

House Resolution 100

By: Representatives Schofield of the 63rd, Townsend of the 179th, Drenner of the 85th, Davis of the 87th, Scott of the 76th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on the Cumulative Impact of Pollution on Economic
2 Development and Growth; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, pollution negatively impacts the health of a community and its economic
4 prospects, thus furthering cycles of poverty; and

5 WHEREAS, a concentration of industrial facilities in a community leads to blight and limited
6 amenities that contribute to lower property values and less funding for public schools, also
7 furthering cycles of poverty; and

8 WHEREAS, proximity to a facility that needs a risk management plan is associated with
9 significantly lower home values; and

10 WHEREAS, employers and businesses such as grocery stores, food services, healthcare
11 providers, hotels, and professional service centers prefer to not be located near industrial
12 centers, thus limiting the job prospects for community residents and furthering cycles of
13 poverty; and

14 WHEREAS, Georgia's leading economic engine, agriculture, is put at risk by air, soil, and
15 water pollution that can potentially stunt crop growth and affect both Georgia's economy and
16 the food security of all Georgians; and

17 WHEREAS, in Georgia there are more than 1 million resident anglers who collectively spend
18 8.7 million days a year on the water, and more than 650,000 hunters who collectively spend
19 8.9 million days a year in the field. The combination of these activities accounts for over \$2
20 billion in retail sales, \$3 billion in ripple effects, and more than 38,000 jobs; this vital
21 economic engine is also put at risk by pollution; and

22 WHEREAS, conditions such as severe asthma, nervous system damage, cardiovascular
23 disease, dangerous pregnancy outcomes, heart disease, and various forms of cancer can
24 cluster in polluted areas, areas near highways, and areas near industrial plants; addressing the
25 environmental causes of disease is important for the health of communities, but also for the
26 economic prosperity of the state; and

27 WHEREAS, in 2020 the average life expectancy in the United States was 77 years of age,
28 but in Georgia, the average life expectancy was 75.6 years of age, which constitutes the
29 fifteenth worst life expectancy of any state in the nation; and

30 WHEREAS, Georgia tied for second among states with the highest prevalence of childhood
31 asthma in 2021, with 9.7 percent of Georgia's children suffering from the condition, and the
32 total cost of asthma related hospitalizations among Georgia children totaled \$41.6 million;
33 and

34 WHEREAS, studies have shown that simply reducing heavy-duty truck traffic by half could
35 decrease air quality warning days, thus allowing 16,000 more Georgians to play outside,
36 eliminate 2,700 sick days, and overall provide \$200 million in annual economic benefit; and

37 WHEREAS, flooding of infrastructure such as concrete and overburdened storm-water and
38 waste-water systems, which are typically found in highly industrialized areas, is another
39 source of pollution and negative economic impact on communities; and

40 WHEREAS, all citizens of this state should have access to clean air, water, and sustainable
41 infrastructure; and

42 WHEREAS, careful study is necessary to determine policy and legislative solutions for
43 sustainable, economically viable, and healthy communities.

44 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

45 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Study Committee
46 on the Cumulative Impact of Pollution on Economic Development and Growth.

47 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of 11 members to be
48 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives:

49 (A) Five members of the House of Representatives;

50 (B) One representative of the Environmental Protection Division of the Department of
51 Natural Resources;

52 (C) One representative of the Department of Agriculture;

53 (D) One representative of the Department of Human Services;

54 (E) One representative of academia or the nonprofit or scientific community who
55 specializes in the study of pollution;

(F) One individual who represents a nonprofit entity with knowledge relative to Georgia pollution impacts; and

(G) One community member who sits at the intersection of pollution and economic development.

The Speaker shall designate a legislative member of the committee as chairperson of the committee.

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

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

(5) **Allowances, expenses, and funding.**

(A) The legislative members of the committee shall receive the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

(B) Members of the committee who are state officials, other than legislative members, or who are state employees shall receive no compensation for their services on the committee, but they may be reimbursed for expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties as members of the committee in the same manner as they are reimbursed for expenses in their capacities as state officials or employees.

(C) Members of the committee who are not legislators, state officials, or state employees shall receive a daily expense allowance in an amount the same as that specified in subsection (b) of Code Section 45-7-21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, as well as the mileage or transportation allowance authorized for state employees.

(D) The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any member of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized. Funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds appropriated to the House of Representatives; except that funds for the reimbursement of the expenses of state officials, other than legislative members, and for the reimbursement of the expenses of state employees shall come from funds appropriated to or otherwise available to their respective agencies.

(6) Report.

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

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

(C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.

A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

(D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Clerk of the House of Representatives a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu thereof.

(7) Abolishment. The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2025.