

House Resolution 275

By: Representatives Glaize of the 67th, McQueen of the 61st, and Dawson of the 65th

A RESOLUTION

1 Supporting an increase in the minimum school drop out age from 16 to 17 years old in the
2 State of Georgia; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, in 2014, the State of Georgia had a high school graduation rate of 72.5 percent,
4 significantly lower than the national average of 81 percent in 2013, and states with higher
5 graduation rates have historically maintained a higher compulsory education age; and

6 WHEREAS, a previous Atlanta Regional Commission study projected that by 2020, 60
7 percent of jobs in Georgia would require post-secondary education, yet only 38 percent of
8 high school sophomores at the time were expected to pursue a degree or certificate; and

9 WHEREAS, the economic impact of high school dropouts is substantial, with dropouts from
10 the Class of 2010 alone estimated to cost the nation over \$337 billion in lost wages over their
11 lifetimes; and

12 WHEREAS, the Alliance for Excellent Education found that over the course of their
13 lifetimes, high school dropouts earn about \$260,000 less on average than graduates, with
14 additional research in 2006 revealing that 74 percent of dropouts later regret their decision
15 as adults; and

16 WHEREAS, data published by the *Journal of Public Economics* indicates that individuals
17 with additional years of schooling report better health, lower rates of depression, and greater
18 life satisfaction; and

19 WHEREAS, a report from the National Education Association showed that nearly 71 percent
20 of incarcerated individuals lacked a high school diploma and that an additional year of
21 schooling reduces arrests by 11 to 18 percent; and

22 WHEREAS, a 2021 analysis from CNN Money found that Georgia spends approximately
23 \$20,000 per year per inmate but only about \$10,000 per student; and

24 WHEREAS, research consistently demonstrates that states with a higher school-leaving age
25 have better educational outcomes, higher employment rates, and greater economic stability,
26 with a 2012 article from *The New York Times* estimating that for every dollar invested in
27 increasing graduation rates, there is a return of \$1.45 to \$3.55; and

28 WHEREAS, increasing the minimum dropout age to 17 will better prepare Georgia's
29 workforce, strengthen the state's economy, and provide students with the opportunities
30 necessary for long-term success.

31 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
32 the members of this body support the increase of the minimum school dropout age in the
33 State of Georgia from 16 to 17 years old.

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