

The House Committee on Judiciary Non-civil offers the following substitute to HB 372:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 2 of Chapter 14 of Title 9 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to habeas corpus procedure for persons under sentence of state court of record, so  
3 as to provide time frames for filing briefs and orders in petitions challenging for the first time  
4 state court proceedings resulting in a death sentence; to change certain provisions relating  
5 to petitions challenging for the first time state court proceedings resulting in a death sentence;  
6 to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and  
7 for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Article 2 of Chapter 14 of Title 9 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
11 habeas corpus procedure for persons under sentence of state court of record, is amended by  
12 revising Code Section 9-14-47.1, relating to petitions challenging for the first time state court  
13 proceedings resulting in a death sentence, as follows:

14 "9-14-47.1.

15 (a) In petitions filed under this article challenging for the first time state court proceedings  
16 resulting in a death sentence, the provisions of this article shall apply except as specifically  
17 provided otherwise in this Code section.

18 (b) Within ten days of the filing of a petition challenging for the first time state court  
19 proceedings resulting in a death sentence, the superior court clerk of the county where the  
20 petition is filed shall give written notice to The Council of Superior Court Judges of  
21 Georgia of the filing of the petition which shall serve as a request for judicial assistance  
22 under paragraph (3) of subsection (b) of Code Section 15-1-9.1. Within 30 days of receipt  
23 of such notice, the president of the council shall, under guidelines promulgated by the  
24 executive committee of the council, assign the case to a judge of a circuit other than the  
25 circuit in which the conviction and sentence were imposed.

26 (c) After the close of evidence and the filing of the transcript of any evidentiary hearings,  
 27 the petitioner shall have 60 days in which to file any brief and, if directed by the court,  
 28 shall file proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law. The respondent shall file any  
 29 responsive brief and, if directed by the court, proposed findings of fact and conclusions of  
 30 law within 30 days after the filing of the petitioner's brief. The petitioner shall have 15  
 31 days from the filing of the respondent's brief to file any reply brief. Upon a showing of  
 32 good cause, the court may grant either party an extension of time for filing briefs or orders  
 33 but in any event such extension shall not exceed 60 days.

34 (d) The judge hearing the case shall make written findings of fact and conclusions of law,  
 35 and such findings shall be filed within 180 days of the filing of either the respondent's brief  
 36 or proposed order or the filing of the petitioner's reply brief, whichever is later. If the  
 37 findings of fact and conclusion of law are not filed in such time frame, the court shall file  
 38 a report in the superior court of the county where the case is pending setting forth with  
 39 specificity the reasons for the delay and shall submit a copy of such report to the clerk of  
 40 the Supreme Court of Georgia and the parties. Every 30 days thereafter until the order is  
 41 filed, the court shall provide an updated status report to the superior court clerk, the clerk  
 42 of the Supreme Court of Georgia, and the parties setting forth the reasons for the delay.

43 (e) The Council of Superior Court Judges of Georgia shall establish, by uniform court  
 44 rules, appropriate time periods and schedules applicable to petitions filed ~~on or after~~  
 45 January 1, 1996, challenging for the first time state court proceedings resulting in a  
 46 sentence of death. ~~Such rules shall be adopted by the Supreme Court of Georgia on or~~  
 47 ~~before December 31, 1995. Except as otherwise provided in this Code section, such~~ Such  
 48 new time periods and schedules shall include, but specifically not be limited to, the  
 49 following:

- 50 (1) Respondent's filing of an answer or motion to dismiss the petition;
- 51 (2) Petitioner's filing of any amendments to the petition;
- 52 (3) Filing by either party of motions and responses to motions; and
- 53 (4) Scheduling and conducting of evidentiary hearings; ~~and~~
- 54 (5) ~~Date of final order.~~

55 ~~(d)~~ (f) In petitions filed under this article challenging for a second or subsequent time a  
 56 state court proceeding resulting in a death sentence, the petitioner shall not be entitled to  
 57 invoke any of the provisions set forth in this Code section to delay the proceedings. To the  
 58 extent the court deems it necessary to have an evidentiary hearing on any such petition, the  
 59 court shall expedite the proceedings and the time limits shall not exceed those set for initial  
 60 petitions."

61 **SECTION 2.**

62 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law  
63 without such approval.

64 **SECTION 3.**

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