

The Senate Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee offered the following substitute to HB 952:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating professions and
2 businesses, so as to enact the "Georgia Professional Regulation Reform Act"; to provide for
3 executive oversight of licensing boards; to establish state policy for the regulation of certain
4 professions and businesses; to provide for legislative intent; to provide for definitions; to
5 provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

7 The General Assembly finds, determines, and declares that:

8 (1) In *N.C. State Bd. of Dental Exam'rs v. FTC*, 135 S. Ct. 1101 (2015), the Supreme
9 Court of the United States established a new standard for determining whether state
10 professional licensing boards and board members are entitled to immunity for federal
11 antitrust violations. Pursuant to *N.C. State Bd. of Dental Exam'rs*, state professional
12 licensing boards and board members are entitled to antitrust immunity only if:

13 (A) Their anticompetitive conduct is consistent with "clearly articulated" state policy;
14 and

15 (B) The state provides "active supervision" of their conduct.

16 (2) It is the policy of the State of Georgia to increase economic opportunities for all of
17 its citizens by promoting competition and thereby encouraging innovation and job
18 growth. It is therefore also the policy of the State of Georgia to displace competition only
19 when necessary to protect consumers from present, significant, and substantiated harms
20 that threaten public health and safety.

21 (3) By establishing the policies and procedures of this chapter, the General Assembly
22 intends to ensure that the state's professional licensing boards and board members are
23 entitled to antitrust immunity and that state laws relating to professions and businesses
24 are interpreted and enforced in a manner consistent with clearly articulated state policy.
25

26 **SECTION 2.**

27 Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to professions and businesses,
28 is amended by adding a new chapter to read as follows:

29 "CHAPTER 1C

30 43-1C-1.

31 This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the 'Georgia Professional Regulation
32 Reform Act.'

33 43-1C-2.

34 As used in this chapter, the term:

35 (1) 'Governor' means the Governor of the State of Georgia or his or her designee.

36 (2) 'Professional licensing board' means any board, bureau, commission, or other agency
37 of the executive branch of state government which is created for the purpose of licensing
38 or otherwise regulating or controlling any profession, business, or trade, including all
39 boards, bureaus, commissions, or other agencies established pursuant to this title or
40 Chapter 4 of Title 26; provided, however, that such term shall not include the State Bar
41 of Georgia.

42 (3) 'Rule' means a regulation, standard, or statement of general applicability, whether
43 formal or informal, that implements, interprets, or prescribes law or policy or describes
44 the organization, procedure, or practice requirements of any professional licensing board.
45 Such term shall include the amendment or repeal of a prior rule but shall not include
46 statements of policy or interpretation made as part of a decision in a contested case.

47 43-1C-3.

48 (a) The Governor shall have the authority and duty to actively supervise the professional
49 licensing boards of this state to ensure that their actions are consistent with clearly
50 articulated state policy and shall therefore have the authority and duty to:

51 (1) Review and, in writing, approve or veto any rule before it is filed in the office of the
52 Secretary of State if such rule is required to be filed in the office of the Secretary of State
53 by Chapter 13 of Title 50, the 'Georgia Administrative Procedure Act,' or before such
54 rule becomes effective, if filing is not required;

55 (2) Review and, in writing, approve or veto any rule that is:

56 (A) Challenged via an appeal to the Governor after the denial of a petition filed
57 pursuant to Code Section 50-13-9; or

58 (B) Submitted by a professional licensing board for review by the Governor;

