

Senate Resolution 153

By: Senators Jones II of the 22nd, Anderson of the 43rd, Rhett of the 33rd, Harrell of the 40th and Williams of the 39th

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the Senate Study Committee on Revising Voting Rights for Nonviolent Felony
2 Offenders; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Georgia forbids all felons from voting because all felonies are considered a
4 crime of moral turpitude; and

5 WHEREAS, Georgia statutes, Constitution, and case law do not define a crime of moral
6 turpitude; and

7 WHEREAS, Georgia has been committed to criminal justice reform, and part of this reform
8 effort should be to integrate citizens into the community; and

9 WHEREAS, states with similar laws are now defining what constitutes moral turpitude for
10 the purpose of restricting the right to vote; and

11 WHEREAS, preventing nonviolent felons from voting does not meet the state's compelling
12 interest in properly integrating persons into society.

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

14 (1) **Creation of Senate study committee.** There is created the Senate Study Committee
15 on Revising Voting Rights for Nonviolent Felony Offenders.

16 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of five members of the
17 Senate to be appointed by the President of the Senate. The President shall designate a
18 member of the committee as chairperson of the committee.

19 (3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall undertake to define which nonviolent
20 felonies should be classified as crimes of moral turpitude with the understanding that a
21 blanket prohibition on nonviolent felons having the right to vote does not serve the state's
22 compelling state interest in ensuring that persons are fully integrated into society.

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

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

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

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

34 (6) **Report.**

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

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

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

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

48 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2019.