

Senate Bill 156

By: Senators Harbin of the 16th, Tippins of the 37th, Lucas of the 26th, Tillery of the 19th,
Gooch of the 51st and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Title 34 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to labor and industrial
2 relations, so as to provide for the appointment, oath, bond, power, duties, and authority of
3 a chief labor officer; to require the chief labor officer to provide reports related to claims for
4 unemployment compensation benefits and implement effective strategies for the timely
5 payment of benefits; to require the chief labor officer to promptly respond to financial audits;
6 to provide for automatic repeal; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective
7 date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Title 34 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to labor and industrial relations,
11 is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

12 "34-2-3.1.

13 (a) There is created the office of the chief labor officer, who shall exercise the authority
14 of the Commissioner of Labor in matters performed by the Commissioner as specified in
15 this title. The actions of the chief labor officer shall have the same force and effect as the
16 actions of the Commissioner of Labor, unless otherwise specifically provided in this title.

17 (b) In addition to the powers and authority granted to the chief labor officer in subsection
18 (a) of this Code section, the chief labor officer shall also have the power, authority, and
19 duty to:

20 (1) Provide timely reports relating to claims for unemployment compensation benefits
21 as required under Code Section 34-8-70;

22 (2) Develop and implement a strategy to improve the reliability and timeliness of service
23 to the citizens of Georgia regarding the proper payment of unemployment insurance
24 benefits;

25 (3) Develop and make accessible a consent form providing access to citizens of Georgia
26 and their elected representatives to certain information and records under Code Section
27 34-8-125; and

28 (4) Provide timely reports and responses to any financial audits of the Department of
29 Labor.

30 (c) The chief labor officer shall be appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by
31 the Senate Committee on Government Oversight, and shall hold no other state office. He
32 or she shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The chief labor officer shall be required
33 to take and subscribe before the Governor an oath to discharge faithfully and impartially
34 the duties of such office, which oath shall be in addition to the oath required of all civil
35 officers.

36 (d) The chief labor officer shall receive a salary as determined by the Governor and paid
37 from funds appropriated to the Department of Labor.

38 (e) The chief labor officer may be required by the Governor to give bond not to exceed the
39 amount of any bond as may be required for the Commissioner of Labor. The premium on
40 the bond shall be paid as an expense of the Department of Labor.

41 (f) This Code section shall stand repealed on January 1, 2022."

42

SECTION 2.

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

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SECTION 3.

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