

House Resolution 163

By: Representatives Frye of the 118th, Beverly of the 143rd, Schofield of the 60th, Davis of the 87th, Nguyen of the 89th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee to Evaluate Workplace Safety and Labor Law
2 Enforcement in Georgia; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Labor does not utilize state funding for the
4 enforcement of laws that keep workers safe on the job within the State of Georgia; and

5 WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Labor directs people with employment issues to
6 federal enforcement of labor laws; and

7 WHEREAS, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has the fewest
8 number of inspectors since 1975; the number of inspections conducted during Fiscal Years
9 2017-2019 is lower than any three-year period since Fiscal Year 2009; and Fiscal Year 2019
10 saw the highest number of required inspections related to fatalities; and

11 WHEREAS, in 2017, 194 work related deaths and 25,400 nonfatal work related injuries or
12 illnesses were recorded in Georgia; and

13 WHEREAS, more than 400 workers in Georgia's poultry industry have contracted
14 COVID-19; and

15 WHEREAS, researchers estimate that Georgia workers suffer from minimum wage
16 violations amounting to \$301,000.00 annually; and

17 WHEREAS, twenty-two states have established a state plan with OSHA to share in the
18 enforcement of laws that keep workers safe on the job; and

19 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia has not established such a plan.

20 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

21 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Study Committee
22 to Evaluate Workplace Safety and Labor Law Enforcement in Georgia.

23 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of five members of the
24 House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of
25 Representatives. The Speaker shall designate a member of the committee as chairperson
26 of the committee.

27 (3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall undertake a study of the conditions, needs,
28 issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any action or
29 legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate. Specifically, the
30 committee shall:

31 (A) Gather evidence of the prevalence of violations of the federal Fair Labor Standards
32 Act and how effectively violations are investigated and employees receive relief;

33 (B) Gather evidence of the prevalence of violations of federal workplace safety laws
34 including the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 and how effectively
35 violations are investigated and employees receive relief;

36 (C) Gather evidence of the prevalence of fatal and nonfatal injuries or illnesses on the
37 job and the causes for these injuries or illnesses;

38 (D) Gather evidence on the extent of COVID-19 infections concentrated in workplaces
39 and the relationship between decisions to close businesses and rates of COVID-19
40 transmission;

41 (E) Evaluate effective laws, regulations, guidance, or best practices to avoid fatal and
42 nonfatal injuries or illnesses on the job;

43 (F) Evaluate whether Georgia should establish an OSHA approved state plan; and

44 (G) Evaluate increased state enforcement of workplace safety and wage laws.

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

49 (5) **Allowances and funding.** The legislative members of the committee shall receive
50 the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia
51 Annotated. The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any
52 member of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized.
53 Funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
54 appropriated to the House of Representatives.

55 (6) **Report.**

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

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

63 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
64 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.

65 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
66 the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

67 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Clerk of the
68 House of Representatives a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu
69 thereof.

70 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2021.