

House Bill 1701

By: Representative Harrell of the 54th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 44 of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 speech-language pathologists and audiologists, so as to establish an advisory committee on
3 hearing in newborn infants; to provide for the duties and membership of such committee; to
4 provide for automatic repeal; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date;
5 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Chapter 44 of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
9 speech-language pathologists and audiologists, is amended by adding a new Code section to
10 the end of such chapter to read as follows:

11 "43-44-19.

12 (a) There is established an advisory committee on hearing in newborn infants for the
13 purposes of studying and collecting informational data and providing recommendations to
14 audiologists, speech-language pathologists, hospitals, physicians, and other health care
15 institutions, the Department of Human Resources, and the public concerning, but not
16 limited to the following:

17 (1) Appropriate methodologies to be implemented for hearing screening of newborn
18 infants, which methodologies shall be objective and physiologically based. An
19 audiologist licensed pursuant to this chapter shall perform such screening, and a person
20 not licensed as an audiologist may perform such screening provided such screening by
21 the unlicensed person is performed pursuant to the exception in subsection (h) of Code
22 Section 43-44-7;

23 (2) The number of births sufficient to qualify a hospital or health institution to arrange
24 otherwise for hearing screenings;

25 (3) Guidelines for reporting and the means to assure that identified children received
26 referral for appropriate follow-up services. The advisory committee on hearing in

1 newborn infants shall present its findings and recommendations to the Board of Human
2 Resources. Said board shall consider the findings and recommendations of such advisory
3 committee in the adoption of rules and regulations for purposes of such screening; and

4 (4) The availability of resources for intervention and treatment of newborn infants with
5 hearing loss and strategies for augmenting such resources to assure that identified infants
6 have access to appropriate follow-up services.

7 (b) The advisory committee on hearing in newborn infants shall consist of no more than
8 20 members including one audiologist and one speech-language pathologist appointed by
9 the board and the other members who shall be appointed by the director of the Division of
10 Public Health of the Department of Human Resources. Such advisory committee shall be
11 a joint subcommittee of:

12 (1) The Maternal & Infant Health Council; and

13 (2) The State Interagency Coordinating Council for Early Intervention.

14 There shall be one member from each of these councils on the advisory committee.
15 Members appointed to the committee shall have training, experience, or interest in the area
16 of hearing conditions of children and shall include at least one audiologist, one pediatrician,
17 one hospital administrator from a hospital which offers perinatal services, one deaf or hard
18 of hearing adult, and one parent of a deaf or hard of hearing child. In addition, the Speaker
19 of the House of Representatives shall appoint two members from the House of
20 Representatives, and the Senate Committee on Assignments shall appoint two members
21 from the Senate to serve on the advisory committee.

22 (c) The members of the advisory committee on hearing in newborn infants shall serve
23 without compensation.

24 (d) The advisory committee on hearing in newborn infants shall meet as often as necessary
25 to study and collect the information necessary to develop and make the recommendations
26 specified in subsection (a) of this Code section.

27 (e) This Code section is automatically repealed effective July 1, 2008."

28 **SECTION 2.**

29 This Act shall become effective July 1, 2005.

30 **SECTION 3.**

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