

House Bill 480

By: Representatives Ballinger of the 23rd, Caldwell of the 131st, Pak of the 108th, Sheldon of the 104th, Abrams of the 89th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Code Section 17-8-54 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 persons allowed to be present in a courtroom when a person under the age of 16 testifies
3 concerning a sex offense, so as to add victim assistance personnel to the list of persons who
4 may be present in a courtroom when a person under the age of 16 testifies concerning a sex
5 offense; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Code Section 17-8-54 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to persons allowed
9 to be present in a courtroom when a person under the age of 16 testifies concerning a sex
10 offense, is amended as follows:

11 "17-8-54.

12 In the trial of any criminal case, when any person under the age of 16 is testifying
13 concerning any ~~sex~~ sexual offense, the court shall clear the courtroom of all persons except
14 parties to the cause and their immediate families or guardians, attorneys and their
15 secretaries, officers of the court, victim assistance coordinators, victims' advocates, and
16 such other victim assistance personnel as provided for by Code Section 15-18-14.2, jurors,
17 newspaper reporters or broadcasters, and court reporters."

18 **SECTION 2.**

19 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.