

House Bill 1371 (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE)

By: Representatives Jasperse of the 11th, Watson of the 172nd, Corbett of the 174th, England of the 116th, and Campbell of the 171st

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 1 of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 general provisions regarding health, so as to provide for the creation of the Rural Health
3 Advancement Commission; to provide for purpose, membership, terms, meetings, expenses,
4 and powers; to provide for reporting; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting
5 laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Chapter 1 of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general
9 provisions regarding health, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

10 "31-1-25.

11 (a) There is created the Rural Health Advancement Commission. The purpose of the
12 commission shall be to develop private-sector solutions to address short-term and
13 long-term health care and long-term care workforce shortages, with an emphasis on rural
14 areas. The commission shall bring together all relevant stakeholders to explore and
15 develop such private-sector solutions, such as collaboration between educational
16 institutions and health care facilities, to address the workforce shortages.

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- 17 (b) The commission shall be composed of 13 members as follows:
- 18 (1) The dean of a medical college in this state, who shall serve as chairperson of the
- 19 commission, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- 20 (2) A physician who practices medicine in a rural area of Georgia, who shall serve as
- 21 vice-chairperson of the commission, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor;
- 22 (3) The director of the Georgia Rural Health Innovation Center;
- 23 (4) The following members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives:
- 24 (A) A member representing rural hospitals in different geographic areas of the state;
- 25 (B) A health insurance provider;
- 26 (C) A licensed practical nurse or registered professional nurse;
- 27 (D) A licensed mental health professional; and
- 28 (E) An advanced practice registered nurse or physician assistant; and
- 29 (5) The following members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor:
- 30 (A) A member representing area health education centers;
- 31 (B) A chief executive officer of a hospital that serves a rural area;
- 32 (C) A member representing a health clinic or public health department;
- 33 (D) A member representing health care departments in postsecondary institutions; and
- 34 (E) A dentist.
- 35 (c) The following additional members shall serve as nonvoting members of the
- 36 commission:
- 37 (1) A member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House
- 38 of Representatives; and
- 39 (2) A member of the Senate, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor.
- 40 (d) Each nonlegislative member of the commission shall be appointed to serve for a term
- 41 of two years or until his or her successor is duly appointed. Legislative members of the
- 42 commission shall serve until completion of their current terms of office. Any member may
- 43 be appointed to succeed himself or herself on the commission. If a member of the

44 commission is an elected or appointed official, such member, or his or her designee, shall
45 be removed from the commission if such member no longer serves as such elected or
46 appointed official.

47 (e) The commission may conduct meetings at such places and times as it deems necessary
48 or convenient to enable it to fully and effectively exercise its powers, perform its duties,
49 and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this Code section. The commission shall
50 hold meetings at the call of the chairperson. The commission shall meet not less than once
51 every two months. A quorum for transacting business shall be a majority of the members
52 of the commission.

53 (f) Legislative members of the commission shall receive the allowances provided for in
54 Code Section 28-1-8. Nonlegislative members shall receive a daily expense allowance in
55 the amount specified in subsection (b) of Code Section 45-7-21, as well as the mileage or
56 transportation allowance authorized for state employees. Members of the commission who
57 are state officials, other than legislative members, or state employees shall receive no
58 compensation for their services on the commission, but shall be reimbursed for expenses
59 incurred by them in the performance of their duties as members of the commission in the
60 same manner as they are reimbursed for expenses in their capacities as state officials or
61 state employees. The funds necessary for the reimbursement of the expenses of state
62 officials, other than legislative members, and state employees shall come from funds
63 appropriated to or otherwise available to their respective departments. All other funds
64 necessary to carry out the provisions of this Code section shall come from funds
65 appropriated to the Senate and the House of Representatives.

66 (g) The commission shall have the following powers:

67 (1) To request and receive data from and review the records of appropriate state agencies
68 and courts to the greatest extent allowed by state and federal law;

69 (2) To accept public or private grants, devises, and bequests;

- 70 (3) To conduct studies, hold public meetings, collect data, or take any other action the
71 commission deems necessary to fulfill its responsibilities; and
72 (4) To retain the services of attorneys, consultants, subject matter experts, economists,
73 budget analysts, data analysts, statisticians, and other individuals or organizations as
74 deemed appropriate by the commission.
75 (h) The commission shall annually report on the work of the commission to the Governor,
76 Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House of Representatives."

77 **SECTION 2.**

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