

Senate Bill 243

By: Senators Goggans of the 7th, Thomas of the 54th, Williams of the 19th, Whitehead, Sr. of the 24th and Balfour of the 9th

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 relative to services for the aging, so as to provide for the
3 development of a strategy for disseminating information to the public concerning the
4 availability of pharmaceutical assistance programs and pharmaceutical discount purchasing
5 card programs; to provide for the coordination of such dissemination of information through
6 the Division of Aging Services of the Department of Human Resources; to provide for the
7 establishment and maintenance of a website and a toll-free telephone number for the
8 dissemination of information; to ensure that area agencies on aging receive adequate
9 information concerning the services; to provide for the encouragement of pharmaceutical
10 manufacturers to include user-friendly application forms for pharmaceutical discount
11 purchasing card programs on their respective websites; to provide for an analysis of the
12 feasibility of developing a single application form for eligibility; to provide that the
13 commissioner may appoint an advisory task force; to provide for related matters; to repeal
14 conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

16 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

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

20 "49-6-8.

21 (a) The commissioner of the Department of Human Resources and the director of the
22 Division of Aging Services shall develop a strategy, in coordination with the area agencies
23 on aging, as defined in Code Section 49-6-72, and other private and nonprofit
24 organizations, for disseminating information to the public concerning the availability of
25 pharmaceutical assistance programs and pharmaceutical discount purchasing card programs

1 and for training senior citizen volunteers to assist in completing applications for
2 pharmaceutical assistance programs and pharmaceutical discount purchasing cards.

3 (b) The department, through its Division of Aging Services, shall coordinate the
4 dissemination of information to the public regarding any pharmaceutical assistance
5 programs and any pharmaceutical discount purchasing card programs while maintaining
6 a neutral posture regarding such programs. The information shall include pharmaceutical
7 benefits provided under the medicare program and how such benefits may help senior
8 citizens with the costs of pharmaceutical benefits.

9 (c) The department, through its Division of Aging Services, shall establish and maintain
10 a website to provide for the dissemination of information pursuant to this Code section.

11 (d) The department, through its Division of Aging Services, shall establish and maintain
12 a toll-free telephone number which shall provide recorded information regarding
13 pharmaceutical assistance programs and pharmaceutical discount purchasing cards and
14 other services available through the division and other appropriate agencies or
15 organizations.

16 (e) The department, through its Division of Aging Services, shall ensure that each area
17 agency on aging is provided with adequate information concerning the services provided
18 by and through the division, including, but not limited to, its toll-free telephone number and
19 website information on pharmaceutical assistance programs and pharmaceutical discount
20 purchasing card programs provided pursuant to this Code section.

21 (f)(1) The commissioner of the Department of Human Resources and the director of the
22 Division of Aging Services shall encourage pharmaceutical manufacturers to include
23 application forms for pharmaceutical discount purchasing card programs on their
24 respective websites in a format capable of being downloaded and printed by consumers.
25 When practicable, the website maintained by the department shall include direct links to
26 such forms.

27 (2) The commissioner of the Department of Human Resources and the director of the
28 Division of Aging Services shall report to the Governor and the General Assembly no
29 later than October 30, 2005, on the feasibility of developing a single application form for
30 citizens of this state to use to seek eligibility for existing pharmaceutical assistance
31 programs and pharmaceutical discount purchasing cards. In determining feasibility, the
32 commissioner and director shall obtain copies of the application forms used by such
33 pharmaceutical assistance programs and pharmaceutical discount purchasing cards in this
34 state, compile a list of the various information required to complete such application
35 forms, identify common elements, and analyze the forms for readability and simplicity.
36 Upon completion of this analysis, the commissioner and director shall assess the
37 feasibility of designing a single, concise application form that is logically formatted,

1 written in clear and easily understandable language, and covers any and all data that may
2 be required to obtain eligibility for any such pharmaceutical assistance programs and
3 pharmaceutical discount purchasing cards.

4 (g) The commissioner may appoint an advisory task force of stakeholders to assist the
5 department in meeting the requirements of subsections (a) and (f) of this Code section."

6 **SECTION 2.**

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