

House Resolution 1416

By: Representatives Dickey of the 134th, Meeks of the 178th, O’Steen of the 169th, Ford of the 170th, Corbett of the 174th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Joint Study Committee on Generational Sustainability of Family Farms; and for
2 other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the agricultural industry is the leading driver of this state's economy and the
4 family farm is central to the identity of Georgia and its continued success; and

5 WHEREAS, the agricultural industry contributes \$100.4 billion to this state's economy and
6 contributes 370,400 jobs to the workforce, yet the United States' agricultural trade deficit is
7 projected to exceed \$40 billion this year; and

8 WHEREAS, despite consumers facing rising food prices, the farmer's share of every dollar
9 spent by consumers continues to get smaller; and

10 WHEREAS, farm families have faced unprecedented challenges over the last few years
11 including natural disasters, global trade wars, disease outbreaks, corporate consolidation, and
12 a declining workforce, leading to record high input costs and record low commodity prices;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, the insurmountable economic challenges facing family farms have caused a
15 rapid increase in suicides and mental illnesses within the farm community; and

16 WHEREAS, the aforementioned challenges are causing American consumers to be more
17 reliant on imported food and fiber, leading to the outsourcing of food production to trading
18 partners overseas; and

19 WHEREAS, a study is needed to evaluate the challenges family farms are facing and to
20 explore policies and investments the General Assembly can pursue to support existing
21 markets, develop new and innovative domestic markets, decrease the cost of inputs,
22 adequately prepare the next generation of farmers, and address systemic challenges
23 contributing to the declining farm economy.

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
25 GEORGIA:

26 (1) **Creation of joint study committee.** There is created the Joint Study Committee on
27 Generational Sustainability of Family Farms.

28 (2) **Members and officers.**

29 (A) The committee shall be composed of nine members.

30 (B) The President of the Senate shall appoint three members of the Senate as members
31 of the committee.

32 (C) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint three members of the
33 House of Representatives as members of the committee.

34 (D) The committee shall include additional members as follows:

35 (i) The chairperson of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Consumer Affairs,
36 who shall serve as cochairperson of the committee;

37 (ii) The chairperson of the House Committee on Agriculture and Consumer Affairs
38 Committee, who shall serve as cochairperson of the committee; and

39 (iii) The Commissioner of Agriculture.

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

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

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

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

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

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

62 (6) **Report.**

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

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

70 (C) No report shall be filed without approval prior to the date of abolishment specified
71 in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee. A report so approved
72 shall be signed by the cochairpersons of the committee and filed with the Secretary of
73 the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

74 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the cochairpersons may file with the
75 Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives copies of the
76 minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu thereof.

77 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2027.