

Senate Bill 546

By: Senators Orrock of the 36th, Fort of the 39th and Douglas of the 17th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 4 of Title 1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
2 holidays and observances, so as to designate "Alzheimer's Awareness Day"; to amend  
3 Chapter 6 of Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to services for the  
4 aging, so as to provide for minimum dementia-specific training requirements for employees  
5 and independent contractors who are involved in the delivery of care to persons with  
6 Alzheimer's disease or Alzheimer's related dementia; to establish the State Alzheimer's  
7 Disease Commission; to provide for its membership and duties; to provide for an annual  
8 report; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

**SECTION 1.**

10 Chapter 4 of Title 1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to holidays and  
11 observances, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

12 "1-4-17.

13 The first Tuesday in March of each year is designated and shall be observed as  
14 'Alzheimer's Awareness Day.'

**SECTION 2.**

16 Chapter 6 of Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to services for the  
17 aging, is amended by adding a new Code section to Article 1 to read as follows:

18 "49-6-5.1.

19 (a) As used in this Code section, 'Alzheimer's disease' or 'Alzheimer's related dementia'  
20 means a progressive, degenerative disease or condition that attacks the brain and results in  
21 impaired memory, thinking, and behavior.

22 (b) The department, through the Office of Aging Section, shall establish minimum  
23 dementia-specific training requirements for persons who are employed by skilled nursing  
24 facilities, intermediate care facilities, personal care homes, home health agencies, adult day  
25

1 centers, or hospice programs in this state which are involved in the delivery of care to  
 2 persons with Alzheimer's disease or Alzheimer's related dementia or who are independent  
 3 contractors who provide direct care to persons with Alzheimer's disease or Alzheimer's  
 4 related dementia in this state. Such training requirements shall be incorporated into new  
 5 employee orientation and ongoing in-service curricula for all such persons and shall  
 6 include, at a minimum:

7 (1) For employees or independent contractors providing direct care to persons with  
 8 Alzheimer's disease or Alzheimer's related dementia, an overview of Alzheimer's  
 9 disease and Alzheimer's related dementia, appropriate methods of communicating with  
 10 persons with such disease or dementia, behavior management, promotion of  
 11 independence in activities of daily living, and understanding and dealing with family  
 12 issues; and

13 (2) For employees or independent contractors who do not provide direct care for, but  
 14 may have contact with, persons with Alzheimer's disease or Alzheimer's related  
 15 dementia, an overview of Alzheimer's disease and Alzheimer's related dementia and  
 16 appropriate methods of communicating with persons with Alzheimer's disease or  
 17 Alzheimer's related dementia."

### 18 SECTION 3.

19 Said chapter is further amended by adding a new article to read as follows:

#### 20 "ARTICLE 2A

21 49-6-30.

22 As used in this article, the term 'Alzheimer's disease' or 'Alzheimer's related dementia'  
 23 means a progressive, degenerative disease or condition that attacks the brain and results in  
 24 impaired memory, thinking, and behavior.

25 49-6-31.

26 (a) There is created the State Alzheimer's Disease Commission. The commission shall be  
 27 composed of 16 members, as follows:

28 (1) The chairperson of the House Committee on Health and Human Services;

29 (2) The chairperson of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee;

30 (3) The director of the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and  
 31 Addictive Diseases of the department or his or her designee;

32 (4) The director of the Office of Aging Section of the department or his or her designee;

33 (5) The commissioner of community health or his or her designee;

1 (6) The director of the Division of Medical Assistance of the Department of Community  
2 Health or his or her designee;

3 (7) The Commissioner of Labor or his or her designee; and

4 (8) The following members appointed by the Governor:

5 (A) One consumer member with a family member with Alzheimer's disease;

6 (B) One caregiver of a person with Alzheimer's disease;

7 (C) One member representing skilled nursing facilities;

8 (D) One member representing personal care homes;

9 (E) One member representing adult day centers;

10 (F) One member representing the health care provider community;

11 (G) One member representing the Alzheimer's disease research community;

12 (H) One member representing an Alzheimer's advocacy organization; and

13 (I) One member representing the law enforcement community.

14 (b) Each member's term shall be for two years and until his or her successor is appointed  
15 and qualified. The members of the commission shall be eligible to succeed themselves.  
16 The commission shall elect its own chairperson and such other officers as it deems  
17 necessary. The commission may adopt rules and procedures. The commission shall meet  
18 upon the call of the chairperson.

19 (c) A member of the commission is not entitled to compensation or expenses, except that  
20 any member of the commission who is a member of the General Assembly shall receive  
21 the same expenses and allowances for each day of service on the commission as is  
22 authorized for members of interim legislative study committees of the General Assembly.

23 (d) The Office of Aging Section of the department shall provide necessary staffing and  
24 administrative support for the commission.

25 49-6-32.

26 (a) The State Alzheimer's Disease Commission is authorized and directed to:

27 (1) Assess the current and future impact of Alzheimer's disease and Alzheimer's related  
28 dementia on the residents of this state;

29 (2) Examine the existing industries, services, and resources addressing the needs of  
30 persons in this state with Alzheimer's disease or Alzheimer's related dementia and their  
31 families and care givers;

32 (3) Examine trends in state Alzheimer's disease population and needs, including the  
33 changing population with Alzheimer's related dementia, including but not limited to:

34 (A) The state's role in long-term care, family caregiver support, and assistance to  
35 persons with early stage and early onset of Alzheimer's disease; and

36 (B) State policy regarding persons with Alzheimer's disease;

- 1 (4) Develop a strategy to mobilize a state response to the public health crisis of  
2 Alzheimer's disease and Alzheimer's related dementia;
- 3 (5) Monitor state and federal policy and legislation that may affect the areas of  
4 Alzheimer's disease and Alzheimer's related dementia; and
- 5 (6) Recommend assistance, services, and policy changes that will further the goals of the  
6 commission.
- 7 (b) The commission shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations under this  
8 article to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of  
9 Representatives not later than October 1 of each year."

10

**SECTION 4.**

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