

House Bill 1184

By: Representatives Freeman of the 140th, Harbin of the 118th, Smith of the 113th, Maddox of the 127th, Peake of the 137th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 3 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to the Georgia Student Finance Authority, so as to authorize the Georgia
3 Student Finance Authority to establish two pilot educational assistance programs for
4 collegiate sports for students with physical disabilities; to provide for legislative intent; to
5 provide for duration; to provide for scholarships; to provide for eligibility; to provide for
6 scholarships for eligible disabled veterans; to provide for pilot criteria; to provide for
7 selection of pilot institution; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and
8 for other purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

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

11 Part 3 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
12 relating to the Georgia Student Finance Authority, is revised by adding a new subpart to read
13 as follows:

14 style="text-align:center">"Subpart 2A

15 20-3-360.

16 (a) The General Assembly recognizes the educational, social, and employment benefits of
17 collegiate sports for students with physical disabilities. It is the purpose of this subpart to
18 establish a pilot program that will provide competitive sports opportunities for students
19 with physical disabilities at the collegiate level in Georgia and create a sustainable
20 collegiate sports program for students with physical disabilities. This program will
21 continue the state's rich tradition of successful collegiate sports programs for students that
22 are not disabled.

23 (b) The authority is authorized to establish and administer a five-year pilot program to
24 provide competitive sports opportunities for students with physical disabilities at the

1 collegiate level and provide scholarships to student athletes with disabilities. In order to
2 implement the pilot program, the board of regents shall select two state schools to be pilot
3 institutions. The selected institutions shall have programs in place that serve to create
4 meaningful social change to promote human rights for people with disabilities.

5 (c) The selected pilot institutions shall recruit high school student athletes with disabilities
6 for participation in the project through community based clubs and high school programs
7 as well as through an extensive public relations and awareness campaign.

8 (d) The program shall coordinate with the Veterans Administration and the Georgia
9 section of the Paralyzed Veterans of America to identify and recruit disabled veterans who
10 will benefit from the program.

11 (e) Recruits shall meet entry requirements for the pilot institutions and the National
12 Collegiate Athletic Association.

13 (f) The authority shall collaborate with the pilot institutions to determine the amount of
14 scholarship moneys offered to prospective student athletes for participation in the disability
15 sports program.

16 (g) The pilot institutions shall strive to make the program like any other university
17 department of athletics program, including recruiting, signing, and enrolling student
18 athletes with disabilities, managing the budget, securing coaches and trainers, securing
19 equipment, sports wheelchairs, and training facilities, as well as any other necessary
20 services or equipment.

21 (h) The pilot institutions may at their sole discretion contract with an independent party
22 recognized by the U.S. Olympic Committee as a member of the Multi-Sport Organizations
23 Council (MSOC) to act as subcontractor and to partner with such subcontractor to provide
24 paralympic sport technical expertise and resources in scouting, recruiting, coaching, and
25 training of disabled athletes with a variety of physical disabilities that may include
26 wheelchair, blind, war-injured, and other disabilities as well as providing sport wheelchairs,
27 sporting equipment, off campus practice and competition facilities, competition
28 management, and transportation for the respective teams and student athletes.

29 (i) Each pilot institution may choose to delegate the administration of the pilot program
30 to a division of that institution having expertise and a record of working toward positive
31 social change through sport by promoting disability rights and disability sport.

32 (j) The pilot program shall strive to achieve gender equity and access to students with
33 various physical disabilities through its choice of sports and shall include wheelchair
34 basketball to compete in the collegiate division of National Wheelchair Basketball
35 Association and a program of cross-disability sports sanctioned by the United States
36 Paralympics and the United States Disability Sport Organization.

1 (k) The scope to the pilot program shall include goals of : (1) Ten full scholarships that
2 may be subdivided as partial scholarships consistent with other collegiate sports; and (2)
3 Twenty to 25 student athletes with physical disabilities by year three of the pilot program
4 with an emphasis upon recruiting veterans with disabilities.

5 (1)(1) The General Assembly shall conduct a review of the pilot program after the third
6 school year of operation.

7 (2) Not later than December 31 following the end of the third year of operation of the
8 pilot program, the pilot institutions shall provide a report to the Lieutenant Governor and
9 the Speaker of the House of Representatives on the pilot program, using all data obtained
10 to analyze the success, progress, or failure of the program and the participating student
11 athletes. The report shall detail the operation and cost of the pilot program and include
12 recommendations regarding extension, expansion, or termination of the pilot program
13 after the initial three-year period.

14 (3) Any other corporation, organization, or association that has an interest in the pilot
15 program may provide a report to the Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House
16 of Representatives with recommendations for improving the program."

17 **SECTION 2.**

18 This Act shall become effective only if funds are specifically appropriated for the purposes
19 of this Act in a General Appropriations Act making specific reference to this Act and shall
20 become effective when funds so appropriated become available for expenditure.

21 **SECTION 3.**

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