

Senate Resolution 108

By: Senators Jackson of the 2nd, Jones of the 10th, Rahman of the 5th, Henson of the 41st, Sims of the 12th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Encouraging the State of Georgia's endorsement of the Stand4Forests platform; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia endeavors to be a good steward of the state and region's
4 environment and resources; and

5 WHEREAS, standing forests provide our communities with clean air, fresh water, and
6 carbon storage; are home to thousands of unique species of plants and animals; and protect
7 us from flooding and drought; and

8 WHEREAS, there is scientific consensus regarding the reality of climate change and the
9 connection between the combustion of fossil fuels and the degradation and loss of forests that
10 create greenhouse gasses and the warming of the planet; and

11 WHEREAS, climate science shows that southeastern U.S. cities, including those in Georgia,
12 are particularly vulnerable to climate change, with expected impacts to infrastructure and
13 human health; and

14 WHEREAS, logging is a significant contributor to carbon emissions and is preventing the
15 ability of our forests to remove increasing amounts of carbon from the atmosphere; and

16 WHEREAS, the industrial-scale use of wood pellets for electricity releases more carbon per
17 unit of electricity generated than coal, is not a carbon neutral form of energy, and will
18 contribute to the rate of climate change and severity of its impacts; and

19 WHEREAS, the combined climate disruption effects of frequent extreme rainfall events and
20 sea level rise are already increasing flood frequency and impacting property values,
21 municipal credit ratings, and infrastructure viability, particularly in Georgia's coastal regions;
22 and

23 WHEREAS, Georgia's coastal plain and inland low-lying regions support a rapidly growing
24 population, a robust tourism economy and other critical industries, essential nursery habitats
25 for recreational and commercially important fisheries, and important cultural resources that
26 are highly vulnerable to climate change impacts; and

27 WHEREAS, changing temperature extremes, wildfire patterns, rising sea levels, hurricanes,
28 floods, droughts, and warming ocean temperatures are expected to redistribute species and
29 greatly modify ecosystems, resulting in an increased risk to the ecological resources that
30 people depend on for their livelihood, protection, and well-being; and

31 WHEREAS, reductions in the frequency and intensity of cold winter temperature extremes
32 are already allowing tropical and subtropical invasive species to move northward and replace
33 more temperate species which may negatively impact Georgia's agriculture industry; and

34 WHEREAS, rising temperatures and increases in the duration and intensity of drought are
35 expected to increase wildfire occurrence and reduce the effectiveness of prescribed fire
36 practices; and

37 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia recognizes that the agriculture, tourism, film, fishing, and
38 other key industries depend on a healthy environment in order to continue serving as major
39 economic drivers that benefit the current and future residents, property owners, and visitors
40 of Georgia; and

41 WHEREAS, forest protection is a crucial component of a just solution to the climate crisis;
42 and

43 WHEREAS, the destruction and degradation of United States forests are climate
44 emergencies, and we are clear-cutting away a critical solution to the climate crisis; and

45 WHEREAS, when forests are destroyed, degraded, converted to plantations, or harvested to
46 burn for bioenergy, their climate and community benefits disappear; and

47 WHEREAS, communities of color, indigenous communities, and low-income or rural
48 populations disproportionately bear the impacts of climate change as well as the health,
49 economic, and social costs associated with industrial practices; and

50 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia recognizes that it is economically, socially, and
51 ecologically responsible for expanding forest protection, restoring degraded forests, reducing
52 consumption, and transitioning to truly clean, nonpolluting sources of renewable energy,
53 such as solar and wind energy, that pose less risk to the environment and economic health
54 of Georgia citizens.

55 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
56 encourage the State of Georgia's endorsement of the Stand4Forests platform to support
57 permanent expansion of protected lands, a ban on subsidies for false solutions, accurate and
58 transparent emissions reduction, investment in forest protection, economic transition
59 development for communities dependant on extractive forest economies, and provision for
60 more options and resources for landowners and municipalities to keep forests standing and
61 thriving.

62 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
63 to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to all members of the
64 Georgia General Assembly.