

House Resolution 1158

By: Representatives Taylor of the 173rd, Stephens of the 164th, Petrea of the 166th, Wiedower of the 119th, Buckner of the 137th, and others

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Recognizing the importance of the Okefenokee Swamp in Georgia; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia is blessed with the unrivaled beauty of the Okefenokee
3 Swamp, the largest blackwater wetland in North America; and
- 4 WHEREAS, the Okefenokee Swamp is recognized as one of Georgia's seven natural
5 wonders and a natural area unique not only to the State of Georgia but also to the United
6 States of America and the world; and
- 7 WHEREAS, the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is being considered for nomination
8 as an internationally recognized natural area for United Nations World Heritage Site
9 designation; and
- 10 WHEREAS, the Okefenokee Swamp spans 438,000 acres with 93 percent of it protected as
11 the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, including 353,000 acres designated as a National
12 Wilderness Area by Congress; and
- 13 WHEREAS, Georgia's Stephen C. Foster State Park lies within the Okefenokee National
14 Wildlife Refuge and is designated as an International Dark Sky Park; and

15 WHEREAS, the Okefenokee Swamp hosts more than 650,000 visits by Americans and
16 international tourists to Georgia on an annual basis, generating upwards of \$64.7 million
17 annually for the economies of Ware, Clinch, and Charlton Counties and creating some 750
18 swamp tourism-related jobs; and

19 WHEREAS, the Okefenokee Wilderness Canoe Trail, part of the National Water Trails
20 System, is visited regularly by anglers and tourists seeking a true wilderness experience; and

21 WHEREAS, the Okefenokee Swamp has inspired countless Georgia naturalists, artists, and
22 writers and has given us our very own state opossum, Pogo Possum; and

23 WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper for this body to recognize the extraordinary
24 natural wonder that is the Okefenokee Swamp.

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
26 the members of this body recognize the importance of the Okefenokee Swamp in Georgia
27 and encourage efforts to protect the Okefenokee Swamp and promote it as an international
28 tourist destination.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
30 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the
31 public and the press.