

The Senate Insurance and Labor Committee offered the following substitute to the House Committee on Human Relations and Aging substitute to HB 935 (LC 33 0286S):

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 6 of Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to general provisions related to services for the aging, so as to provide for legislative
3 findings and intent; to establish an advisory committee on seniors and prescription drug costs
4 and to provide for its selection, compensation, powers, qualifications, and duties; to provide
5 for automatic repeal; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other
6 purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

8 Article 1 of Chapter 6 of Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
9 general provisions related to services for the aging, is amended by adding a new Code
10 Section 49-6-8 to read as follows:
11

12 "49-6-8.

13 (a) The General Assembly finds, determines, and declares:

14 (1) That prescription drugs are the fastest rising component of personal health
15 expenditures in the United States and many conditions that previously required surgery
16 and hospitalization now are treatable by prescription drugs;

17 (2) That the prices of prescription drugs are a matter of great concern to most adults, but
18 especially to seniors, who are the biggest consumers of such drugs and for whom their
19 quality of life depends on such drugs;

20 (3) That the cost of prescription drugs can create financial burdens for many seniors,
21 particularly those with low incomes;

22 (4) That most seniors are enrolled in medicare, but medicare will offer some assistance
23 for outpatient prescription drugs, but there will still be significant out of pocket expenses;

24 (5) That the pharmaceutical industry has risen to the challenge to ease the financial
25 burden of the cost of prescription drugs for seniors and has implemented prescription
26 drug assistance programs for seniors who cannot afford those medications;

1 (6) That this state has available currently a program, GeorgiaCares, designed to educate
2 and help seniors apply for all available low cost prescription drug assistance programs;
3 and

4 (7) That the subcommittee of the Human Relations and Aging Committee of the House
5 of Representatives, which has reported on the issue of prescription drug costs for seniors,
6 has recommended continued study of ways to assist seniors with their medication costs.

7 (b)(1) For reasons specified in subsection (a) of this Code section, there is established
8 an advisory committee on seniors and prescription drug costs for the purposes of studying
9 and collecting the informational data specified in this Code section and providing two
10 reports on such information to the General Assembly and Governor by July 1, 2005, and
11 by July 1, 2007, for the purpose of providing recommendations concerning, but not
12 limited to, the following:

13 (A) Appropriate methodologies to evaluate the experiences of seniors trying to access
14 prescription drug assistance programs and the effectiveness of referrals to such
15 programs;

16 (B) Marketing approaches to provide information about available prescription drug
17 assistance programs to seniors;

18 (C) Streamlining the enrollment and purchasing process for all available prescription
19 drug assistance programs;

20 (D) Coordinating various prescription drug assistance programs;

21 (E) Evaluating outcome data provided by GeorgiaCares to make policy
22 recommendations to the General Assembly;

23 (F) Identifying gaps in prescription drug coverage and programs designed to assist
24 seniors in obtaining prescription medications;

25 (G) Identifying more cost effective and convenient ways for seniors to access and
26 obtain maintenance medications; and

27 (H) Assessing the experiences of seniors in obtaining prescription drugs at affordable
28 costs with various coverages.

29 (2) The advisory committee on seniors and prescription drug costs shall consist of 13
30 members. The director of the Division of Aging Services of the Department of Human
31 Resources shall appoint one member of a nonprofit organization that advocates for
32 seniors, one senior consumer, one representative of the pharmaceutical industry, one
33 representative of the Georgia Council on Aging, one representative of GeorgiaCares, one
34 representative from the State Health Insurance Assistance Program, and one
35 representative of the area agencies on aging. In addition, the Speaker of the House of
36 Representatives shall appoint two members from the House of Representatives and a
37 physician specializing in gerontology, and the Senate Committee on Assignments shall

