

The Senate Education and Youth Committee offered the following substitute to SB 170:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 3 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to educational programs under the "Quality Basic Education Act," so as
3 to provide that American Sign Language can be used to fulfill the foreign language
4 requirements for a college preparatory diploma for any student; to amend Chapter 1 of Title
5 30 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general provisions relative to
6 handicapped persons, so as to recognize American Sign Language as the official state
7 language of the deaf community in Georgia; to provide for legislative findings; to provide
8 for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

10 **SECTION 1.**

11 Part 3 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
12 relating to educational programs under the "Quality Basic Education Act," is amended by
13 revising Code Section 20-1-151.1, relating to American Sign Language as a foreign language
14 for college preparatory curriculum and for Carnegie unit elective credits, as follows:

15 "20-2-151.1.

16 (a) For the purpose of fulfilling the foreign language requirements for a college
17 preparatory curriculum seal of endorsement on a high school diploma, a demonstrated
18 proficiency in American Sign Language shall be accepted as a foreign language for any
19 student ~~if it is determined that a deaf student has a hearing loss which significantly impacts~~
20 ~~upon the student's ability to learn a foreign language. The Individualized Education Plan~~
21 ~~Committee may then determine that American Sign Language can substitute for the foreign~~
22 ~~language requirements for the college preparatory seal of endorsement for a high school~~
23 ~~diploma, and it shall be so accepted by all local boards of education and the State Board~~
24 of Education. A demonstrated proficiency in American Sign Language shall be accepted
25 as the equivalent of the required two units of a foreign language.

1 (b) For the purpose of earning Carnegie unit curriculum credits at the high school level,
2 American Sign Language may be accepted by the State Board of Education for ~~one unit~~
3 two or more units of elective credit or for ~~the third unit~~ two or more units of foreign
4 language credit, pursuant to ~~for any student who is not covered by the provisions of~~
5 subsection (a) of this Code section."

6 SECTION 2.

7 Chapter 1 of Title 30 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general
8 provisions relative to handicapped persons, is amended by revising Code Section 30-1-6,
9 which is reserved, to read as follows:

10 "30-1-6.

11 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

12 (1) American Sign Language is a fully developed, autonomous, natural language with
13 distinct grammar, syntax, and symbols, and is one of hundreds of signed languages of the
14 world; and

15 (2) American Sign Language is the fourth most commonly used language in the United
16 States and Canada.

17 (b) American Sign Language is recognized as the official state language of the deaf
18 community in Georgia."

19 SECTION 3.

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