

Senate Bill 266

By: Senators Meyer von Bremen of the 12th and Price of the 56th

AS PASSED SENATE

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT**

To amend Chapter 12 of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to control of hazardous conditions, so as to require postsecondary educational institutions to provide information on meningococcal meningitis; to require vaccination against meningococcal meningitis or a signed waiver for certain students enrolled in postsecondary educational institutions; to provide that postsecondary educational institutions shall not be required to pay for such vaccinations; to provide for legislative findings and intent; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

The General Assembly finds and declares:

- (1) Meningococcal meningitis is a serious disease that can lead to death within only a few hours of onset;
- (2) Meningococcal meningitis is a highly contagious but largely preventable infection of the spinal cord fluid and the fluid that surrounds the brain;
- (3) One in ten cases of meningococcal meningitis is fatal;
- (4) One in seven survivors is left with a severe disability, such as the loss of a limb, mental retardation, paralysis, deafness, or seizures;
- (5) Individuals of any age can carry the disease for days, weeks, or months unknowingly or without becoming ill;
- (6) At any time from 10 to 25 percent of the population carries meningococcal meningitis;
- (7) Scientific evidence suggests that college students living in dormitory facilities are six times more likely than other individuals to contract meningococcal meningitis;
- (8) Immunization against meningococcal meningitis will decrease the risk of disease; and
- (9) The General Assembly recommends that college freshmen residing in on-campus housing be vaccinated against meningococcal meningitis.

SECTION 2.

Chapter 12 of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to control of hazardous conditions, is amended by adding following Code Section 31-12-3.1, relating to childhood vaccination registry and reporting requirements, maintenance, and use, a new Code section to read as follows:

"31-12-3.2.

(a) A postsecondary educational institution shall provide detailed information on the risks associated with meningococcal meningitis and the availability, effectiveness, and known contraindications of any required or recommended vaccine against meningococcal meningitis to each student, or to the student's parent or guardian if the student is a minor, who has been accepted for admission.

(b) An individual enrolled in a postsecondary educational institution who will be residing in on-campus housing shall provide documentation of vaccination against meningococcal meningitis or may, if the individual is 18 years of age or older, sign a waiver provided by the institution stating that he or she has received and reviewed the information provided as required by subsection (a) of this Code section and has chosen not to be vaccinated against meningococcal meningitis. If the individual is a minor, his or her parent or guardian may sign the waiver provided by the institution.

(c) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to require any postsecondary educational institution to provide or pay for vaccinations against meningococcal meningitis."

SECTION 3.

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