House Bill 676 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)
By: Representatives Houston of the 170th, Dickey of the 140th, England of the 116th, Gilliard of the 162nd, Williams of the 148th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

To amend Article 2 of Chapter 10 of Title 2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to farmers' markets, so as to provide for oversight by a legislative advisory committee; to provide for members, duties, and allowances; to provide for presentation of findings; to provide for planning; to provide for automatic repeal; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Article 2 of Chapter 10 of Title 2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to farmers' markets, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

"2-10-53.1. (a) The Commissioner shall establish, operate, and maintain this state's farmers' markets under the oversight of a legislative advisory committee to be composed as follows:

(1) The chairpersons of the House Appropriations Subcommittee for Economic Development and Tourism and the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee for Agriculture and Consumer Affairs or their designees, ex officio;
(2) The chairperson of the House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee or his or her designee;

(3) The chairperson of the Senate Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee or his or her designee;

(4) Three members of the House of Representatives appointed by the chairperson of the House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee; and

(5) Three members of the Senate appointed by the chairperson of the Senate Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee.

(b) The members of the legislative advisory committee shall appoint the committee's chairperson and vice-chairperson, who shall each serve two-year terms to coincide with the legislative biennium of the General Assembly.

(c) The members of the legislative advisory committee shall receive the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8.

(d) The legislative advisory committee created by this Code section shall be tasked with the duty to:

(1) Commission an independent study of the economic viability and public benefit of each existing farmers' market with an analysis of the benefits to this state's agribusiness economy, including this state's farmers, food supply chain, grocers, restaurants, agri-tourism, local economies, and the effectiveness of the marketing of Georgia grown products. Upon completion of the study, the findings shall be presented to the legislative advisory committee; and

(2) Using such findings as provided for in paragraph (1) of this subsection, coordinate with the Commissioner and the department to develop a five-year plan for all of this state's farmers' markets that maximizes the public benefit of all farmers' market properties and ensures efficient and fiscally responsible operation of such markets.

(e) This Code section shall stand repealed on January 10, 2027."
SECTION 2.
This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law without such approval.

SECTION 3.
All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.