

## Senate Resolution 685

By: Senators Kirkpatrick of the 32nd, Albers of the 56th, Watson of the 1st, Anavitarte of the 31st, Walker III of the 20th and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the work of Georgia's aerospace and defense industry and recognizing February  
2 3, 2026, as Georgia Aerospace and Defense Day at the state capitol; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Georgia is home to a robust aerospace and defense industry, encompassing  
4 more than 800 companies, including an estimated 320 aerospace manufacturing firms, more  
5 than 120 MRO facilities, and over 70 airline and charter operations employing more than  
6 200,000 Georgians; and

7 WHEREAS, aerospace and defense industry products are Georgia's top export product  
8 category and the state's second largest manufacturing industry, generating an estimated  
9 annual economic impact of \$57.5 billion; and

10 WHEREAS, aerospace and defense industry products have remained the State of Georgia's  
11 number one international export since 2004, with 2024 aerospace and defense exports  
12 totaling \$12.6 billion, including civilian aircraft and parts, turbojets, turbo propellers, aircraft  
13 launching gear, parachutes, and nonpowered aircraft; and

14 WHEREAS, in 2024, Georgia's top ten international markets for aerospace industry exports  
15 included Canada, Chile, Germany, Hong Kong, Mexico, Poland, Singapore, U.A.E., and the  
16 United Kingdom; and

17 WHEREAS, this state has a proud history as both a manufacturer and host of advanced  
18 military aircraft and equipment, and seven of the world's top ten defense contractors maintain  
19 a presence within the state of Georgia, serving as top employers for newly retired veterans;  
20 and

21 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia received more than \$15.3 billion in Department of War  
22 funding in Fiscal Year 2023, representing the economic impact of personnel salaries, defense  
23 contracts, and facility construction; and

24 WHEREAS, the Georgia Aerospace & Defense Alliance (GADA) serves as the unified voice  
25 for Georgia's aerospace, aviation, and defense ecosystem, bringing together industry leaders,  
26 higher education institutions, and government partners to advocate for workforce  
27 development, innovation, and long-term competitiveness, and was founded by Gulfstream  
28 Aerospace, Lockheed Martin, FlightSafety International, Rolls-Royce, and RTX; and

29 WHEREAS, Georgia's higher education institutions are dedicated to delivering top-tier talent  
30 for the aerospace and defense mission through the aerospace career pipeline; and

31 WHEREAS, the Georgia Institute of Technology is home to the number one public aerospace  
32 engineering program in the United States, according to *U.S. News and World Report*, and the  
33 Georgia Tech Research Institute executes nearly \$1 billion of sponsored research for national  
34 security and keeping our nation safe; and

35 WHEREAS, Mercer University, through its School of Engineering and the Mercer  
36 Engineering Research Center (MERC), a research institute of Mercer University, has been  
37 an integral partner to the Robins Air Force Base community since 1987, advancing applied  
38 research, engineering innovation, and workforce development, with nearly 90 percent of its  
39 School of Engineering graduates remaining in this state; and

40 WHEREAS, Georgia Southern University's Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and  
41 Computing is advancing aerospace innovation through cutting-edge research in sustainable  
42 fuels, aircraft power systems, and advanced manufacturing, while equipping students with  
43 the skills and expertise needed to support Georgia's aerospace industry; and

44 WHEREAS, the flagship and land grant institution of this state, the University of Georgia's  
45 College of Engineering is dedicated to supporting the state's thriving and expanding  
46 aerospace industry through education, workforce development, collaborative and innovative  
47 research, and by providing support to those investing in our great state; and

48 WHEREAS, Kennesaw State University (KSU) is meeting the growing demand for  
49 aerospace talent by launching its Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering degree  
50 program, building on the success of its highly enrolled minor, offering hands-on research  
51 opportunities, industry collaboration, and experiential learning designed to prepare graduates  
52 for careers in aeronautics and astronautics; and

53 WHEREAS, with 68 percent of KSU engineering graduates remaining in Georgia five years  
54 after graduation, the university's aerospace engineering program will strengthen the state's  
55 workforce while advancing innovation in one of Georgia's most critical industries; and

56 WHEREAS, Lockheed Martin is celebrating its seventy-fifth anniversary of continuous  
57 operations in Marietta, Georgia, in 2026, and builds two iconic military programs, the C-130J  
58 Super Hercules and the F-35 Lightning II, in its Georgia facilities, supporting direct and  
59 indirect jobs for more than 20,000 Georgians; and

60 WHEREAS, Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation has operated continuously at its worldwide  
61 headquarters in Savannah, Georgia, since 1967, designing, manufacturing, and supporting  
62 the world's most technologically advanced business aircraft, now employs more than 13,000  
63 in this state, has a Georgia payroll of over \$1.4 billion and is the largest manufacturer in the  
64 state; and

65 WHEREAS, Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport is the world's busiest and  
66 most efficient passenger airport and Georgia is home to the largest single container terminal  
67 and most extensive rail and interstate system in the Southeast, providing a seamless air, sea,  
68 and ground transportation network; and

69 WHEREAS, Georgia's aerospace and defense industry continues to grow thanks to the state's  
70 positive business climate and bipartisan support at the local, state, and federal levels of  
71 government.

72 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
73 honor the work of Georgia's aerospace and defense industry and recognize February 3, 2026,  
74 as Georgia Aerospace and Defense Day at the state capitol.

75 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
76 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to representatives of

77 the aerospace and defense industry, higher education officials, and other representatives as  
78 deemed necessary.