

Senate Resolution 771

By: Senators Robertson of the 29th, Strickland of the 42nd, Tillery of the 19th, Setzler of the 37th, Anavitarte of the 31st and others

ADOPTED SENATE

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Senate Study Committee on Adoption and Permanency Affordability; and for
2 other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia has a compelling interest in promoting the welfare of
4 children, ensuring safe and permanent family placements, and supporting policies that
5 encourage adoption and permanency for children who cannot remain with their biological
6 families; and

7 WHEREAS, adoption serves as a critical permanency outcome for children placed through
8 private, domestic, and international adoption systems, offering long-term stability and
9 improved life outcomes; and

10 WHEREAS, despite broad public support for adoption, many prospective adoptive families
11 report that the financial costs of adoption present a significant barrier to entry, even for
12 families otherwise willing and qualified to adopt; and

13 WHEREAS, the total costs of adoption include, but are not limited to, home studies, agency
14 fees, legal representation, court costs, background checks, training requirements,

15 post-placement supervision, interstate compact compliance, and related administrative
16 expenses; and

17 WHEREAS, adoption costs can vary significantly depending on the type of adoption
18 pursued, including private domestic adoption, relative or kinship adoption, and international
19 adoption, creating disparities in access and affordability; and

20 WHEREAS, concerns have been raised regarding whether certain regulatory, administrative,
21 or procedural requirements, while well-intended, may unnecessarily increase costs, delay
22 permanency, or discourage prospective adoptive parents; and

23 WHEREAS, Georgia law addresses adoption across multiple titles of the Official Code of
24 Georgia Annotated, including but not limited to Title 19 and Title 49, which may benefit
25 from coordinated review to ensure efficiency; and

26 WHEREAS, questions have arisen as to whether Georgia's current adoption framework
27 adequately balances child safety, family integrity, and administrative oversight with the goal
28 of timely and affordable permanency; and

29 WHEREAS, tax credits, deductions, employer based benefits, grants, and other financial
30 incentives have been used at the federal and state levels to offset adoption related expenses,
31 yet the accessibility, adequacy, and effectiveness of such incentives may warrant further
32 evaluation; and

33 WHEREAS, adoptive parents of children with special needs face additional financial and
34 logistical challenges, including medical, therapeutic, educational, and long-term support
35 costs, which can affect adoption outcomes and permanency stability; and

36 WHEREAS, faith based organizations, nonprofit agencies, private adoption providers, and
37 state licensed child-placing agencies play a significant role in Georgia's adoption ecosystem,
38 and their regulatory obligations, cost structures, and service models may merit review; and

39 WHEREAS, other states have undertaken reforms in recent years to streamline adoption
40 procedures, reduce unnecessary costs, expand tax incentives, and promote permanency
41 outcomes, providing potential models for Georgia to consider; and

42 WHEREAS, a study committee is needed to evaluate whether Georgia's adoption systems
43 could be improved through legislative, administrative, or fiscal reforms, including
44 consideration of:

- 45 (1) The primary cost drivers associated with adoption in Georgia;
- 46 (2) The impact of state and federal regulatory requirements on adoption affordability and
47 timelines;
- 48 (3) Whether existing fees, licensing requirements, or procedural mandates could be
49 clarified, streamlined, or modernized while maintaining child safety;
- 50 (4) The availability and effectiveness of state tax credits, deductions, or other financial
51 incentives related to adoption;
- 52 (5) The interaction between state adoption policies and federal programs or benefits;
- 53 (6) Barriers faced by middle-income families seeking to adopt;
- 54 (7) Adoption outcomes for children with special needs or complex medical or behavioral
55 needs;
- 56 (8) The role of public-private partnerships in expanding adoption access; and
- 57 (9) Potential legislative options to promote timely, safe, and affordable permanency for
58 children; and

59 WHEREAS, a comprehensive study involving legislators, child welfare professionals,
60 adoption agencies, adoptive parents, legal practitioners, economists, faith based
61 organizations, and other stakeholders is necessary to fully understand the conditions, needs,
62 gaps, and opportunities for reform.

63 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE:

64 (1) **Creation of Senate study committee.** There is created the Senate Study Committee
65 on Adoption and Permanency Affordability.

66 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of at least five members
67 of the Senate to be appointed by the President of the Senate. The President shall
68 designate a legislative member of the committee as chairperson of the committee.

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

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

76 (5) **Allowances and funding.**

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

79 (B) The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any member
80 of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized. Funds
81 necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
82 appropriated to the Senate.

83 (6) **Report.**

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

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

91 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
92 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
93 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
94 the Secretary of the Senate.

95 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Secretary
96 of the Senate a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu thereof.

97 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2026.