

Senate Resolution 175

By: Senators Butler of the 55th, Mullis of the 53rd, Harbison of the 15th, Anderson of the 43rd, Jones II of the 22nd and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and commending Dr. Mark P. Becker upon his retirement as president of
2 Georgia State University; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Dr. Mark P. Becker has served with distinction as president of Georgia State
4 University for 12 years, leading the university through a historic period of growth and
5 achievement; and

6 WHEREAS, under his leadership, Georgia State became nationally recognized as the
7 national leader in introducing innovative initiatives to foster student success and increase
8 graduation rates; and

9 WHEREAS, he has led an institution that has eliminated achievement gaps among students
10 of all races, ethnicities, and incomes, increasing the graduation rate by 25 points for students
11 seeking to earn a bachelor's degree; and

12 WHEREAS, he has made Georgia State a destination of choice among students, increasing
13 enrollment by more than 20,000 and doubling applications for admission in ten years; and

14 WHEREAS, he has led one of the nation's most diverse institutions, which is first in the
15 nation among nonprofit institutions in graduating African American students; and

16 WHEREAS, he has led the largest university in Georgia and one of the largest in the nation;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, he is annually listed by regional news media among Atlanta's most powerful,
19 influential, and admired chief executives; and

20 WHEREAS, Dr. Becker was named one of America's 10 most innovative university
21 presidents by *Washington Monthly* in 2015, winner of the Academic Leadership Award by
22 the Carnegie Corporation of New York in 2017, and winner of the TIAA Institute Theodore
23 M. Hesburgh Award for Leadership Excellence in 2019; and

24 WHEREAS, he led the successful consolidation of Georgia State with Georgia Perimeter
25 College in 2016 and has introduced student success programs that have tripled the two-year
26 college's graduation rates in the first five years of the consolidation; and

27 WHEREAS, Dr. Becker has vastly expanded Georgia State's research enterprise, making it
28 one of the fastest growing research institutions in the United States by expanding sponsored
29 research at more than twice the national average. Georgia State has doubled its annual
30 research funding during his tenure; and

31 WHEREAS, through his Second Century and Next Generation initiatives, he has focused the
32 university's research efforts in areas that are crucial to the future of the region, nation, and
33 world; and

34 WHEREAS, he introduced and led the most successful fundraising campaign in Georgia
35 State's history; and

36 WHEREAS, Dr. Becker's personal contribution initiated the university's Panther Retention
37 Grants, a nationally recognized program that provides much needed financial support for
38 students to enable them to complete their education; and

39 WHEREAS, he has led Georgia State to new heights of national recognition. The university
40 has been recognized as the No. 1 institution in America for its commitment to undergraduate
41 teaching and the No. 2 most innovative university in the country by *U.S. News & World*
42 *Report* magazine; and

43 WHEREAS, Dr. Becker has been a widely recognized catalyst for the revitalization of
44 downtown Atlanta, expanding the university's campus and acquiring the former Atlanta
45 Braves baseball stadium as a centerpiece of rapidly advancing revitalization efforts in the
46 city's Summerhill area; and

47 WHEREAS, he has led a major expansion of Georgia State's facilities, including residence
48 halls to grow the university's on-campus population, the acquisition of Turner Field, the
49 establishment of a major research science center and the Creative Media Industries Institute,
50 the construction of advanced labs on the Alpharetta Campus, and the creation of a greenway
51 on the Atlanta Campus; and

52 WHEREAS, he has built a highly successful NCAA Division 1 athletics program that
53 includes an 11-year-old football team that has played in four bowl games in the past six years
54 as well as a men's basketball team that has played in three of the last five NCAA national
55 tournaments.

56 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
57 recognize Dr. Mark P. Becker for his efficient, effective, unselfish, and dedicated service to
58 Georgia State University; commend him upon the grand occasion of his retirement; and
59 extend the most sincere best wishes for continued health and happiness.

60 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
61 to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to Dr. Mark P.
62 Becker.