

House Bill 1433

By: Representatives Gullett of the 19<sup>th</sup> and Burchett of the 176<sup>th</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 3 of Chapter 19 of Title 15 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to the regulation of practice of law, so as to make certain acts of the unauthorized  
3 practice of law felonies and to provide for penalties therefore; to provide for related matters;  
4 to provide for an effective date and applicability; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other  
5 purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Article 3 of Chapter 19 of Title 15 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the  
9 regulation of practice of law, is amended by revising Code Section 15-19-56, relating to  
10 penalty for prohibited conduct, as follows:

11 "15-19-56.

12 (a) Any person, corporation, or voluntary association violating Code Section ~~15-19-51,~~  
13 ~~15-19-53,~~ 15-19-54; or 15-19-55 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

14 (b) Every officer, trustee, director, agent, or employee of a corporation or voluntary  
15 association who directly or indirectly engages in any of the acts prohibited in Code Section  
16 ~~15-19-51, 15-19-53,~~ 15-19-54; or 15-19-55 or assists a corporation or voluntary association

17 in performing the prohibited acts shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. The fact that the person  
18 is a duly and regularly admitted attorney at law shall not be held to permit or allow the  
19 corporation or voluntary association to do the acts prohibited in such Code sections, nor  
20 shall ~~the~~ such fact be a defense upon the trial of any person mentioned therein for a  
21 violation of those Code sections. Nothing in this subsection shall prevent any court having  
22 jurisdiction from punishing the corporation or its officers for contempt.

23 (c) Any person, corporation, or voluntary association violating Code Section 15-19-51 or  
24 15-19-53 shall be guilty of a felony and, upon the first conviction thereof, shall be punished  
25 by imprisonment of not less than one year nor more than three years, a fine of not less than  
26 \$50,000.00 nor more than \$250,000.00, or both. For a second or subsequent conviction,  
27 the punishment shall be imprisonment of not less than two years nor more than ten years,  
28 a fine of not less than \$250,000.00 nor more than \$1 million, or both.

29 (d) Every officer, trustee, director, agent, or employee of a corporation or voluntary  
30 association who directly or indirectly engages in any of the acts prohibited in Code Section  
31 15-19-51 or 15-19-53 or assists a corporation or voluntary association in performing the  
32 prohibited acts shall be guilty of a felony and, upon the first conviction thereof, shall be  
33 punished by imprisonment of not less than one year nor more than three years, a fine of not  
34 less than \$50,000.00 nor more than \$250,000.00, or both. For a second or subsequent  
35 conviction, the punishment shall be imprisonment of not less than two years nor more than  
36 ten years, a fine of not less than \$250,000.00 nor more than \$1 million, or both. The fact  
37 that the person is a duly and regularly admitted attorney at law shall not be held to permit  
38 or allow the corporation or voluntary association to do the acts prohibited in such Code  
39 sections, nor shall such fact be a defense upon the trial of any person mentioned therein for  
40 a violation of those Code sections. Nothing in this subsection shall prevent any court  
41 having jurisdiction from punishing the corporation or its officers for contempt."

42 **SECTION 2.**

43 This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2026, and shall apply to all offenses committed  
44 on or after such date.

45 **SECTION 3.**

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