

The House Committee on Education offers the following substitute to SB 159:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 2 of Title 20 and Chapter 1 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to elementary and secondary education and identification and regulation
3 of motor vehicles, respectively, so as to revise a provision relating to student transportation;
4 to authorize local boards of education to use vehicles other than school buses for the
5 transport of students to and from school related activities; to provide for minimum
6 requirements; to provide for insurance; to revise a definition; to provide for related matters;
7 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elementary and
11 secondary education, is amended in Code Section 20-2-188, relating to student
12 transportation, by revising subsection (e) as follows:

13 "(e) The State Board of Education shall establish and require adherence to minimum
14 specifications for vehicles used or contracted to be used by local units of administration for
15 transporting students, including a motor vehicle with a capacity of eight persons or less
16 operated and marked for the transportation of school children to and from school activities,

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17 taking into account the factors and circumstances set forth in subsection (a) of this Code
18 section, and shall establish and require adherence to minimum standards and requirements
19 respecting maintenance, repair, inspection, and use of such vehicles and minimum
20 qualifications for the drivers of such vehicles; provided, however, that such transportation
21 shall not be authorized to be provided by a ride share network service or transportation
22 referral service, as such terms are defined in Code Section 40-1-190. The state board shall
23 require, monitor, and fund a program of safety instruction in the practices of safe riding and
24 emergency bus evacuation drills for both school bus drivers and students riding school
25 buses."

26

SECTION 2.

27 Said chapter is further amended in Part 1 of Article 22, relating to the powers of state and
28 local school officials with respect to school buses, by adding a new Code section to read as
29 follows:

30 "20-2-1076.

31 (a) Local boards of education may authorize the use of vehicles other than school buses
32 for the transport of students who are documented in an Individualized Education Program
33 as recipients of special education services or as currently lacking, or during the previous
34 academic year lacked, a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as described under
35 the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. Section 11301, et seq., to and
36 from school related activities, where appropriate. Such vehicles may include motor
37 vehicles with a capacity of eight persons or less operated and marked for the transportation
38 of school children to and from school activities; provided, however, that such
39 transportation shall not be authorized to be provided by a ride share network service or
40 transportation referral service, as such terms are defined in Code Section 40-1-190.

41 (b) Local boards shall comply with all requirements established by the State Board of
42 Education pursuant to Code Section 20-2-188, including minimum standards and

43 requirements, which shall be delineated separately from requirements for school buses; for
 44 maintenance, repair, inspection, and use of such vehicles; minimum qualifications for the
 45 drivers of such vehicles; and other requirements as deemed necessary by the State Board
 46 of Education. Local boards may establish requirements in addition to such minimum state
 47 requirements, in the discretion of the local board.

48 (c) Local boards are authorized and required to cause policies of insurance to be issued
 49 insuring the students being transported to and from school related activities against bodily
 50 injury or death at any time resulting from an accident or collision in which such vehicles
 51 are involved. The amount of such insurance shall be within the discretion of each local
 52 board of education."

53

SECTION 3.

54 Chapter 1 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to identification and
 55 regulation of motor vehicles, is amended in Code Section 40-1-1, relating to definitions, by
 56 revising paragraph (55) as follows:

57 "(55) 'School bus' means:

58 (A) A motor vehicle operated for the transportation of school children to and from
 59 school or school activities or for the transportation of children to and from church or
 60 church activities. Such term shall not include a motor vehicle with a capacity of 15
 61 persons or less operated for the transportation of school children to and from school
 62 activities or for the transportation of children to and from church or church activities
 63 if such motor vehicle is not being used for the transportation of school children to and
 64 from school or any vehicle used for the transport of students to and from school related
 65 activities pursuant to Code Section 20-2-1076; or

66 (B) A motor vehicle operated by a local transit system which meets the equipment and
 67 identification requirements of Code Section 40-8-115; provided, however, that such

68 vehicle shall be a school bus only while transporting school children and no other
69 passengers to or from school."

70 **SECTION 4.**

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