

Senate Bill 220

By: Senators Gillis of the 20th, Starr of the 44th, Cheeks of the 23rd, Bowen of the 13th, Golden of the 8th and others

AS PASSED

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

To amend Code Section 15-7-21, of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to qualifications of state court judges, restrictions on the practice of law, removal, discipline, and involuntary retirement, so as to change the provisions relating to qualifications for election and reelection of judges; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Code Section 15-7-21, of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to qualifications of state court judges, restrictions on the practice of law, removal, discipline, and involuntary retirement, is amended by striking subsection (a) and inserting in its place the following:

"(a)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, each judge of the state court shall be a resident of the geographic area in which he or she is selected to serve, shall have been a resident of the state for three years next preceding the beginning of his or her term of office, shall as of such date be at least 25 years of age, and shall have been admitted to practice law for seven years.

(2) If, at the expiration of the qualifying period for the general nonpartisan primary or any special election, no candidate meeting the requirements of paragraph (1) of this subsection has qualified, then the county election superintendent shall reopen qualifying for a period of 15 days, and any person may qualify who: (A) will have been for three years next preceding the beginning of the term of office a resident of the superior court judicial circuit containing the geographic area in which the judge is to serve; and (B) meets all requirements, other than the residency requirement specified in paragraph (1) of this subsection, for eligibility for nomination and election to the office of state court judge. If such person is elected to the office of state court judge, such person may thereafter qualify for reelection to such office as long as such person continues to reside within the judicial circuit containing the geographic area in which the judge is to serve and otherwise meets the requirements of paragraph (1) of this subsection."

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SECTION 2.

2 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.