

Senate Resolution 873

By: Senators Halpern of the 39th, Mangham of the 55th, Anderson of the 43rd, Orrock of the 36th and Davenport of the 17th

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing March 26, 2026, as HBCU AWARE FEST Day at the state capitol; and for
2 other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the members of the Georgia Senate recognize the importance of higher
4 education as a pathway to economic mobility and long-term financial stability; and

5 WHEREAS, excessive student loan debt has become a significant barrier to degree
6 completion, career flexibility, homeownership, and wealth accumulation for students and
7 families across the State of Georgia and the nation; and

8 WHEREAS, Student Freedom Initiative (SFI) is a nonprofit organization founded in 2021
9 to develop and scale the Student Freedom Loan Agreement (SFLA) and other innovative
10 approaches to higher-education financing that reduce students' reliance on traditional student
11 loans; and

12 WHEREAS, SFI provides a suite of wraparound services that help position students to be
13 leaders in emerging fields; and

14 WHEREAS, since its founding, SFI has served more than 200,000 students through
15 partnerships with 71 colleges and universities, including Albany State University, Clark
16 Atlanta University, and the birthplace of SFI, Morehouse College; and

17 WHEREAS, SFI provides students with alternative financing models, financial education,
18 career preparation, and employer partnerships designed to improve post-graduation outcomes
19 and reduce long-term debt burdens; and

20 WHEREAS, SFI's programs demonstrate measurable scale and growing demand, including
21 1,942 total applicants for its SFLA program and \$26.7 million disbursed to participating
22 students to support degree completion and reduce reliance on traditional private lending; and

23 WHEREAS, in 2026, SFI in partnership with the City of Atlanta, Mayor Andre Dickens and
24 Live Nation Urban, launched HBCU AWAREFEST, a national movement bringing together
25 students, educators, policymakers, philanthropists, the business community, and community
26 leaders to examine the student debt crisis and explore practical solutions to improve
27 economic mobility; and

28 WHEREAS, HBCU AWAREFEST serves as a forum for collaboration, education, and
29 policy-relevant dialogue on the intersection of higher education, workforce readiness, and
30 financial stability; and

31 WHEREAS, the work of Student Freedom Initiative and HBCU AWAREFEST reflect a
32 commitment to expanding access to education, strengthening the workforce, and supporting
33 the long-term economic health of communities across Georgia.

34 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body

35 recognize March 26, 2026, as HBCU AWAREFEST Day at the state capitol and extend best
36 wishes for the continued growth, development, and success of HBCU AWAREFEST.

37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
38 to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to Student Freedom
39 Initiative.