

Senate Bill 170

By: Senators Smith of the 52nd, Moody of the 56th, Mullis of the 53rd, Butler of the 55th, Seay of the 34th and others

**AS PASSED SENATE**

**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 an important language  
7 of the deaf community in Georgia; to provide for legislative findings; to provide for related  
8 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 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 **SECTION 3.**

18 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.