

Senate Bill 185

By: Senator Harp of the 16<sup>th</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Code Section 19-7-4 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to criteria  
2 for loss of parental custody, so as to provide a mechanism for a person to agree to terminate  
3 parental rights; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other  
4 purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

7 Code Section 19-7-4 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to criteria for loss  
8 of parental custody, is amended by striking said Code section in its entirety and inserting in  
9 lieu thereof the following:

10 "19-7-4.

11 (a) If a child is found under circumstances of destitution and suffering, abandonment, or  
12 exposure or if the child has been begging or if it is found that the child is being reared  
13 under immoral, obscene, or indecent influences which are likely to degrade his or her moral  
14 character and devote him or her to a vicious life and it appears to the appropriate court by  
15 competent evidence, including such examination of the child as may be practicable, that  
16 by reason of the neglect, habitual drunkenness, lewd or other vicious habits, or other  
17 behavior of the parents or guardians of the child, it is necessary for the welfare of the child  
18 to protect the child from such conditions, the court may order that the parents or guardians  
19 be deprived of custody of the child and that appropriate measures as provided by law be  
20 taken for the welfare of the child.

21 (b) By agreement of the parties and with proper showing that it is in the child's best  
22 interest and the child will have proper parental care and control and financial, physical,  
23 moral, and emotional support and that the parent making the request is not under any  
24 duress, a court may allow a parent to terminate his or her rights and obligations arising  
25 from the parental relationship, including rights of inheritance. Upon such termination the  
26 parent is not thereafter entitled to notice of proceedings for the adoption of the child by

1 another, nor has the parent any right to object to the adoption or otherwise to participate  
2 in the proceedings. A guardian ad litem for the child and an attorney may be appointed as  
3 the child's counsel."

4 **SECTION 2.**

5 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.