

Senate Resolution 480

By: Senators Brass of the 6th, Robertson of the 29th, Anavitarte of the 31st, Goodman of the 8th, Gooch of the 51st and others

ADOPTED SENATE

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the acute and ongoing threat to Georgia's forests posed by the southern pine
2 beetle, particularly in the western region of this state, and encouraging all Georgia
3 landowners to follow guidance by the Georgia Forestry Commission to mitigate the spread
4 of this destructive pest; and for other purposes.

5 WHEREAS, forestry is a vital economic driver for the State of Georgia, contributing more
6 than \$41 billion annually to the state's economy and supporting thousands of jobs in rural
7 communities; and

8 WHEREAS, Georgia's forests, particularly those that are properly managed, provide essential
9 ecological, economic, and recreational benefits, including clean air and water, carbon
10 sequestration, wildlife habitats, and raw materials for a variety of industries; and

11 WHEREAS, the southern pine beetle (*dendroctonus frontalis*) is a destructive native pest
12 affecting pine forests in the southeastern United States, including Georgia; and

13 WHEREAS, southern pine beetle infestations can cause significant tree mortality, leading
14 to economic losses for landowners, increased wildfire risk, and reduced forest health and
15 productivity; and

16 WHEREAS, the western region of Georgia is currently experiencing a heightened outbreak
17 of the southern pine beetle, resulting in extensive damage to pine stands and threatening the
18 sustainability of the state's forest resources; and

19 WHEREAS, the Georgia Forestry Commission has provided critical guidance and resources
20 to landowners to implement sound forestry practices that reduce the risk of infestation by the
21 southern pine beetle and improve overall forest resilience; and

22 WHEREAS, thinning overcrowded stands, removing infested trees, and adhering to best
23 management practices are the most effective means of controlling and preventing further
24 spread of the southern pine beetle.

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body:

- 26 (1) Recognize the significant threat posed by the southern pine beetle to Georgia's
27 forests;
- 28 (2) Recognize the acute and ongoing challenge of the southern pine beetle outbreak in
29 the western region of this state; and
- 30 (3) Encourage Georgia landowners to take all steps necessary to mitigate the spread of
31 this outbreak through proper forest management and adherence to best management
32 practices outlined by the Georgia Forestry Commission.

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
34 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the public and the
35 press.