

House Resolution 894

By: Representatives Scott of the 76th, Williams of the 168th, Schofield of the 60th, Jackson of the 64th, Beasley-Teague of the 65th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Joint Study Committee on Veterans' Suicide; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, the General Assembly is concerned with the health, safety, and welfare of all
3 veterans of this country's armed forces returning to Georgia;

4 WHEREAS, the rate of mental health problems and suicides for members of this country's
5 armed forces remains startlingly high;

6 WHEREAS, in 2016, 202 Georgia veterans died of suicide and the suicide rate for veterans
7 in Georgia was significantly higher than the national rate of suicide.

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
9 GEORGIA:

10 (1) **Creation of joint study committee.** There is created the Joint Study Committee on
11 Veterans' Suicide.

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

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

14 (B) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint five members of the
15 House of Representatives as members of the committee and shall designate one of such
16 members as cochairperson.

17 (C) The President of the Senate shall appoint five members of the Senate as members
18 of the committee and shall designate one of such members as cochairperson.

19 (3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall undertake a study of the conditions, needs,
20 issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any action or
21 legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate. The committee shall
22 investigate the causes of and ways to prevent the suicide of veterans in Georgia.

23 (4) **Meetings.**

24 (A) The cochairpersons shall call all meetings of the committee. The committee may
25 conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or

26 convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties,
27 and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution.

28 (B) The Department of Veterans Service, the Department of Public Health, the
29 Department of Community Health, the Department of Behavioral Health and
30 Developmental Disabilities, the Department of Public Safety, and the Board of Regents
31 shall provide such assistance to the committee in its work as the committee deems
32 appropriate.

33 (C) The committee shall coordinate its meetings and work with relevant nonprofit
34 groups and veterans organizations that are involved with veteran suicide prevention as
35 well as medical schools and other institutions of higher learning in this state.

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

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

39 (B) The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any member
40 of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized. Funds
41 necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
42 appropriated to the House of Representatives and Senate.

43 **(6) Report.**

44 (A) In the event the committee adopts any specific findings or recommendations that
45 include suggestions for proposed legislation, the cochairpersons shall file a report of the
46 same prior to the date of abolishment specified in this resolution, subject to
47 subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.

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

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

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

58 **(7) Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2020.