

## Senate Resolution 620

By: Senators Anderson of the 43rd, Sims of the 12th, James of the 35th, Tate of the 38th, Davenport of the 44th and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Supporting efforts to invest in a statewide clean energy transition; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, climate change is a legitimate threat to Georgia and the southeast with the  
3 potential of causing increases in temperature, drought, and extreme weather, as well as  
4 predisposing our coastline to flooding, rising sea-levels, and stronger, more frequent  
5 hurricanes; and

6 WHEREAS, since 1980, the average temperature in Atlanta has risen nearly two degrees  
7 Fahrenheit, and Georgia currently averages about 20 dangerous heat days a year; and

8 WHEREAS, Georgia currently has 650 square miles that fall within the 100 year coastal  
9 flood plain, and by 2050, this area is projected to increase more than 9 square miles due to  
10 sea level rise; and

11 WHEREAS, a contributor to climate change is the use of fossil fuels, coal-fired plants, and  
12 other energy related pollutants, which causes serious health problems such as cancer and  
13 asthma, particularly among low wealth communities; and

14 WHEREAS, asthma attacks from exposure to fossil fuels send African Americans to the  
15 emergency room at three times the rate of white individuals, and the death rate from asthma  
16 for African Americans is twice that of white individuals; and

17 WHEREAS, access to clean energy continues to be a struggle for numerous Georgians from  
18 historically marginalized and low wealth communities; and

19 WHEREAS, nationally, Atlanta ranks fourth highest in median energy burden levels and  
20 third highest among low-income household populations; and

21 WHEREAS, African Americans spend almost twice as much per square foot on energy as  
22 their white counterparts; and

23 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia can harness the intellectual capital and resources of its  
24 postsecondary institutions to assist with a statewide clean energy transition, defined as  
25 shifting energy production away from sources that release greenhouse gases to those that  
26 emit little to none at all such as hydro, wind, and solar power; and

27 WHEREAS, a statewide clean energy transition aligns with international and national goals  
28 as well as commitments from numerous Georgia cities, including Atlanta, Savannah, and  
29 Athens, to achieve 100 percent clean and renewable energy use by 2035; and

30 WHEREAS, any statewide effort toward clean energy transition must include historically  
31 Black colleges and universities in Georgia, which are Morehouse College, Spelman College,  
32 Clark Atlanta University, Morris Brown College, Paine College, Savannah State University,  
33 Albany State University, Fort Valley State University, Morehouse School of Medicine, and  
34 the Interdenominational Theological Center; and

35 WHEREAS, historically Black colleges and universities contribute greatly to our state  
36 economic prosperity and generate scholars and leaders in various sectors, especially in  
37 STEM fields; and

38 WHEREAS, historically Black colleges and universities are working towards clean energy  
39 transition to assist historically marginalized communities of color in reimagining energy  
40 access that is cleaner, cheaper, and reflective of global efforts to address climate change; and

41 WHEREAS, leaders such as Felicia Davis, who oversees sustainability at Clark Atlanta  
42 University and who cofounded the HBCU Green Fund in 2016 to help finance green projects  
43 at historically Black colleges and universities, continue to push for investments that will  
44 reduce energy, cut down on water usage, and minimize the carbon footprint of historically  
45 Black colleges and universities; and

46 WHEREAS, an example of HBCU resiliency innovation exists at the Atlanta University  
47 Center Consortium (AUCC), which has forged a relationship with the Georgia Power  
48 Company to develop a community solar microgrid capable of offering an equitable clean  
49 energy transition; and

50 WHEREAS, greater prioritization and investment by the State of Georgia in a statewide  
51 clean energy transition that recognizes and commits resources to historically Black colleges  
52 and universities to become resiliency hubs capable of transforming once neglected  
53 communities into thriving, sustainable, and clean ecosystems, as well as train students to  
54 enter this emerging sector as leaders and innovators, is optimal for all; and

55 WHEREAS, a statewide clean energy transition is the most viable and appropriate remedy  
56 for addressing the dangers stemming from climate change, alleviating energy costs,

57 generating new jobs in the burgeoning green economy, and offering historically Black  
58 colleges and universities another opportunity to serve as leaders in their communities.

59 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
60 support efforts by the state to prioritize and invest in a statewide clean energy transition  
61 wherein by December 31, 2035, residents will receive 100 percent safe, clean, and renewable  
62 energy for consumption.

63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such a transition will include leveraging the intellectual  
64 capital and resources of historically Black colleges and universities to ensure these  
65 institutions and historically marginalized communities of color fully benefit from such a  
66 transition.

67 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
68 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the public and the  
69 press.