

House Bill 941

By: Representatives Benton of the 31st, England of the 108th, Bearden of the 68th, Mosley of the 178th, Maddox of the 172nd, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 3 of Chapter 13 of Title 45 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to the Division of Archives and History, so as to make legislative findings; to
3 recognize the religious heritage of America; to direct the Secretary of State to prepare
4 documents relative to that heritage; to authorize counties to post documents relative to that
5 heritage for education; to direct the Attorney General to defend counties who display
6 documents relative to the religious heritage of America; to set forth the text relative to the
7 religious heritage of America; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

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

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Article 3 of Chapter 13 of Title 45 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the
11 Division of Archives and History, is amended by adding a new Code Section 45-13-51 to
12 read as follows:

13 "45-13-51.

14 (a) The General Assembly finds and determines:

15 (1) The General Assembly has directed the Division of Archives and History of the State
16 of Georgia to encourage the study of historical documents;

17 (2) There is a need to educate and inform the public about the history and background
18 of American law;

19 (3) America's religious heritage plays an important role in the history and background
20 of American law;

21 (4) The public courthouses and judicial facilities of this state are an ideal forum in which
22 to display educational and informational material about the history and background of
23 American law;

24 (5) The role of religion in the constitutional history of both America and Georgia is
25 acknowledged by historians;

1 (6) A basic knowledge of American constitutional history is important to the formation
2 of civic virtue in our society;

3 (7) The courts have provided vital direction to the General Assembly on how to approach
4 the display of historical documents; and

5 (8) The context for acknowledging America's religious heritage is set forth in the
6 historical commentary contained in subsection (d) of Code Section 45-13-52.

7 (b) The General Assembly now endorses the promulgation of a uniform, pedagogically
8 sound, distinctive, and appropriate presentation of the story of the role of religion in the
9 constitutional history of America and Georgia which may be publicly displayed in
10 governmental buildings throughout the State of Georgia.

11 (c) Public displays which acknowledge religious heritage shall include:

12 (1) The Mayflower Compact, 1620, the text of which reads:

13 Agreement Between the Settlers at New Plymouth : 1620

14 **IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN.** We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal
15 Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King *James*, by the Grace of God, of *Great*
16 *Britain, France, and Ireland*, King, *Defender of the Faith*, &c. Having undertaken for
17 the Glory of God, and Advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King
18 and Country, a Voyage to plant the first Colony in the northern Parts of *Virginia*; Do
19 by these Presents, solemnly and mutually, in the Presence of God and one another,
20 covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick, for our better
21 Ordering and Preservation, and Furtherance of the Ends aforesaid: And by Virtue
22 hereof do enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts,
23 Constitutions, and Officers, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and
24 convenient for the general Good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due
25 Submission and Obedience. **IN WITNESS** whereof we have hereunto subscribed our
26 names at *Cape-Cod* the eleventh of November, in the Reign of our Sovereign Lord
27 King *James*, of *England, France, and Ireland*, the eighteenth, and of *Scotland* the
28 fifty-fourth, *Anno Domini*; 1620;

29 (2) The Ten Commandments as extracted from Exodus Chapter 20 (King James
30 Version), which reads:

31 I. Thou shalt have no other gods before me;

32 II. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image;

33 III. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain;

34 IV. Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy;

35 V. Honour thy father and thy mother;

36 VI. Thou shalt not kill;

37 VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery;

- 1 VIII. Thou shalt not steal;
 2 IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour;
 3 X. Thou shalt not covet; and
 4 (3) The Declaration of Independence, the text of which reads:
 5 IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

6 **The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,**

7 When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve
 8 the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the
 9 powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of
 10 Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that
 11 they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

12 We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are
 13 endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life,
 14 Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are
 15 instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,
 16 --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the
 17 Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its
 18 foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall
 19 seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate
 20 that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes;
 21 and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer,
 22 while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which
 23 they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing
 24 invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism,
 25 it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new
 26 Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these
 27 Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former
 28 Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history
 29 of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an
 30 absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid
 31 world.

32 He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public
 33 good.

1 He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance,
2 unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so
3 suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

4 He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people,
5 unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a
6 right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

7 He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant
8 from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into
9 compliance with his measures.

10 He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness
11 his invasions on the rights of the people.

12 He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected;
13 whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People
14 at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the
15 dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

16 He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose
17 obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to
18 encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of
19 Lands.

20 He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for
21 establishing Judiciary powers.

22 He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the
23 amount and payment of their salaries.

24 He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to
25 harrass our people, and eat out their substance.

26 He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our
27 legislatures.

28 He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

29 He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution,
30 and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended
31 Legislation:

32 For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

33 For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they
34 should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

35 For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

36 For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

37 For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:

1 For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences
2 For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province,
3 establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to
4 render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule
5 into these Colonies:
6 For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering
7 fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:
8 For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power
9 to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.
10 He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging
11 War against us.
12 He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives
13 of our people.
14 He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the
15 works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty
16 & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head
17 of a civilized nation.
18 He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms
19 against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to
20 fall themselves by their Hands.
21 He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the
22 inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare,
23 is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

24 In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble
25 terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince
26 whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be
27 the ruler of a free people.

28 Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our Brittish brethren. We have warned them
29 from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable
30 jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration
31 and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we
32 have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations,
33 which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have
34 been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce

1 in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest
2 of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

3 We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General
4 Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of
5 our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies,
6 solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be
7 Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British
8 Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain,
9 is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have
10 full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and
11 to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the
12 support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence,
13 we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

14 (d) Public displays shall contain the documents set forth in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of
15 subsection (c) of this Code section together with a '**context for acknowledging America's**
16 **Religious Heritage**' as follows:

17 (1) Some documents stand out in the iconography of America's religious heritage. In
18 fulfillment of its objects and purposes, the Georgia Archives is charged with encouraging
19 'the study of historical documents including but not limited to those which reflect our
20 National Motto, the Declaration of Independence, the Ten Commandments, the
21 Constitution of the United States, and such other nationally recognized documents which
22 contributed to the history of the State of Georgia' by paragraph (16) of Code Section
23 45-13-41. Three documents, the Mayflower Compact (1620), the Ten Commandments
24 (Exodus 20:1 - 17, KJV), and the Declaration of Independence (1776), have contributed
25 significantly to the history of America and of Georgia. It is hoped that their study in
26 relation to each other and to the history of our State and Nation will foster an appreciation
27 for the role that religion has played in the legal history of America and of Georgia and
28 prompt further study in Georgia's libraries, schools, and colleges.

29 (2) American law, constitutionalism, and political theory have deep roots in religion.
30 American ideas about liberty, equality, covenant, and codes of law, to mention but a few,
31 have roots and underpinnings in the Protestant Reformation. Fundamental law blended
32 ideas of religious reformers such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, and John Knox with
33 those of political theorists such as John Locke and the Baron de Montesquieu, concepts
34 from the jurisprudence of continental writers such as Hugo Grotius, Samuel Pufendorf,
35 and English legal writers such as Sir Edward Coke and Sir William Blackstone.

1 (3) Calvinism was the basic theology of the New England Puritans, the Scottish
2 Presbyterians, the French Huguenots, and the Dutch Reformed Church. Adherents of
3 those churches, as immigrants to the New World, contributed immensely to American
4 moral, spiritual, and legal life.

5 (4) Biblical literacy contributed importantly in the development of American law and
6 constitutionalism by providing a common vocabulary around which political ideas could
7 coalesce. The history of this aspect of America's legal heritage is inextricably bound up
8 with the history of the Bible in English. That story begins with John Wycliffe (c. 1328
9 -1384), who stimulated the creation of an English translation of the Bible in the 14th
10 century in order to implement his view of the Scriptures as the ultimate authority for
11 moral and spiritual issues. Before that, the Bible was in Latin, a language only educated
12 elites could read. Wycliffe's pioneering work was followed in the 15th century by
13 William Tyndale (c. 1494 - 1536) and Miles Coverdale (1488 - 1568) who originated the
14 modern English Bible. Their work, published as the Great Bible (1539) was followed by
15 several editions that served as the basis for the King James Bible, or Authorized Version
16 (1611). That version was the most important and influential of English Bibles and the
17 most widely read in England and during the colonial, revolutionary, and federalist periods
18 in America.

19 (5) The Old Testament tells of the special relationship between God and the Israelites,
20 a relationship cemented in covenant. National identity and ideas of God's providential
21 role in the creation and maintenance of a political identity is reflected in colonial
22 conceptions of America as the 'New Israel.' The Pilgrims, Puritan reformers who sought
23 to purify the Church of England from Catholic elements that persisted after the separation
24 of the English Church from the Papal authority under King Henry VIII, were driven from
25 England by King James I and fled to Holland for safety. With the permission of the
26 Virginia Company, they set sail for the New World on the *Mayflower* eventually settling
27 at Plymouth. Before they disembarked, the Pilgrims drew up a written agreement, or
28 Compact, to form a government to which they would submit. That Mayflower Compact,
29 which set a precedent for written constitutions which would be followed by the Nation
30 as well as all the individual States, richly acknowledged the role of their religious faith
31 in their undertaking and clarified that political power originates in the people.

32 (6) Sir Edward Coke (1552 - 1634), through his treatise *The first part of the institutes*
33 *of the lawes of England* (1628) profoundly influenced the development of American law.

34 Coke had this to say about the law of nature in his report of Calvin's Case:

35 'The law of nature is that which God at the time of creation of the nature of man infused
36 into his heart, for his preservation and direction; and this is *Lex aeterna*, the moral law,
37 called also the law of nature. And by this law, written with the finger of God in the hearts

1 of man were the people of God a long time governed before the law was written by
2 Moses, who was the first reporter or writer of law in the world.'

3 Coke's view was widely shared, namely the view that the Ten Commandments (presented
4 here in the Authorized of King James Version with which early Americans would have
5 been familiar) represented an authoritative legal code of divine origin.

6 (7) The idea of Covenant, reflected in the Mayflower Compact, becomes prominent
7 again as Congress declares America's independence from Great Britain in the Declaration
8 of Independence. The theme of natural law reflected in natural rights joins a public
9 expression of the religious faith of the nation and sense of gratitude to the Divine
10 Providence that blessed the nation since the time of earliest migration at Plymouth.

11 (8) In *Wilkerson v. City of Rome*, 152 Ga. 762 (1922), the Supreme Court of Georgia
12 recognized the central role that Christianity played in shaping America's religious
13 heritage. The words of the Pledge of Allegiance that we are 'one nation, under God' aptly
14 reflect the religious heritage of our laws and constitutions.

15 (9) The following documents, as noted above, are vital to the history of the United
16 States and the State of Georgia:

17 Mayflower Compact 1620

18 Agreement Between the Settlers at New Plymouth : 1620

19 **IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN.** We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal
20 Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King *James*, by the Grace of God, of *Great*
21 *Britain, France, and Ireland*, King, *Defender of the Faith*, &c. Having undertaken for
22 the Glory of God, and Advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King
23 and Country, a Voyage to plant the first Colony in the northern Parts of *Virginia*; Do
24 by these Presents, solemnly and mutually, in the Presence of God and one another,
25 covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick, for our better
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27 hereof do enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts,
28 Constitutions, and Officers, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and
29 convenient for the general Good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due
30 Submission and Obedience. **IN WITNESS** whereof we have hereunto subscribed our
31 names at *Cape-Cod* the eleventh of November, in the Reign of our Sovereign Lord
32 King *James*, of *England, France, and Ireland*, the eighteenth, and of *Scotland* the
33 fifty-fourth, *Anno Domini*; 1620.

34 Mr. John Carver,

35 Mr. William Bradford,

36 Mr. Edward Winslow,

1 Mr. William Brewster,
2 Isaac Allerton,
3 Myles Standish,
4 John Alden,
5 John Turner,
6 Francis Eaton,
7 James Chilton,
8 John Craxton,
9 John Billington,
10 Joses Fletcher,
11 John Goodman,
12 Mr. Samuel Fuller,
13 Mr. Christopher Martin,
14 Mr. William Mullins,
15 Mr. William White,
16 Mr. Richard Warren,
17 John Howland,
18 Mr. Steven Hopkins,
19 Digery Priest,
20 Thomas Williams,
21 Gilbert Winslow,
22 Edmund Margesson,
23 Peter Brown,
24 Richard Britteridge,
25 George Soule,
26 Edward Tilly,
27 John Tilly,
28 Francis Cooke,
29 Thomas Rogers,
30 Thomas Tinker,
31 John Ridgdale,
32 Edward Fuller,
33 Richard Clark,
34 Richard Gardiner,
35 Mr. John Allerton,
36 Thomas English,
37 Edward Doten,

1 Edward Liester.

2 'The Ten Commandments'

3 (King James Version)

4 **Exodus 20**

5 I. Thou shalt have no other gods before me;

6 II. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image;

7 III. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain;

8 IV. Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy;

9 V. Honour thy father and thy mother;

10 VI. Thou shalt not kill;

11 VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery;

12 VIII. Thou shalt not steal;

13 IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour;

14 X. Thou shalt not covet.

15 IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

16 **The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,**

17 When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve
18 the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the
19 powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of
20 Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that
21 they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

22 We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are
23 endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life,
24 Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are
25 instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,
26 --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the
27 Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its
28 foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall
29 seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate
30 that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes;
31 and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer,
32 while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which
33 they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing
34 invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism,

1 it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new
2 Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these
3 Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former
4 Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history
5 of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an
6 absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid
7 world.

8 He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public
9 good.

10 He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance,
11 unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so
12 suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

13 He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people,
14 unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a
15 right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

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17 from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into
18 compliance with his measures.

19 He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness
20 his invasions on the rights of the people.

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22 whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People
23 at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the
24 dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

25 He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose
26 obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to
27 encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of
28 Lands.

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30 establishing Judiciary powers.

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32 amount and payment of their salaries.

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34 harrass our people, and eat out their substance.

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36 legislatures.

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2 He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution,
3 and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended
4 Legislation:
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7 should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:
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9 For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:
10 For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:
11 For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences
12 For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province,
13 establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to
14 render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule
15 into these Colonies:
16 For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering
17 fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:
18 For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power
19 to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.
20 He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging
21 War against us.
22 He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives
23 of our people.
24 He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the
25 works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty
26 & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head
27 of a civilized nation.
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29 against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to
30 fall themselves by their Hands.
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32 inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare,
33 is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

34 In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble
35 terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince

1 whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be
2 the ruler of a free people.

3 Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our Brittish brethren. We have warned them
4 from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable
5 jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration
6 and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we
7 have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations,
8 which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have
9 been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce
10 in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest
11 of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

12 We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General
13 Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of
14 our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies,
15 solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be
16 Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British
17 Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain,
18 is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have
19 full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and
20 to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the
21 support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence,
22 we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

23 *The 56 signatures on the Declaration appear in the positions indicated:*

24 **Column 1**

25 **Georgia:**

26 Button Gwinnett

27 Lyman Hall

28 George Walton

29 **Column 2**

30 **North Carolina:**

31 William Hooper

32 Joseph Hewes

1 John Penn

2 **South Carolina:**

3 Edward Rutledge

4 Thomas Heyward, Jr.

5 Thomas Lynch, Jr.

6 Arthur Middleton

7 **Column 3**

8 **Massachusetts:**

9 John Hancock

10 **Maryland:**

11 Samuel Chase

12 William Paca

13 Thomas Stone

14 Charles Carroll of Carrollton

15 **Virginia:**

16 George Wythe

17 Richard Henry Lee

18 Thomas Jefferson

19 Benjamin Harrison

20 Thomas Nelson, Jr.

21 Francis Lightfoot Lee

22 Carter Braxton

23 **Column 4**

24 **Pennsylvania:**

25 Robert Morris

26 Benjamin Rush

27 Benjamin Franklin

28 John Morton

29 George Clymer

30 James Smith

31 George Taylor

32 James Wilson

33 George Ross

34 **Delaware:**

35 Caesar Rodney

1 George Read
2 Thomas McKean

3 **Column 5**

4 **New York:**

5 William Floyd
6 Philip Livingston
7 Francis Lewis
8 Lewis Morris

9 **New Jersey:**

10 Richard Stockton
11 John Witherspoon
12 Francis Hopkinson
13 John Hart
14 Abraham Clark

15 **Column 6**

16 **New Hampshire:**

17 Josiah Bartlett
18 William Whipple

19 **Massachusetts:**

20 Samuel Adams
21 John Adams
22 Robert Treat Paine
23 Elbridge Gerry

24 **Rhode Island:**

25 Stephen Hopkins
26 William Ellery

27 **Connecticut:**

28 Roger Sherman
29 Samuel Huntington
30 William Williams
31 Oliver Wolcott

32 **New Hampshire:**

33 Matthew Thornton."

SECTION 2.

Said article is further amended by adding a new Code Section 45-13-52 to read as follows:
"45-13-52.

(a) The Secretary of State is directed, in accordance with the duties of the Division of Archives and History as set forth in paragraph (16) of Code Section 45-13-41, to prepare and distribute to the governing authority of each municipality and political subdivision in the State of Georgia the documents set forth in subsection (d) of Code Section 45-13-51 relative to the history of the State of Georgia and the United States of America.

(b) Each municipality and political subdivision of this state is authorized to post the documents provided by the Secretary of State pursuant to this Code section in a visible, public location in the judicial facilities of such municipality or political subdivision.

(c) The Attorney General is directed and required to defend and bear the costs of defending any and all municipalities and political subdivisions of the State of Georgia that display the text of subsection (d) of Code Section 45-13-51 as provided by the Secretary of State's office against any legal proceeding that may be brought against that municipality or subdivision relative to the posting of the text of subsection (d) of Code Section 45-13-51."

SECTION 3.

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