

House Bill 543

By: Representatives Berry of the 56th, McQueen of the 61st, Bell of the 75th, Dawson of the 65th, and Herring of the 145th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 1 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to general provisions relative to education, so as to require testing of drinking water
3 in child care learning centers and schools for lead contamination; to provide for notice and
4 reporting of test results and remediation plans; to provide for definitions; to provide for rules
5 and regulations; to provide for an exemption; to prohibit waivers; to provide for related
6 matters; to provide a short title; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Get the Lead Out of School Drinking
10 Water Act."

11 **SECTION 2.**

12 Article 1 of Chapter 1 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
13 general provisions relative to education, is amended by adding a new Code section to read
14 as follows:

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15 "20-1-12.

16 (a) As used in this Code section, the term:

17 (1) 'Child care learning center' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code
18 Section 20-1A-2.

19 (2) 'Lead contamination' means a lead concentration level of five parts per billion or
20 greater.

21 (3) 'School' means any public or private primary or secondary school.

22 (b) No later than July 1, 2026, every child care learning center and every school shall
23 conduct testing of drinking water outlets for lead contamination and develop a remediation
24 plan for any lead contamination identified. Remediation shall be completed as soon as
25 practicable, and remediation plans shall include a timeline for the completion of such
26 remediation. Such testing and remediation shall be conducted in accordance with rules and
27 regulations established pursuant to subsection (d) of this Code section.

28 (c) Where a finding of lead contamination is made, a child care learning center or school
29 shall:

30 (1) Provide written notice of test results and the remediation plan to parents or guardians
31 of children and students and to staff members;

32 (2) Post such test results and remediation plan in a prominent location at the child care
33 learning center or school or on such center's or school's public website;

34 (3) Submit such test results and remediation plan to the Department of Public Health;
35 and

36 (4) Provide an intermediate or alternate source of drinking water that does not contain
37 lead contamination.

38 (d) The Department of Public Health, in consultation with the Environmental Protection
39 Division of the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Education, and the
40 Department of Early Care and Learning, shall establish rules and regulations no later than
41 January 1, 2026, regarding the testing of drinking water outlets and the remediation of lead

42 contamination as required pursuant to this Code section. Such rules and regulations shall
43 include, but not be limited to, minimum criteria for testing drinking water, entities that are
44 authorized to analyze drinking water samples, and any intermediate or alternate water
45 sources required during remediation.

46 (e) Subject to appropriations or other available funding, the Department of Education shall
47 be authorized to provide grants to child care learning centers and schools in order to assist
48 such child care learning centers and schools in complying with the requirements of this
49 Code section.

50 (f) Child care learning centers and schools which are classified as public water systems
51 pursuant to 40 C.F.R. Parts 141-142 as such regulations existed on January 1, 2025, shall
52 be exempt from this Code section.

53 (g) This Code section shall not be subject to waivers pursuant to Code Section 20-2-82 for
54 a strategic waivers school system; Code Section 20-2-244 for a local board of education;
55 Code Section 20-2-2063.2 for a charter system; or Code Section 20-2-2065 for a charter
56 school established pursuant to Article 31 or Article 31A of Chapter 2 of this title, a charter
57 system, or schools within a charter system."

58 **SECTION 3.**

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