

House Bill 76

By: Representatives Kidd of the 141<sup>st</sup>, Powell of the 29<sup>th</sup>, Epps of the 140<sup>th</sup>, Maddox of the 127<sup>th</sup>, and Williams of the 89<sup>th</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 7 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the  
2 Department of Economic Development, so as to create the Georgia Certified Retirement  
3 Community Program; to define certain terms; to provide for the purpose of such program;  
4 to provide for the identification of factors of interest to retired persons; to provide for  
5 certification; to provide for administration and support; to provide for expiration; to provide  
6 for a pilot project; to provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other  
7 purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 SECTION 1.

10 Chapter 7 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Department  
11 of Economic Development, is amended by adding a new article to read as follows:

12 "ARTICLE 8

13 50-7-90.

14 (a) As used in this article, the term:

15 (1) 'Department' means the Department of Economic Development.

16 (2) 'Program' means the Georgia Certified Retirement Community Program.

17 (b) There is established the Georgia Certified Retirement Community Program. The  
18 department shall coordinate the development and planning of the program with other state  
19 and local groups interested in participating in and promoting the program. The department  
20 shall adopt rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this article.

21 (c) The purpose of the program is to encourage retirees and those planning to retire to  
22 make their homes in Georgia. In order to further this purpose, the department shall engage  
23 in the following activities:

- 24 (1) Promote the state as a retirement destination to retirees and those persons and  
 25 families who are planning retirement both in and outside of Georgia;
- 26 (2) Assist Georgia communities in their efforts to market themselves as retirement  
 27 locations and to develop communities that retirees would find attractive for a retirement  
 28 lifestyle;
- 29 (3) Assist in the development of retirement communities and continuing care retirement  
 30 communities as such term is defined in Code Section 31-6-2 in order to promote  
 31 economic development and a potential workforce to enrich Georgia communities; and
- 32 (4) Encourage mature market travel and tourism to the state to evaluate future retirement  
 33 desirability and to visit those who have chosen to retire in Georgia.
- 34 (d) The department shall identify factors that are of interest to retirees or potential retirees  
 35 in order to inform them of the benefits of living in the state. Such factors shall be used to  
 36 develop a scoring system to determine whether an applicant will qualify as a Georgia  
 37 certified retirement community and may include the following:
- 38 (1) Georgia's state and local tax structure;
- 39 (2) Housing opportunities and cost;
- 40 (3) Climate;
- 41 (4) Personal safety;
- 42 (5) Working opportunities;
- 43 (6) Health care and continuing care services;
- 44 (7) Transportation;
- 45 (8) Continuing education;
- 46 (9) Leisure living;
- 47 (10) Recreation;
- 48 (11) The performing arts;
- 49 (12) Festivals and events;
- 50 (13) Sports; and
- 51 (14) Other services and facilities necessary to enable persons to age in the community  
 52 with a minimum of restrictions.
- 53 (e) The department shall establish criteria for qualifying as a Georgia certified retirement  
 54 community. To be eligible to obtain certification as a Georgia certified retirement  
 55 community, the community shall meet each of the following requirements:
- 56 (1) Be located within 30 miles of a hospital and of emergency medical services;
- 57 (2) Take steps to gain the support of churches, clubs, businesses, media, and other  
 58 entities whose participation will increase the program's success in attracting retirees or  
 59 potential retirees;

60 (3) Establish a retiree attraction committee. The retiree attraction committee shall fulfill  
 61 or create subcommittees to fulfill each of the following:

62 (A) Conduct a retiree desirability assessment analyzing the community with respect to  
 63 each of the factors identified by the department and submit a report of the analysis to  
 64 the department;

65 (B) Send a representative of the retirement attraction committee to attend state training  
 66 meetings conducted by the department during the certification process;

67 (C) Raise funds necessary to run the program, organize special events, and promote  
 68 and coordinate the program with local entities;

69 (D) Establish a community image, evaluate target markets, and develop a marketing  
 70 and public relations plan designed to accomplish the purpose of the program; and

71 (E) Develop a system that identifies and makes contact with existing and prospective  
 72 retirees, that provides tour guides when prospects visit the community, and that  
 73 responds to inquiries, logs contacts made, invites prospects to special community  
 74 events, and maintains continual contact with prospects until the prospect makes a  
 75 retirement location decision;

76 (4) Remit an application fee to the department in the amount of \$2,000.00 or 5¢ times  
 77 the population of the county as shown in the most recent decennial census, whichever is  
 78 greater;

79 (5) Submit the completed marketing and public relations plan designed to accomplish  
 80 the purpose of the program to the department; and

81 (6) Submit a long-term plan outlining the steps the community will undertake to maintain  
 82 or improve its desirability as a destination for retirees, including corrections to any  
 83 services or facilities identified in the retiree desirability assessment.

84 50-7-91.

85 (a) Upon a community's certification as a Georgia certified retirement community, the  
 86 department shall provide the following assistance to the community:

87 (1) Assistance in the training of local program staff and volunteers;

88 (2) Ongoing oversight and guidance in marketing and updating on national retirement  
 89 trends;

90 (3) Inclusion in the state's national advertising and public relations campaigns and travel  
 91 show promotions, including a prominent feature on the department's website;

92 (4) Eligibility for state financial assistance for brochures, support material, and  
 93 advertising; and

94 (5) An annual evaluation and progress assessment on maintaining and improving the  
 95 community's desirability as a home for retirees.

96 (b) A community's certification under this Code section expires on the fifth anniversary  
 97 of the date the initial certification is issued. To be considered for recertification, an  
 98 applicant community shall submit the following:  
 99 (1) A completed new application in accordance with the requirements of this article;  
 100 (2) Data demonstrating the success or failure of the community's efforts to market and  
 101 promote itself as a desirable location for retirees and potential retirees; and  
 102 (3) The fee required by this article.

103 50-7-92.

104 The department shall implement the program through a pilot project. During such pilot  
 105 implementation, the community selection criteria and scoring methodology shall be  
 106 defined, applications will be developed, educational sessions will be conducted, and  
 107 marketing strategies will be developed. Baldwin County and the City of Milledgeville  
 108 shall serve as the pilot communities for such program. The governing authorities of  
 109 Baldwin County and the City of Milledgeville shall jointly work to organize the  
 110 communities and prepare for application of the program."

111 **SECTION 2.**

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

114 **SECTION 3.**

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