

The Senate Committee on Regulated Industries and Utilities offered the following substitute to HB 1344:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 37 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to general provisions relative to the administration of mental health, developmental  
3 disabilities, addictive diseases, and other disability services, so as to allow for certain  
4 officials on the Behavioral Health Coordinating Council to be represented by a delegate or  
5 agent; to repeal provisions relating to the formulation and publication of a state plan for  
6 disability services; to amend Article 1 of Chapter 10A of Title 43 of the Official Code of  
7 Georgia Annotated, relating to licensing provisions relative to professional counselors, social  
8 workers, and marriage and family therapists, so as to authorize the Georgia Composite Board  
9 of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists to waive  
10 certain requirements for applicants licensed in other jurisdictions; to amend Article 10 of  
11 Chapter 5 of Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to social services  
12 relative to children and adolescents with severe emotional problems, so as to repeal a  
13 provision relating to the submission of an annual report by the commissioner of behavioral  
14 health and developmental disabilities; to provide for related matters; to provide for an  
15 effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

16 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

17

**SECTION 1.**

18 Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 37 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
 19 general provisions relative to the administration of mental health, developmental disabilities,  
 20 addictive diseases, and other disability services, is amended in Code Section 37-2-4, relating  
 21 to the Behavioral Health Coordinating Council, membership, meetings, and obligations, by  
 22 revising subsection (c) and adding a new subsection to read as follows:

23 "(c) Meetings of the council shall be held quarterly, or more frequently, on the call of the  
 24 chairperson. Meetings of the council shall be held with no less than five days' public notice  
 25 for regular meetings and with such notice as the bylaws may prescribe for special meetings.  
 26 Each member shall be given written or electronic notice of all meetings. All meetings of  
 27 the council shall be subject to the provisions of Chapter 14 of Title 50. Minutes or  
 28 transcripts shall be kept of all meetings of the council and shall include a record of the  
 29 votes of each member, specifying the yea or nay vote or absence of each member, on all  
 30 questions and matters coming before the council, and minutes or transcripts of each  
 31 meeting shall be posted on the state agency website of each council member designee. No  
 32 member may abstain from a vote other than for reasons constituting disqualification to the  
 33 satisfaction of a majority of a quorum of the council on a recorded vote. Except as  
 34 provided in subsection (c.1) of this Code section, no ~~No~~ member of the council shall be  
 35 represented by a delegate or agent. Any member who misses three duly posted meetings  
 36 of the council over the course of a calendar year shall be replaced by an appointee of the  
 37 Governor unless the council chairperson officially excuses each such absence.

38 (c.1) The commissioner of behavioral health and developmental disabilities, the  
 39 commissioner of early care and learning, the commissioner of community health, the  
 40 commissioner of public health, the commissioner of human services, the commissioner of  
 41 juvenile justice, the commissioner of corrections, the commissioner of veterans service, the  
 42 commissioner of community supervision, the commissioner of community affairs, the  
 43 commissioner of the Technical College System of Georgia, the Commissioner of Labor,

44 the State School Superintendent, and the chairperson of the State Board of Pardons and  
45 Paroles shall each be authorized to be represented by a delegate or agent at any meeting of  
46 the council or subcommittee meeting. Any such delegate or agent shall be counted toward  
47 a quorum, shall have all voting privileges as the member's delegate or agent, and shall not  
48 be considered an absence of the member."

49 **SECTION 2.**

50 Said article is further amended by repealing and reserving Code Section 37-2-7, relating to  
51 formulation and publication of state plan for disability services.

52 **SECTION 3.**

53 Article 1 of Chapter 10A of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
54 licensing provisions relative to professional counselors, social workers, and marriage and  
55 family therapists, is amended by revising Code Section 43-10A-10, relating to licensure  
56 without examination, as follows:

57 "43-10A-10.

58 (a) The board may issue a license without examination to any applicant licensed in a  
59 specialty under the laws of another jurisdiction having requirements for licensure in that  
60 specialty which are substantially equal to the licensure requirements for that specialty in  
61 this state.

62 (b) The board shall be authorized to waive all or a portion of the experience requirements  
63 for any applicant licensed under the laws of another jurisdiction who has maintained full  
64 licensure in good standing in such jurisdiction for a minimum of two years."

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**SECTION 4.**

66 Article 10 of Chapter 5 of Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
67 social services relative to children and adolescents with severe emotional problems, is  
68 amended by repealing and reserving Code Section 49-5-224, relating to annual report.

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**SECTION 5.**

70 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law  
71 without such approval.

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**SECTION 6.**

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