

House Resolution 1160 (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE)

By: Representatives Hugley of the 133rd, Smyre of the 132nd, and Buckner of the 130th

A RESOLUTION

1 Compensating Mr. Lathan Rydell Word; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, on September 14, 1999, six days before he was scheduled to begin Marine
3 Corps boot camp, Mr. Lathan Rydell Word was informed that the police were searching for
4 him in connection with an armed robbery; and

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Word immediately contacted the Columbus Police Department in an
6 attempt to clear his name, but he was arrested and, on September 7, 2000, was convicted of
7 armed robbery and possession of a firearm and sentenced to 15 years in prison; and

8 WHEREAS, in March of 2011, his conviction was overturned by the Georgia Court of
9 Appeals and a new trial was ordered, and when he was offered the opportunity to plead guilty
10 for time served, he refused and demanded a new trial to prove his innocence; and

11 WHEREAS, at his new trial, the victim of the alleged crime testified that the victim had not
12 been truthful and that Mr. Word was not the man who robbed him, and after 11 years, nine
13 months, and six days in prison, Mr. Word was exonerated of the crime and released; and

14 WHEREAS, as a result of his wrongful arrest and conviction, Mr. Word was denied the
15 honor of serving his country in the United States Marine Corps; and

16 WHEREAS, Mr. Word has suffered loss of liberty, personal injury, lost wages, injury to
17 reputation, emotional distress, loss of consortium, loss of familial association, and other
18 damages as a result of his over 11 years of incarceration and expenses in trying to prove his
19 innocence; and

20 WHEREAS, the conviction, incarceration, and subsequent loss of liberty and other damages
21 occurred through no fault or negligence on the part of Mr. Word, and it is only fitting and
22 proper that he be compensated for his loss.

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
24 GEORGIA that the Department of Administrative Services is authorized and directed to pay
25 the sum of \$400,000.00 dollars to Mr. Lathan Rydell Word as compensation as provided
26 above. Said sum shall be paid from funds appropriated to or available to the Department of
27 Administrative Services and shall be in full and complete satisfaction of all claims against
28 the state arising out of said occurrence. Said sum shall not be subject to state income taxes
29 and shall be paid in the form of an annuity over a 20-year period with an initial lump sum
30 payment of \$100,000.00 and monthly payments thereafter.