



Monday, March 8, 2021

Dear Members of the Georgia State House of Representatives,

The Metro Atlanta Chamber writes in support of House Bill 479 (LC 41 3075-ECS), legislation that would repeal and replace Georgia's 150-year-old Citizen's Arrest statute. We support this bipartisan, balanced effort to reform Georgia's Citizen Arrest statute to eliminate abusive use of the statute while providing a way for private businesses to reasonably detain lawbreakers until law enforcement can respond.

HB 479 builds on 2020's historic passage of Georgia's hate crimes legislation and would close dangerous legal loopholes that could be used to justify future acts of vigilantism against Georgians. It would also ensure that private businesses and law enforcement retain the ability to temporarily detain lawbreakers when necessary and appropriate. At the same time, it would not infringe on private citizens' rights to defend themselves under the state's existing self-defense and stand your ground statutes.

Georgia has become the No. 1 state to do business, and with the enactment of this legislation, we will become a leader for the rest of the country by repealing the state's antiquated Citizen's Arrest statute – an act we hope will prompt similar action by other state legislatures with outdated Citizen's Arrest statutes in their state codes.

We applaud Governor Brian Kemp, House Floor Leader Bert Reeves, House Judiciary Chairman Chuck Efration, and the several other individuals and advocacy groups for their tireless work on this critical legislation. We are proud to support HB 479 and look forward to continuing our work with the Georgia General Assembly on smart, meaningful legislation that will propel our state forward and ensure our state's laws reflect our values.

Sincerely,

Marshall Guest  
Senior Vice President, Public Policy