

House Bill 1376

By: Representatives Day of the 163rd, Stephens of the 164th, Bryant of the 160th, Stephens of the 161st, Gordon of the 162nd, and others

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 establish "Irish Heritage and History Month"; to provide
3 for legislative findings; to encourage observances and celebrations of "Irish Heritage and
4 History Month"; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other
5 purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

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

10 "1-4-21.

11 (a) The General Assembly hereby finds and determines that:

12 (1) March 17 is the day designated to celebrate the wearing of green and the history of
13 the beloved patron saint of Ireland, Saint Patrick;

14 (2) Starting with Saint Patrick's Day, the month of March has evolved into a celebration
15 of all things Irish and provides an opportunity to celebrate the hardy character, the rich
16 cultural heritage, and the many valuable contributions of Irish-Americans;

17 (3) Irish culture has been spread throughout Georgia due to the many thousands of Irish
18 immigrants who, for more than 200 years, have come and made Georgia their home;

19 (4) By 1776, the year that began the history of our republic, some 300,000 Irish citizens
20 had emigrated to the United States and many of these courageous individuals played
21 crucial roles in America's War for Independence. Nine of the men who signed the
22 Declaration of Independence were of Irish origin;

23 (5) Throughout the arts, education, government, business, science, and agriculture,
24 talented men and women of Irish descent continue to merit the honor we give to them and
25 to their ancestors;

26 (6) The countless annual Saint Patrick's Day parades held throughout the United States,
27 and most notably Savannah Georgia's annual Saint Patrick's Day parade and celebration
28 which is one of the largest in the nation, all attest to the continued vigor of
29 Irish-American heritage; and

30 (7) It is fitting and appropriate that all Georgians reflect upon our state's Irish history and
31 respect the tremendous heritage that has contributed so much to our culture and freedom.

32 (b) The month of March of each year is hereby designated as 'Irish History and Heritage
33 Month,' and shall be set aside to honor, observe, and celebrate the influence of Irish culture
34 in our history.

35 (c) Officials and departments of state, county, and municipal governments, boards of
36 education, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, businesses, and all
37 citizens are encouraged to participate in programs, displays, and activities that
38 commemorate and honor our shared history and cultural inheritance throughout each March
39 during 'Irish History and Heritage Month.'

40 **SECTION 2.**

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