

Senate Bill 71

By: Senators Smith of the 25th, Squires of the 5th and Butler of the 55th

AS PASSED SENATE

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT**

1 To amend Code Section 43-10A-7 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 licensing requirements for professional counselors, social workers, and marriage and family
3 therapists, so as to provide an exemption from such requirements for certain persons
4 providing certain disaster relief services; to provide for related matters; to provide an
5 effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:**

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Code Section 43-10A-7 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to licensing
9 requirements for professional counselors, social workers, and marriage and family therapists,
10 is amended by striking the word "and" at the end of paragraph (17) of subsection (b); by
11 replacing the period at the end of paragraph (18) of subsection (b) with the symbol and word
12 "; and"; and by adding at the end of subsection (b) a new paragraph (19) to read as follows:

13 "(19) Professional counselors, social workers, and marriage and family therapists who
14 are:

15 (A) Duly and currently licensed to provide professional services within their area of
16 expertise as defined by the applicable laws of their state or territory of residence; and

17 (B) Enlisted, screened, and assigned by the American Red Cross to provide such
18 services within a defined disaster area to alleviate the emotional, mental, or behavioral
19 impact on persons or groups of persons affected by a disaster, provided that such
20 services are provided without cost to the recipients of the services.

21 The exemption provided in this paragraph shall not apply to any one individual for any
22 continuous period in excess of 30 days. For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'disaster'
23 shall mean the occurrence of or imminent threat of a condition that causes or poses a high
24 probability of a large number of deaths in the affected population, a large number of
25 serious or long-term disabilities in the affected population, or widespread exposure to an
26 infectious or toxic agent that poses a significant risk of substantial future harm to a large

1 number of people in the affected population or any event that causes human suffering or
2 creates a human need which the victim or victims are unable to alleviate without
3 assistance."

4 **SECTION 2.**

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

7 **SECTION 3.**

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