

Senate Resolution 500

By: Senators Strickland of the 17th, Anavitarte of the 31st, Harrell of the 40th, Sims of the 12th, Tippins of the 37th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Congratulating and commending Georgia State University College of Law on its 40th
2 anniversary; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Georgia State University College of Law welcomed its first class of 200 Juris
4 Doctor (JD) candidates taught by six professors on September 13, 1982, as a result of the
5 efforts of the college's founder, Dean Ben F. Johnson Jr., and many others with a common
6 goal to answer the demand for a part-time and evening accredited law school in Atlanta,
7 Georgia; and

8 WHEREAS, in the beginning, the school was housed on the first floor of Georgia State
9 University's Urban Life building in Atlanta, Georgia, at the downtown campus; in December
10 1984, Georgia State Law graduated its first class of seven students, and in January 1988,
11 Georgia State College of Law won the National Moot Court Competition. The college gained
12 full accreditation from the American Bar Association in 1990 under the leadership of
13 Marjorie Fine Knowles, Georgia State Law's second dean; and

14 WHEREAS, ten years later in 1992, the college grew to 617 students and 35 faculty
15 members, 120,000 volumes filled the law library, and applications for admission exceeded
16 2,200 for 180 slots; the Georgia Civil Justice Foundation funded the college's first endowed

17 scholarship with the purpose to provide financial assistance to a student who has shown a
18 preference for or a skill in trial advocacy; and

19 WHEREAS, 40 years after opening its doors, the Georgia State University College of Law
20 maintains its long-standing commitment of accessibility and affordability and has gained
21 national recognition as one of the "best value" law schools in the nation. In 2022, it was
22 named the No. 1 ranked health law program and earned state-wide recognition for having the
23 best overall bar passage rates in Georgia for the February 2020 and 2021 Georgia Bar
24 Examinations; and

25 WHEREAS, in 2015, under the leadership of then-Dean Steven Kaminshine, the Georgia
26 State University College of Law relocated to a new \$82.5 million state-of-the-art building
27 at 85 Park Place in Downtown Atlanta, Georgia, offering 12 degree programs of study,
28 including the JD and Master of Laws, as well as a variety of experiential learning
29 opportunities through six clinics, six centers, and initiatives, incorporating 70 faculty
30 members, an alumni community numbering more than 6,500, and a significant growth of the
31 college's endowments to 71; and

32 WHEREAS, the college has been led by seven law school deans, including current Dean
33 LaVonda Reed in 2021.

34 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
35 recognize Georgia State University College of Law on the occasion of its 40th anniversary
36 and commend its contribution to providing a quality legal education to a diverse student
37 body, promoting legal scholarship and service that enriches the legal profession and the
38 communities we serve.

39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
40 to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to the Georgia State
41 University College of Law.