provide necessities, such as electricity, gas, water,
4 and telephone service, have customers who from time to time are unable to pay their utility
5 bills in a timely manner; and

6 WHEREAS, many of these customers are receiving temporary assistance for needy families
7 (TANF), aid to the aged, blind, and disabled (AABD), benefits from general assistance or
8 supplemental security income, income from social security benefits or veterans benefits, or
9 unemployment compensation benefits; and

10 WHEREAS, a committee to investigate the best way to assist such customers is needed; and

11 WHEREAS, options, such as a budget payment plan with a preferred payment date, should
12 be considered; and

13 WHEREAS, it would be beneficial to both the customers and the public utilities to study the
14 feasibility of a program that would provide an alternative payment plan that would provide
15 much needed relief to customers receiving certain benefits, while ensuring that the moneys
16 owed to the public utility companies are ultimately paid.

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

18 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Study Committee
19 on Public Utility Payment Options for Customers in Need of Assistance.

20 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of five members of the
21 House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of
22 Representatives. The Speaker shall designate a member of the committee as chairperson
23 of the committee.

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

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

31 (5) **Allowances and funding.** The legislative members of the committee shall receive
32 the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia
33 Annotated. The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any
34 member of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized.
35 Funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
36 appropriated to the House of Representatives.

37 (6) **Report.**

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

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

45 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
46 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
47 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
48 the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

49 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Clerk of the
50 House of Representatives a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu
51 thereof.

52 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2017.