

House Bill 997

By: Representatives Millar of the 79th, Coleman of the 97th, Casas of the 103rd, Jones of the 46th, and Reece of the 11th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 5 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to program weights and funding requirements relative to elementary and
3 secondary education, so as to change certain provisions regarding program weights; to
4 provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

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

7 Part 5 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
8 relating to program weights and funding requirements relative to elementary and secondary
9 education, is amended by striking subsections (i) and (k) of Code Section 20-2-182, relating
10 to program weights, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

11 "(i) The State Board of Education shall adopt for each instructional program authorized
12 pursuant to Part 3 of this article and the middle school program provided for in Code
13 Section 20-2-290 the maximum number of students which may be taught by a teacher in
14 an instructional period. The State Board of Education shall provide for a system average
15 maximum class size that shall not exceed the funding class size by more than 20 percent
16 for mathematics, science, social studies, or language arts classes, unless specifically
17 authorized by the State Board of Education. The system average maximum class size for
18 kindergarten and grades one through three shall not exceed 20 percent over the funding
19 ratio except for art, music, or physical education classes; provided, further, that the system
20 average maximum class size for special education, gifted, and English for speakers of other
21 languages classes shall be set by the State Board of Education. For each instructional
22 program, the maximum number of students who may be taught by a teacher in an
23 instructional period shall not exceed the system average maximum class size for the
24 program by more than two students; provided, however, that a system average maximum
25 class size which results in a fractional full-time equivalent shall be rounded up to the
26 nearest whole number. For time periods as set out in subsection (k) of this Code section a

1 ~~period not to exceed seven years~~, beginning with the 2000-2001 school year, local school
 2 systems shall be allowed to exceed the maximum class sizes set forth in this subsection in
 3 a manner consistent with State Board of Education rules and subsection (k) of this Code
 4 section. The State Board of Education shall lower the current maximum class sizes set by
 5 state board rules in effect for the 1999-2000 school year, beginning with the 2000-2001
 6 school year, by an amount so that, beginning with the 2007-2008 school year for
 7 kindergarten, grades one through three, and grades six through 12, and beginning with the
 8 2006-2007 school year for grades four and five, State Board of Education rules are in
 9 compliance with this subsection. An aide may be used in programs to increase class size
 10 as allowed by State Board of Education rule and subsection (k) of this Code section, except
 11 that beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, an aide shall not be used to increase the
 12 maximum class size in kindergarten or grades one through three. The maximum class size
 13 for the kindergarten and primary grades programs is defined as the number of students in
 14 a physical classroom. Maximum class sizes that result in a fractional full-time equivalent
 15 shall be rounded up to the nearest whole number as needed. The middle school program
 16 shall use the teacher-student ratio of the middle grades program for the purpose of this
 17 subsection. The number of students taught by a teacher at any time after the first 15 school
 18 days of a school year may not exceed the maximum such number unless authorization for
 19 a specific larger number is requested of the state board, along with the educational
 20 justification for granting the requested exemption, and the state board has approved said
 21 request. The state board shall not reduce class sizes without the authorization of the
 22 General Assembly if this reduction necessitates added costs for facilities, personnel, and
 23 other program needs. Local boards of education may reduce class sizes, build additional
 24 facilities, and provide other resources at local cost if such actions are in the best interest of
 25 the local school systems' programs as determined by the local boards of education."

26 "(k) For the 2003-2004, 2004-2005, 2005-2006, and 2006-2007 school years, the
 27 maximum class sizes set by the State Board of Education for the 2002-2003 school year
 28 shall apply for grades ~~four~~ six through 12. For the 2003-2004, 2004-2005, and 2005-2006
 29 school years, the maximum class sizes by the State Board of Education for the 2002-2003
 30 school year shall apply for grades four and five. For the 2003-2004, 2004-2005, 2005-2006,
 31 and 2006-2007 school years, the maximum class sizes set by the State Board of Education
 32 for the 2003-2004 school year shall apply to kindergarten and grades one through three,
 33 except that a kindergarten class may be increased to 20 students if a paraprofessional is
 34 present in addition to the certificated teacher. Except as otherwise provided in this
 35 subsection, other provisions of this Code section shall apply. This subsection shall not be
 36 construed to repeal any other provision of this Code section or this chapter, or to apply to

1 any period of time other than the four fiscal years beginning July 1, 2003, and ending June
2 30, 2007. This subsection shall be automatically repealed July 1, 2007."

3 **SECTION 2.**

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