

House Bill 662

By: Representatives Chambers of the 81st and Martin of the 47th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 2 of Title 35 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the
2 Department of Public Safety, so as to create the Capitol Police Division; to provide for
3 personnel and duties; to provide for funding; to provide for the off-duty use of official
4 vehicles; to amend Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to state
5 government, so as to define a certain term; to provide for duties of certain employees of the
6 Department of Public Safety; to repeal certain security duties of janitors and watchmen in
7 public buildings; to make certain provisions relative to denying entrance to the capitol and
8 other public property; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other
9 purposes.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

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

12 Chapter 2 of Title 35 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Department
13 of Public Safety, is amended by adding a new article to read as follows:

14 style="text-align:center">"ARTICLE 6

15 35-2-120.

16 As used in this article, the term:

17 (1) 'Capitol Square' means that area designated as such by Code Section 50-2-28.

18 (2) 'Commissioner' means the commissioner of public safety.

19 (3) 'Department' means the Department of Public Safety.

20 (4) 'Division' means the Capitol Police Division of the department created by this article.

21 35-2-121.

22 There is created and established a division of the Department of Public Safety to be known
23 as the Capitol Police Division. The department shall staff such division with certified law

24 enforcement officers, who shall be designated capitol police officers, security personnel
25 under the employment of or contract with the department, and any other certified peace
26 officer employed by the department.

27 35-2-122.

28 (a) The division shall have jurisdiction and the primary duty to enforce all laws in Capitol
29 Square and the property and buildings owned by the Georgia Building Authority within a
30 five-mile radius of Capitol Square.

31 (b) The division shall have the following additional duties:

32 (1) To maintain peace and order and enforce the laws and regulations relating to
33 controlling access to any building or property under the control or operation of the
34 Georgia Building Authority;

35 (2) To maintain peace and order and enforce the laws and regulations relating to
36 controlling access to Capitol Square;

37 (3) To enforce parking and traffic laws and to investigate accidents within Capitol
38 Square;

39 (4) To enforce state law when ordered to do so by the commissioner; and

40 (5) To exercise the powers of a law enforcement officer to protect life and property.

41 (c) In the performance of their duties, certified law enforcement officers shall be
42 authorized to carry firearms and exercise the power of arrest.

43 35-2-123.

44 (a) Certified law enforcement officers employed by the division shall be authorized to use
45 official vehicles while engaging in approved off-duty employment, provided that:

46 (1) The off-duty employment is related to a contract between the off-duty employer and
47 the department and is service in which the use of the official vehicle is a benefit to the
48 department or is in furtherance of the department's mission;

49 (2) The off-duty employer pays to the department an amount determined by the
50 commissioner to be sufficient to reimburse the department for the use of the official
51 vehicle; and

52 (3) The commissioner has approved, in writing, the individual use of the official vehicle
53 by the law enforcement officer.

54 (b) At no time shall an off-duty law enforcement officer be allowed the use of an official
55 vehicle at a political function of any kind.

56 35-2-124.

57 The Georgia Building Authority shall reimburse the department for the costs of performing
 58 the duties imposed by this article from funds appropriated for such purpose."

59 **SECTION 2.**

60 Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to state government, is amended
 61 by revising Code Section 50-2-28, relating to Capitol Square designated, state control and
 62 jurisdiction over buildings and grounds, and Governor authorized to deed part of grounds to
 63 the City of Atlanta for traffic movement, as follows:

64 "50-2-28.

65 (a) The following area is designated as 'Capitol Square':

66 (1) The property owned by this state and the sidewalks and streets within the area in the
 67 City of Atlanta bounded by Washington Street, Trinity Avenue, Memorial Drive, Capitol
 68 Avenue, ~~Central Place,~~ and Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive is designated as the Capitol
 69 Square; and

70 (2) The buildings and property owned and operated by the Georgia Building Authority
 71 which are located on or bounded by Central Avenue, Trinity Avenue, Memorial Drive,
 72 Capitol Avenue, Jessie Hill, Jr. Drive, Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, Peachtree Street,
 73 and Marietta Street.

74 (b) The state shall have the same control and jurisdiction over the use of the buildings and
 75 grounds owned by the state and designated as ~~the~~ Capitol Square as have been authorized
 76 by law for the control and supervision of the public property formerly known as the State
 77 Capitol Buildings and Grounds.

78 (c) The Governor is authorized and empowered to deed, upon unanimous approval of the
 79 Governor, an appointee of the Governor who is not the Attorney General, and state auditor,
 80 upon such terms and conditions as they may deem to be to the best interests of the state,
 81 to the City of Atlanta or other appropriate governmental entity such part of the grounds
 82 owned by the state and facing Capitol Avenue that is deemed necessary and essential to
 83 widen, ~~and straighten,~~ and improve Capitol Avenue at the entrance to Martin Luther King,
 84 Jr. Drive, so as to route traffic ~~into Piedmont Avenue,~~ and to such other property ~~owned~~
 85 ~~by the state~~ which is essential or necessary to aid in the movement of traffic around ~~the~~
 86 Capitol Square."

87 **SECTION 3.**

88 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 50-9-9, relating to disruptions of state
 89 employees and employment of security guards to protect public property, as follows:

90 "50-9-9.

91 (a) In that it has been previously declared by state law that the use of the capitol building
92 and grounds shall be limited to departments of state government and to state and national
93 political organizations and for no other purposes unless specifically authorized by law and
94 in that the employees of the departments of state government, and of state agencies,
95 authorities, commissions, boards, bureaus, and other state entities located in the capitol
96 building and other state buildings are engaged in the business of the citizens of the state
97 and should not be unreasonably interrupted in the performance of their public duties, it is,
98 therefore, in the best interest of the state and its citizens that a public policy against such
99 unreasonable disruptions of state employees in the performance of their official duties be
100 declared, and it is in this Code section so declared.

101 (b) Without the express written consent of the director of the Georgia Building Authority,
102 his or her designee, or his or her successor in office first having been received and except
103 as otherwise provided by state law, it shall be illegal for any person, firm, group,
104 organization, or other entity to beg, panhandle, solicit, or to sell goods, wares, or any other
105 objects or services within any buildings or on the grounds, sidewalks, or other ways owned
106 by or under the control of the state, its agencies, authorities, commissions, boards, bureaus,
107 or other state entities.

108 (c) Any person who violates subsection (b) of this Code section shall be guilty of a
109 misdemeanor.

110 (d) The authority or its legal successor shall establish the rules and regulations for and
111 carry out the implementation of this Code section.

112 (e) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Code section or elsewhere, subsections (a)
113 and (b) of this Code section shall be ~~applicable only to the buildings, facilities, and~~
114 ~~improvements adjacent to the state capitol and shall not be applicable to persons, firms,~~
115 ~~organizations, corporations, or other entities doing business with the Department of~~
116 ~~Administrative Services or the activities in relation thereto; and this Code section shall be~~
117 ~~permissive in nature.~~

118 (f) ~~The authority shall be authorized to employ security guards known as the Georgia~~
119 ~~Building Authority Police to keep watch over and protect the properties of the authority~~
120 ~~and such other properties as may be administered by, or as may be directed by, the~~
121 ~~authority. The Georgia Building Authority Police employed as provided by this Code~~
122 ~~section shall be employees of and compensated by the authority. The Georgia Building~~
123 ~~Authority Police employed pursuant to this Code section shall wear such insignia and~~
124 ~~uniforms and carry such identification as prescribed by the authority and shall be~~
125 ~~authorized to carry weapons and, while in the performance of their duties, shall have the~~
126 ~~same powers of arrest, shall have the same powers to enforce law and order, and shall be~~

127 ~~authorized to exercise such powers and duties as are authorized by law for security guards~~
 128 ~~of the Security Guard Division of the Department of Public Safety. Certified law~~
 129 ~~enforcement officers employed by the Department of Public Safety and security personnel~~
 130 ~~employed by or under contract with that department shall exercise such powers and duties~~
 131 ~~as are authorized by law to keep watch over and protect the property of the authority in that~~
 132 ~~area designated as Capitol Square by Code Section 50-2-28. Certified law enforcement~~
 133 ~~officers employed by such department shall have jurisdiction to enforce all laws within~~
 134 ~~such area."~~

135 SECTION 4.

136 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 50-16-6, relating to janitors and
 137 watchmen of public buildings and grounds to make arrests, prevent abuse, suppress
 138 disorderly conduct, and protect property, as follows:

139 "50-16-6.

140 ~~The janitors and watchmen employed by the keeper of public buildings and grounds are~~
 141 ~~authorized, under rules prescribed by the Governor and keeper of public buildings, to make~~
 142 ~~arrests and convey offenders to the police headquarters of Atlanta to be tried by the proper~~
 143 ~~court. It shall be their duty to prevent the abuse of the capitol building, to suppress~~
 144 ~~disorderly conduct therein, and to protect the building and its contents. Reserved."~~

145 SECTION 5.

146 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 50-16-14, relating to authorization of
 147 security personnel to deny entrance and remove persons from state property and assistance,
 148 as follows:

149 "50-16-14.

150 ~~The Georgia Building Authority and its security personnel and members of the Georgia~~
 151 ~~State Patrol and Certified law enforcement officers of the Department of Public Safety and~~
 152 ~~the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and security personnel employed by or under contract~~
 153 ~~with the Department of Public Safety are authorized and empowered to deny the entrance~~
 154 ~~of any person into or upon any property or building of the authority Georgia Building~~
 155 ~~Authority or the state when the person's activities are intended to disrupt or interfere with~~
 156 ~~the normal activities and functions carried on in such property or building or have the~~
 157 ~~potential of violating the security of the personnel therein. ~~The authority and its security~~~~
 158 ~~personnel and members of the Georgia State Patrol and Certified officers of the Department~~
 159 ~~of Public Safety and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and security personnel employed~~
 160 ~~by or under contract with the Department of Public Safety are authorized and empowered~~
 161 ~~to deny entrance into or upon any such property or building of any person displaying any~~
 162 ~~sign, banner, placard, poster, or similar device. ~~The authority and its security personnel~~~~

163 ~~and members of the Georgia State Patrol and~~ Certified officers of the Department of Public
164 Safety and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and security personnel employed by or
165 under contract with the Department of Public Safety are authorized and empowered to
166 remove any person from any such property or building when the person's activities interfere
167 with or disrupt the activities and the operations carried on in such property or building or
168 constitute a safety hazard to the property or building or the inhabitants thereof. The
169 authority and power provided in this Code section and Code Section 50-16-15 shall also
170 extend to any property or building utilized by the state or any agency thereof. Any law
171 enforcement officer assisting the ~~authority or any of its security personnel or members of~~
172 ~~the Georgia State Patrol and~~ the certified officers of the Department of Public Safety and
173 the Georgia Bureau of Investigation or the security personnel employed by or under
174 contract with the Department of Public Safety shall have the same authority and power
175 ~~bestowed upon the authority by~~ as provided by this Code section and Code Section
176 50-16-15."

177 **SECTION 6.**

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