
GOVERNOR BRIAN P. KEMP
2023 SESSION OF THE GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SIGNING STATEMENT FOR SENATE BILL 115

SIGNING STATEMENT 1

Senate Bill 115 seeks to ensure sportsman have use of Georgia’s navigable rivers. My office has received many calls both in support of and some in opposition to this piece of legislation. After careful analysis, I have signed Senate Bill 115 for the following reasons.

One, the state has invested millions of dollars collected through license fees to establish fisheries and boat ramps and to manage recreational fishing populations in our rivers. Two, this legislation does not affect non-navigable rivers or streams or change the definition of navigability. The definition of navigability is codified in a different subsection of this statute: O.C.G.A. § 44-8-5(a). Three, this legislation does not impact the use of water by adjacent landowners in navigable rivers. Four, this statute does not create a private right of action. Any implied private right of action is abrogated by statute. *See* O.C.G.A. § 9-2-8.

This bill allows for the public to hunt, fish, and transit the navigable waters of this state – an embodiment of the principle of *sic vos non vobis* and a privilege that has been assured Georgians for generations. To the extent some believe it stands for more, House Resolution 519 establishes the House Study Committee on Fishing Access to Freshwater Resources. This study committee will meet between legislative sessions this summer and is the appropriate venue to receive suggested amendments to the language in Senate Bill 115.