

Senate Resolution 561

By: Senators Orrock of the 36th, Halpern of the 39th, Butler of the 55th, Parent of the 42nd,
James of the 35th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing February 2, 2024, as Clark Atlanta University Day (CAU) at the state capitol;
2 and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Clark Atlanta University was established in 1988 upon the consolidation of its
4 two parent institutions, Atlanta University, founded in 1865 by the American Missionary
5 Association and the nation's first institution to award graduate degrees to African Americans;
6 and Clark University, which was later changed to Clark College, established four years later
7 in 1869 by the Freedman's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) and the
8 nation's first four-first year liberal arts college to serve a primarily African American
9 population; and

10 WHEREAS, CAU is one of the top performers on Social Mobility in the nation, ranked at
11 number 69; the CAU School of Education is ranked as the number three school of education
12 in State of Georgia; the School of Business is ranked number nine among MBA programs
13 in the State of Georgia; the CAU Whitney M. Young, Jr., School of Social Work is ranked
14 number five and is the first school of social work to be accredited in the State of Georgia;
15 according to the most recent *U.S. News and World Report*; and

16 WHEREAS, the university's four schools, Arts and Sciences, Business Administration,
17 Education, and Social Work, offer 40 academic programs to 3,920 students annually, making
18 a valuable contribution to the future workforce, including training for technology,
19 engineering, and education and contributing to the leadership of Georgia; and

20 WHEREAS, Clark Atlanta University's economic impact to the state of Georgia boasts \$541
21 million in combined gross sales, a direct impact of \$400 million, and 3,282 full and part-time
22 jobs that contribute to Georgia's economy; and

23 WHEREAS, Clark Atlanta University is a founding member of the Georgia Research
24 Alliance and the home of the Center for Cancer Research and Therapeutic Development,
25 which has the distinction of being one of the nation's largest academic prostate cancer
26 research centers, providing opportunities for high caliber basic and translational research,
27 training the next generation of scientists in cancer research, and offering an educational
28 environment for community outreach, prevention, early detection, and treatment of prostate
29 cancer; and

30 WHEREAS, Clark Atlanta University is the home of the Center for Innovation and
31 Entrepreneurship Development, one of the nation's most progressive forums integrating
32 traditional academics, market research and intelligence, and innovation to increase the level
33 of competitiveness among CAU graduates and local entrepreneurs; and

34 WHEREAS, Clark Atlanta University is the first private historically black university to host
35 a chapter of Phi Kappa Phi, America's most prestigious honor society for all academic
36 disciplines, in addition to Golden Key International Honor Society, Phi Eta Sigma Honor
37 Society, and Alpha Kappa Mu Honor Society, as well as several discipline-specific honor
38 societies; and

39 WHEREAS, Clark Atlanta University is an important contributor to local, regional, and
40 national communities, engaging more than 1,000 student and faculty volunteers annually in
41 service to local nonprofit organizations; supporting the educational systems of Fulton,
42 DeKalb, Cobb, Gwinnett, Rockdale, and nearby Georgia counties; and continuing to reach
43 beyond the campus footprint to address critical issues through purposeful service; and

44 WHEREAS, Clark Atlanta University is the home of WCLK Jazz 91.9 FM, Atlanta's Jazz
45 Station, a National Public Radio (*NPR*) affiliate celebrating 50 years of service to the
46 community; and

47 WHEREAS, Clark Atlanta University has produced stellar alumni who represent
48 irreplaceable threads in the fabric of the State of Georgia and America as a whole, including:
49 Fletcher Henderson, AU '19; former Georgia State Representative Grace Towns Hamilton,
50 AU '27; Irma Jackson Clayton Wertz, AU '35; Evelyn Gibson Lowery, CC '46; Mary Frances
51 Early, CC '57; the Honorable Brenda Hill Cole, AU '67; Georgia State Representative Shelia
52 Jones, CC '78; Kenny Leon, CC '79; Helen Smith Price, AU '81; Georgia State Senator
53 Horacena Tate, AU '88, CAU '92; Anthony White, CAU '99; Bomani Jones, CAU '01;
54 Tharon Johnson, CAU '02; and Lorin Crawford, CAU '13; and

55 WHEREAS, Clark Atlanta University is now under the leadership of President George T.
56 French Jr., the longest serving HBCU president in the United States, who is now applying
57 his considerable experience and expertise, wisdom, and passion for advocacy toward a better
58 future for the young men and women of Clark Atlanta University; and

59 WHEREAS, under his leadership in 2022, CAU has embarked on a \$250 million
60 comprehensive endowment campaign; a few initiatives within the campaign include

61 innovative research to help cure prostate cancer and Alzheimer's disease, creating new
62 avenues of entrepreneurship, and finding ways to eradicate social and racial injustices; and

63 WHEREAS, under the leadership of President French, Clark Atlanta University has received
64 the largest unrestricted donation in the university's history from philanthropist Mackenzie
65 Scott totaling \$15 million; and

66 WHEREAS, President French has stewarded the addition of the Propel Center, which will
67 support Clark Atlanta University, the Atlanta University Center, and the entire HBCU
68 community, which includes more than 107 colleges and universities, through a robust virtual
69 platform accessible to all HBCU students and faculty. The founding partners, Apple and
70 Southern Company, along with strategic partner the Walt Disney Company, have each made
71 major investments toward the development and launch of the center.

72 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
73 recognize and commend Clark Atlanta University; Dr. George T. French Jr., President of
74 Clark Atlanta University; and its students, faculty, staff, alumni, colleagues, and friends for
75 their many years of dedicated service to the higher education of Georgia's citizens and for
76 attracting young scholars from across the nation to our great state.

77 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
78 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to Clark Atlanta
79 University and President French.