

## **PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN, HR 1219/SR 955**

### **What Does the Resolution Accomplish?**

**This resolution urges Georgia Department of Education and Georgia schools to safeguard the rights of children under the age 17 from military recruitment and to implement basic safeguards for recruitment of 17-year-olds .**

**Specifically, the resolution encourages Georgia:**

1. To comply with the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict*, ratified by the U.S. Senate in 2002 and signed by President Bush;
2. To cease current programs and activities and refrain from future programs designed to recruit children under the age of 17 into the military;
3. To implement basic safeguards for recruitment of 17-year-olds by requiring that military recruitment activities be genuinely voluntary and carried out with the consent of the child's parents or guardians; and
4. To actively provide students and parents with exemption forms and information regarding exemption forms that prohibit schools from disclosing students' records to military recruiters as required by the No Child Left Behind Act.

### **Why is this Resolution Necessary?**

- Increased pressure to recruit during wartime has led to abusive recruitment in violation of the *Optional Protocol*. Wartime enlistment quotas have placed increased pressure on military recruiters to fill the ranks of the armed services. The added strain of fulfilling enlistment quotas necessary to carry out sustained U.S. military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan without reinstating a draft has contributed to a rise in aggressive recruitment efforts and documented misconduct and abuse by recruiters, in contravention of the *Optional Protocol*.
- Documented misconduct by recruiters, including coercion, deception and false promises nullify the voluntariness of youths' recruitment. This resolution will combat these practices and ensure that any recruitment of 17-year-olds is completely voluntary.



## American Friends Service Committee

- **Leading by Example** - The United States serves as a role model for democracy and human rights throughout the world, and has participated in programs abroad that prevent the recruitment of child soldiers. America and Georgia must continue to lead by example.
- **Legal Obligation** - The United States Senate ratified the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, thus, obligating the States, including Georgia, to comply with the Optional Protocol.

### **JROTC:**

This resolution will not affect any JROTC programs, to the extent that JROTC programs are not being used to recruit children under 17 into the armed services. This resolution only addresses abusive or inappropriate recruitment activities, not educational and school completion programs that are not being used for recruitment.