

## House Resolution 404

By: Representatives Evans of the 42<sup>nd</sup>, Willard of the 51<sup>st</sup>, Scott of the 76<sup>th</sup>, Park of the 101<sup>st</sup>, Drenner of the 85<sup>th</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Joint Study Committee on Comprehensive Civil Rights Legislation; and for  
2 other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Georgia is one of only three states without comprehensive state civil rights laws  
4 protecting individuals from discrimination in employment, housing, and public  
5 accommodations; and

6 WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly has debated adding specific protections against  
7 discrimination for people based on religious beliefs as well as sexual orientation and gender  
8 identity in separate contexts; and

9 WHEREAS, the Georgia Constitution guarantees equal protection under the law for all  
10 citizens; and

11 WHEREAS, the Georgia Constitution guarantees the natural and inalienable right to worship  
12 God, according to the dictates of a person's own conscience, and no human authority should,  
13 in any case, control or interfere with such right of conscience; and

14 WHEREAS, the Georgia Constitution holds that no one should be molested in person or  
15 property on account of religious opinions, but the right of freedom of religion shall not be  
16 construed as to excuse acts of licentiousness or justify practices inconsistent with the peace  
17 and safety of the state; and

18 WHEREAS, it shall be the duty of the Georgia General Assembly to enact such laws as will  
19 protect all citizens in the full enjoyment of the rights, privileges, and immunities due to such  
20 citizenship; and

21 WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly seeks to understand the best options available  
22 for protecting the rights reserved for all citizens of our state while preventing discrimination  
23 in employment, housing, and public accommodations whenever possible.

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 Comprehensive Civil Rights Legislation.

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

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

30 (B) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint five members of the  
31 House of Representatives as members of the committee and shall designate one of such  
32 members as cochairperson. At least two members of the committee shall be attorneys  
33 who serve on the House Committee on Judiciary.

34 (C) The President of the Senate shall appoint five members of the Senate as members  
35 of the committee and shall designate one of such members as cochairperson. At least  
36 two members of the committee shall be attorneys who serve on the Senate Judiciary  
37 Committee.

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

41 (4) **Meetings.** The cochairpersons shall call all meetings of the committee. The  
42 committee may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem  
43 necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform  
44 its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution. No fewer than  
45 one meeting of the committee shall include public comment and testimony.

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

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

53 (6) **Report.**

54 (A) In the event the committee adopts any specific findings or recommendations that  
55 include suggestions for proposed legislation, the cochairpersons shall file a report of the

56 same prior to the date of abolishment specified in this resolution, subject to  
57 subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.

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

61 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of  
62 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.  
63 A report so approved shall be signed by the cochairpersons of the committee and filed  
64 with the Clerk of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate.

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

68 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2017.