

## House Resolution 185

By: Representatives Bennett of the 94<sup>th</sup>, Jenkins of the 136<sup>th</sup>, Dempsey of the 13<sup>th</sup>, Lewis-Ward of the 115<sup>th</sup>, Newton of the 127<sup>th</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

- 1 Creating the House Healthy Food Retail Study Committee to investigate the lack of access  
2 to fresh, healthy food in certain rural and urban areas in Georgia; and for other purposes.
- 3 WHEREAS, expanding access to retail outlets that sell fresh food is a key strategy to help  
4 improve the nutrition, overall health, and economic vitality of underserved rural and urban  
5 communities in Georgia; and
- 6 WHEREAS, national research shows that residents of lower income communities often have  
7 very limited access to fresh fruits, vegetables, and other healthy food options; and
- 8 WHEREAS, this limited access detrimentally affects the health of all residents, with the  
9 elderly and children bearing the brunt of the negative consequences; and
- 10 WHEREAS, food security is defined as access by all people at all times to enough food that  
11 is nutritionally adequate and meets individual and collective consumer preferences; and
- 12 WHEREAS, food insecurity is associated with serious, potentially dire, health complications  
13 in adults and children; and

14 WHEREAS, in the United States, low-income households, households headed by women,  
15 and minority households are much more likely to be food insecure; and

16 WHEREAS, studies show the access to retail outlets that sell fresh fruits, vegetables, and  
17 healthy food options increase consumption of these items; and

18 WHEREAS, although individuals make decisions on what they consume, these decisions are  
19 directly affected by the availability of healthy food options in their communities; and

20 WHEREAS, twelve states and the District of Columbia have enacted healthier food  
21 legislation since 2001; and

22 WHEREAS, in 2004, Pennsylvania established the Fresh Food Financing Initiative, a  
23 successful public-private partnership that increases the number of supermarkets and other  
24 fresh food retailers in underserved communities across the state; and

25 WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania program provides grants and loans to meet the financing needs  
26 of supermarkets, smaller grocery stores, farmers' markets, and other fresh food retailers  
27 operating in underserved areas; and

28 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania appropriated funds to create the program, which has leveraged  
29 substantially more resources through a variety of public and private sources; and

30 WHEREAS, access to fresh, healthy food is essential in fighting the epidemic of obesity and  
31 diet related diseases; and

32 WHEREAS, Georgia ranks in the bottom third of state health rankings; and

33 WHEREAS, access to fresh, healthy food would undoubtedly contribute to a healthier  
34 Georgia.

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

36 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Healthy Food  
37 Retail Study Committee.

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

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

40 (B) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint five members of the  
41 House of Representatives as members of the committee and shall designate one of such  
42 members as chairperson. The Speaker shall also appoint an additional four  
43 nonlegislative members of the committee as follows: two representatives from the retail  
44 food industry in this state, the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs  
45 or his or her designee, and one representative that resides in an area that lacks quality  
46 retail food options.

47 (3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall investigate and study the conditions, needs,  
48 issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and develop recommendations  
49 for the creation of a statewide program to bring fresh food retailers into underserved areas  
50 and a plan to implement such a program.

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

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

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

58 (B) Members of the committee who are state officials, other than legislative members,  
59 or state employees shall receive no compensation for their services on the committee,  
60 but they may be reimbursed for expenses incurred by them in the performance of their  
61 duties as members of the committee in the same manner as they are reimbursed for  
62 expenses in their capacities as state officials or employees.

63 (C) Members of the committee who are not legislators, state officials, or state  
64 employees shall receive a daily expense allowance in an amount the same as that  
65 specified in subsection (b) of Code Section 45-7-21 of the Official Code of Georgia  
66 Annotated, as well as the mileage or transportation allowance authorized for state  
67 employees.

68 (D) The allowances and expenses authorized by this resolution shall not be received  
69 by any member of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are  
70 authorized. Funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come  
71 from funds appropriated to the House of Representatives; except that funds for the  
72 reimbursement of the expenses of state officials, other than legislative members, and  
73 state employees shall come from funds appropriated to or otherwise available to their  
74 respective agencies.

75 **(6) Report.**

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

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

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

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

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

90 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2023.