

House Bill 103

By: Representatives Powell of the 29th, Benton of the 31st, Bearden of the 68th, Shaw of the 176th, Stephens of the 164th, 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 create Confederate Heritage and History Month; to
3 provide for legislative findings; to encourage observances and celebrations of Confederate
4 Heritage and History Month; to provide for statutory construction; to provide for related
5 matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other 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 "1-4-20.

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

12 (1) The Confederate States of America was created in 1861 as a result of decades of
13 growing cultural, economic, social, and political differences between the southern states
14 and other sections of the United States, particularly New England, and which, as a result
15 of the election of 1860, precipitated the secession of 13 southern states from the union;

16 (2) Some of Georgia's greatest statesmen, including Robert Toombs, Benjamin Harvey
17 Hill, and Confederate Vice President Alexander H. Stephens, served the Confederate
18 government in high positions;

19 (3) Approximately 125,000 Georgians served and 25 percent lost their lives defending
20 the Confederate cause during the ensuing four years of conflict;

21 (4) Georgians James Longstreet and John Brown Gordon were prominent Confederate
22 generals;

23 (5) Many of the war's prominent battles were fought in Georgia, including Chickamauga,
24 Resaca, Kennesaw, the siege of Atlanta, and Jonesboro. Much of Georgia was laid waste
25 during Sherman's march to the sea and Georgians of all classes and every profession gave
26 generously and sacrificed much to the Confederacy and its cause. It is the most

27 momentous period in the history of the South and our state since the American
28 Revolution and deserves official honors and recognition; and
29 (6) Tourism is a great economic resource in Georgia; and historical, heritage, and
30 cultural inheritance are among the tourism industry's most popular attractions. Georgia's
31 Confederate heritage, physical artifacts and battle sites, and historic events and persons
32 not only attract visitors but also are potentially of even greater importance and benefit to
33 our state's economy. Increased development of our state's Confederate history and
34 heritage as part of the tourism industry will be enhanced through recognizing, celebrating,
35 and advertising that heritage and history.

36 (b) The month of April of each year is hereby designated as Confederate History and
37 Heritage Month, and shall be set aside to honor, observe, and celebrate the Confederate
38 States of America, its history, those who served in its armed forces and government, and
39 all those millions of its citizens of various races and ethnic groups and religions who
40 contributed in sundry and myriad ways to the cause of Southern Independence from its
41 founding on February 4, 1861, in Montgomery, Alabama, until the Confederate ship CSS
42 Shenandoah sailed into Liverpool Harbor and surrendered to British authorities on
43 November 6, 1865.

44 (c) Officials and departments of state, county, and municipal governments, boards of
45 education, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, businesses, and all
46 citizens are encouraged to participate in programs, displays, and activities that
47 commemorate and honor our shared history and cultural inheritance throughout each April
48 during Confederate History and Heritage Month.

49 (d) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to limit or impair any ability of a
50 department or agency of this state or any county or municipality, local board of education,
51 or other subdivision of this state to adopt and implement reasonable regulations to prevent
52 unlawful speech or expression including, but not limited to, behavior that disrupts or
53 involves substantial disorder or the invasion of the rights of others in events and activities
54 associated with Confederate History and Heritage Month.

55 (e) The Civil War Commission is encouraged to develop a curriculum that may be used
56 to instruct and inform students in elementary and secondary schools and in colleges and
57 universities about Georgia's Confederate heritage and history during Confederate History
58 and Heritage Month. The Civil War Commission is also encouraged to develop any
59 information, advertisements, press releases, and other information relative to Confederate
60 History and Heritage Month and to distribute the same to state and local governments, the
61 public, and the media."

62

SECTION 2.

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