

House Bill 257

By: Representative Reece of the 11th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 3 of Chapter 3 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to state symbols, so as to designate the green tree frog as the official state amphibian;
3 to provide for legislative findings; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws;
4 and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 **SECTION 1.**

7 The General Assembly finds and determines that:

8 (1) The green tree frog's (*Hyla cinerea*) habitat includes nearly all of Georgia, so virtually
9 all Georgians are familiar with it or have a great opportunity to see its conspicuous bright
10 color and striped markings;

11 (2) Large aggregations of calling males create conspicuous and characteristic nighttime
12 choruses during the warm months;

13 (3) All other major groups of wildlife, including mammals, birds, reptiles, fish, insects,
14 trees, and wildflowers, are represented by state symbols, and amphibians are a crucial
15 link in the state's ecosystem;

16 (4) Official recognition of a state amphibian could help correct the false impression that
17 amphibians and reptiles are one and the same;

18 (5) The State of Georgia is home to 85 different species of amphibians, which gives it
19 the distinction of having the second greatest amphibian diversity of any state in the
20 United States behind North Carolina;

21 (6) Well-publicized world-wide decline of amphibians has become a major conservation
22 concern, and the exclusion of amphibians from our official state symbols list could
23 possibly contribute to a sense of complacency towards this loss of biota;

24 (7) Amphibians are excellent indicators of water and air quality due to their porous skin
25 and habit of moving between aquatic and terrestrial habitats, and declines in their

1 numbers can serve as early warning signs that environmental conditions may be
2 deteriorating in localized areas; and

3 (8) Establishing an official state amphibian is necessary to fully recognize our diverse
4 wildlife and the green tree frog is deserving of the attention and appreciation of the
5 citizens of this state by designation as the official state amphibian.

6 **SECTION 2.**

7 Article 3 of Chapter 3 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to state
8 symbols, is amended by adding a new Code Section 50-3-79 to read as follows:

9 "50-3-79.

10 The green tree frog is designated as the official Georgia state amphibian."

11 **SECTION 3.**

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