

House Resolution 1495

By: Representatives Kausche of the 50th, Williams of the 37th, Gilliard of the 162nd, Oliver of the 82nd, Evans of the 83rd, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on Regulatory and Oversight Processes of the
2 Environmental Protection Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources; and for
3 other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, the Environmental Protection Division of the Georgia Department of Natural
5 Resources is a state agency charged with protecting Georgia's air, land, and water resources
6 through the authority of state and federal environmental statutes; and

7 WHEREAS, the citizens of Georgia have a right to a healthy environment and the
8 conservation of the state's natural resources, and the Environmental Protection Division of
9 the Department of Natural Resources has a responsibility to maintain such environment and
10 conservation; and

11 WHEREAS, air, land, and water resources may have been contaminated and human health
12 put at unnecessary risk due to three different types of incidents in 2019; and

13 WHEREAS, concerns of toxins affecting human well-being from ethylene oxide in Cobb,
14 Fulton, and Newton counties, from the burning of creosote in Madison and Franklin counties,
15 and from coal ash in Floyd, Cobb, Monroe, Heard, Newton, and Coweta counties are
16 increasing; and

17 WHEREAS, the affected counties, local governmental agencies, and residents have voiced
18 concerns about pollutants originating from industrial facilities; and

19 WHEREAS, research from the National Institutes of Health concludes that each pollutant
20 named above contains known carcinogens that are detrimental to human health; and

21 WHEREAS, residents and local governmental agencies have inquired what specific role the
22 Environmental Protection Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources takes
23 in mitigating the impacts of these toxins on the health of the citizens of Georgia; and

24 WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly desires to ensure the mission of the
25 Environmental Protection Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources is
26 properly met and the health of the citizens of the State of Georgia and the environment are
27 properly safeguarded in a consistent, fair, and timely manner; and

28 WHEREAS, it is crucial to ascertain what enforcement tools are in place, whether the
29 Environmental Protection Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources has
30 adequate funding to fulfill its mission, and what improvements can be implemented to
31 continuously maintain high-quality environmental protection standards.

32 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

33 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Study Committee
34 on Regulatory and Oversight Processes of the Environmental Protection Division of the
35 Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

36 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of five members of the
37 House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of
38 Representatives. The Speaker shall designate a member of the committee as chairperson
39 of the committee.

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

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

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

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

50 (B) The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any member
51 of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized. Funds
52 necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
53 appropriated to the House of Representatives.

54 (6) **Report.**

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

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

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

66 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Clerk of the
67 House of Representatives a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu
68 thereof.

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