

Senate Resolution 659

By: Senators Summers of the 13th, Dugan of the 30th, Kennedy of the 18th, Burns of the 23rd, Hickman of the 4th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Senate Study Committee on Unsheltered Homelessness; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, in recent years, Georgia has seen a notable increase in unsheltered or street
3 homelessness and homeless encampments; and

4 WHEREAS, current homeless encampments pose a threat to the well-being of nearby
5 residents, businesses, and the homeless themselves; and

6 WHEREAS, any effort to alleviate the problems of unsheltered homelessness will have to
7 consider the prevalence of mental illness and substance use disorders among this group; and

8 WHEREAS, all Georgians, including the unsheltered homeless, have a right to public safety.

9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE:

10 (1) **Creation of Senate study committee.** There is created the Senate Study Committee
11 on Unsheltered Homelessness.

12 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of five members of the
13 Senate to be appointed by the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall
14 designate a member of the committee as chairperson of the committee. The President of

15 the Senate may appoint up to two additional citizen members with relevant experience
16 or expertise.

17 (3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall undertake a study of the conditions, needs,
18 issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any action or
19 legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate. In particular, the
20 committee shall:

21 (A) Study the increase in unsheltered homelessness in Georgia and its capital city,
22 Atlanta;

23 (B) Assess the evidence for the success or failure of different policies in reducing street
24 homelessness;

25 (C) Solicit input from neighborhood groups, police, homeless nonprofit organizations,
26 affected businesses, drug rehabilitation and mental health groups, and municipal
27 leaders; and

28 (D) Develop specific recommendations on the enforcement of bans on camping and
29 sleeping in public spaces, new types of state and local contracts with homeless
30 nonprofit organizations, and the necessity for new state laws dealing with
31 homelessness.

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

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

42 (6) **Report.**

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

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

50 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
51 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
52 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
53 the Secretary of the Senate.

54 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Secretary
55 of the Senate a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu thereof.

56 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2022.