

Senate Bill 170

By: Senators Jackson of the 41st, Robertson of the 29th, Summers of the 13th and Halpern of the 39th

AS PASSED SENATE

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 12 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 commissions and other agencies, so as to create the Georgia Interagency Council for the
3 Homeless; to provide for the purpose, membership, and duties of such council; to provide for
4 reporting of activities; to provide for compensation; to provide for legislative findings; to
5 provide for automatic repeal; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and
6 for other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 The General Assembly finds that:

- 10 (1) Every Georgian has the right to life, liberty, and property under the Constitution of the
11 State of Georgia;
- 12 (2) The protection of persons and property is the paramount duty of government;
- 13 (3) No Georgian shall be denied equal protection under the law;
- 14 (4) The government of the State of Georgia is instituted for the protection, security, and
15 benefit of the people;

S. B. 170

16 (5) In 2022, the Georgia State Senate created a Study Committee on Unsheltered
17 Homelessness to study the issue, assess evidence for different policies, solicit input, and
18 develop recommendations for improvements to the law that would aid those experiencing
19 homelessness;

20 (6) In 2022, the Georgia State Senate found that the state should continue to oppose the
21 criminalization of homelessness, and the Study Committee on Unsheltered Homelessness
22 did not recommend any legal action against unsheltered or sheltered homeless individuals
23 based on housing status; and

24 (7) This Act reinforces the General Assembly's commitment to the safety and security of
25 those state residents who remain unhoused.

26

SECTION 2.

27 Chapter 12 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to commissions
28 and other agencies, is amended by adding a new article to read as follows:

29

"ARTICLE 9

30 50-12-140.

31 (a) There is created the Georgia Interagency Council for the Homeless for the purpose of
32 ensuring a coordinated state-wide approach to addressing homelessness.

33 (b) As used in this Code section, the term 'council' means the Georgia Interagency Council
34 for the Homeless.

35 (c) The council shall consist of the following 21 members who shall be appointed by the
36 Governor:

37 (1) The commissioner of community affairs or his or her designee;

38 (2) One member from the Attorney General's office;

- 39 (3) One member from the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental
40 Disabilities;
- 41 (4) One member from the Department of Corrections;
- 42 (5) One member from the Division of Aging Services within the Department of Human
43 Services;
- 44 (6) One member from the Governor's Office for Children and Families;
- 45 (7) One member from the Department of Veterans Service;
- 46 (8) One member from the Georgia Housing and Finance Authority;
- 47 (9) One member from the Department of Community Affairs;
- 48 (10) One member from the Department of Transportation;
- 49 (11) One member from the Department of Public Health;
- 50 (12) One member from the Department of Public Safety;
- 51 (13) One member from the State Board of Pardons and Paroles;
- 52 (14) One member from the Continuum of Care Network;
- 53 (15) One member from the Department of Community Supervision;
- 54 (16) Three members who have personally experienced homelessness; and
- 55 (17) Three members representing service providers to the homeless.
- 56 (d) Councilmembers appointed pursuant to subsection (c) of this Code section shall serve
57 for a period of three years.
- 58 (e) A vacancy on the council shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment
59 was made.
- 60 (f) The commissioner of community affairs or his or her appointee shall serve as the
61 chairperson of the council.
- 62 (g) The council shall:
- 63 (1) Survey current resources for services for the homeless in this state;
- 64 (2) Initiate an evaluation of the current and future needs for the services;

- 65 (3) Assist in coordinating and providing state-wide services for all homeless individuals
66 in this state;
- 67 (4) Increase the flow of information among separate providers and appropriate
68 authorities;
- 69 (5) Develop guidelines to monitor the provision of services for the homeless and the
70 methods of delivering those services;
- 71 (6) Coordinate with the State Workforce Development Board, homeless shelters, and
72 public and private entities to provide homeless individuals information on services
73 available to assist them in obtaining employment and job training;
- 74 (7) Establish a central resource and information center for the homeless in this state;
- 75 (8) Coordinate state-wide efforts to combat the criminalization of homelessness;
- 76 (9) Ensure that local or state-wide nonprofit organizations perform the duties under this
77 subsection that the council is unable to perform; and
- 78 (10) Meet at least once per quarter to set the goals of the council and review the work
79 described in this Code section.
- 80 (h) The council, no later than December 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, shall submit to
81 the office of the Governor a report detailing the council's activities, findings, and any
82 recommendations. Any reports generated by the council shall be made available on an
83 annual basis by the department to the members of the General Assembly, all departments
84 and agencies of state government, all county and municipal governments, and members of
85 the general public by posting such reports on the appropriate state agency public websites.
- 86 (i) Councilmembers shall receive no compensation for their services but shall be allowed
87 actual and necessary expenses in the performance of their duties. Citizen members shall
88 receive a daily expense allowance in the amount specified in subsection (b) of Code
89 Section 45-7-21 as well as the mileage or transportation allowance authorized for state
90 employees. If any members selected to serve on the council are state officials or are state
91 employees, they shall receive no compensation for their services on the council but shall

92 be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as members of the
93 council in the same manner as reimbursements are made in their capacity as state officials
94 or state employees. The funds necessary for the reimbursement of the expenses of state
95 officials and state employees shall come from funds appropriated to or otherwise available
96 to their respective departments.
97 (j) The council shall be abolished and this article shall stand repealed on
98 December 31, 2028."

99

SECTION 3.

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