

House Bill 1184 (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE) (AM)

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

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

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

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

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

11 Part 1 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
12 relating to the Georgia Student Finance Commission, is revised by designating the existing  
13 provisions of said part as Subpart 1 of said part and by adding a new subpart to read as  
14 follows:

15 style="text-align:center">"Subpart 2

16 20-3-245.

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

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1 (b) The board of regents is authorized to establish and administer a five-year pilot program  
2 to provide competitive sports opportunities for students with physical disabilities at the  
3 collegiate level. The commission is authorized to provide scholarships to student athletes  
4 with physical disabilities. In order to implement the pilot program, the board of regents  
5 shall select two state schools to be pilot institutions. The selected institutions shall have  
6 programs in place that serve to create meaningful social change to promote human rights  
7 for people with disabilities. The commission is authorized to promulgate rules and  
8 regulations not inconsistent with the provisions of this subpart related to the scholarships  
9 described in this subpart.

10 (c) The selected pilot institutions shall recruit high school student athletes with physical  
11 disabilities for participation in the project through participating in community based clubs  
12 and high school programs as well as through an extensive public relations and awareness  
13 campaign.

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

17 (e) Scholarship recipients shall:

18 (1) Meet entry requirements for the pilot institutions and the National Collegiate Athletic  
19 Association;

20 (2) Meet the residency requirements established by the board of regents for in-state  
21 tuition; and

22 (3) Meet such other eligibility criteria established by the commission in its applicable  
23 rules and regulations.

24 (f) The commission shall collaborate with the pilot institutions to determine the amount  
25 of scholarship moneys offered to prospective student athletes for participation in the  
26 disability sports program.

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

32 (h) The pilot institutions may at their sole discretion contract with an independent party  
33 to act as subcontractor and to partner with such subcontractor to provide paralympic sport  
34 technical expertise and resources in scouting, recruiting, coaching, and training of disabled  
35 athletes with a variety of physical disabilities that may include wheelchair, blind,  
36 war-injured, and other disabilities as well as providing sport wheelchairs, sporting

1 equipment, off campus practice and competition facilities, competition management, and  
2 transportation for the respective teams and student athletes.

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

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

11 (k) The scope to the pilot program shall include goals of ten full scholarships that may be  
12 subdivided as partial scholarships and 20 to 25 student athletes with physical disabilities  
13 by year three of the pilot program with an emphasis upon recruiting veterans with  
14 disabilities. Such scholarship funds shall be applied to the student's cost of attendance at  
15 the institution after all other scholarships and grants have been applied to the student's  
16 account.

17 (1)(1) The General Assembly shall conduct a review of the pilot program after the third  
18 school year of operation.

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

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

## 29 SECTION 2.

30 Subpart 1 of Part 1 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia  
31 Annotated, relating to Georgia Student Finance Commissions, is amended by replacing "this  
32 part" with "this subpart" wherever the former term appears in:

33 (1) Code Section 20-3-230, relating to a short title;

34 (2) Code Section 20-3-231, relating to legislative findings and purpose of the  
35 commission;

36 (3) Code Section 20-3-232, relating to definitions;

- 1 (4) Code Section 20-3-234, relating to functions and composition of the board of  
2 commissioners; appointment, qualifications, and terms of commissioners; board officers;  
3 meetings; committees; compensation; and advisory councils;
- 4 (5) Code Section 20-3-235, relating to commission officers, employees, and support  
5 services; bonds; and legal services;
- 6 (6) Code Section 20-3-236, relating to powers and duties of the commission, the board  
7 of commissioners, and officers; and
- 8 (7) Code Section 20-3-237, relating to division of the board of commissioners to serve  
9 as directors of the corporation and authority.

10

**SECTION 3.**

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

14

**SECTION 4.**

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