

House Bill 1068

By: Representatives Davis of the 87<sup>th</sup>, Schofield of the 63<sup>rd</sup>, and Scott of the 76<sup>th</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapters 1 and 4 of Title 28 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating  
2 to general provisions regarding the General Assembly and legislative services, respectively,  
3 so as to provide for additional office expense funding; to provide for additional funding for  
4 constituent services for members of the General Assembly; to provide for the creation,  
5 staffing, funding, duties, and procedures for the Office of Constituent Services; to provide  
6 for a short title; to provide for legislative findings and intent; to provide for related matters;  
7 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Georgia Constituent Services Improvement  
11 and Accountability Act."

12 **SECTION 2.**

13 The General Assembly finds and expresses as the intent of this Act that:

14 (1) There is a need for a framework for constituent services offices for the General  
15 Assembly as well as caucuses and delegations;

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- 16 (2) Constituent services management needs to be modernized through the adoption and  
17 implementation of technology and funding increases; and  
18 (3) There is a need to promote transparency, accountability, and equitable access with  
19 regard to constituent services through the year.

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**SECTION 3.**

21 Chapter 1 of Title 28 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general  
22 provisions regarding the General Assembly, is amended by revising subsection (a) of Code  
23 Section 28-1-8, relating to salary and allowances of members and officers, as follows:

24 "(a)(1) Each member of the General Assembly shall receive an annual salary, as provided  
25 for in Code Section 45-7-4, to be paid in equal monthly installments. Upon complying  
26 with the requirements of paragraph (22) of subsection (a) of Code Section 45-7-4, each  
27 member shall also be reimbursed for those actual expenses incurred in the performance  
28 of duties for which reimbursement is provided in paragraph (22) of subsection (a) of  
29 Code Section 45-7-4. The Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Speaker Pro  
30 Tempore of the House of Representatives, and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate  
31 shall receive an additional amount per annum as provided for in Code Section 45-7-4.  
32 The majority leader, the minority leader, the administration floor leader, and the assistant  
33 administration floor leaders of the House of Representatives and the majority leader, the  
34 minority leader, the administration floor leader, and the assistant administration floor  
35 leaders of the Senate shall each receive such additional amount per annum as shall be  
36 provided by resolution of the respective houses; but such amount for each shall not be  
37 greater than the additional amount provided by law for the Speaker Pro Tempore of the  
38 House of Representatives. All of such additional amounts shall also be paid in equal  
39 monthly installments.

40 (2) In addition to the reimbursements for expenses for the performance of duties  
41 provided for in subsection (a) of this Code section and paragraph (22) of subsection (a)

42 of Code Section 45-7-4, each member shall receive at the beginning of such member's  
43 term of office an additional expense allowance of \$7,000.00. Such funds shall be used  
44 by the member only for those purposes for which expense reimbursement is provided for  
45 in paragraph (22) of subsection (a) of Code Section 45-7-4. Each member shall maintain  
46 records documenting the use of such funds and shall make such records available to the  
47 State Ethics Commission for review and audit at all times. The State Ethics Commission  
48 shall provide forms and procedures for the maintenance of such records and shall conduct  
49 annual audits of such records and may conduct random audits in the discretion of the  
50 State Ethics Commission of such records regarding the use of such funds. Not later than  
51 January 31 of each calendar year, each member of the General Assembly shall submit a  
52 report, which shall be public record, to the Legislative Services Committee and such  
53 report shall detail how the funds provided for in this paragraph were used in the  
54 preceding calendar year and shall provide specific examples of constituent services  
55 improvements accomplished, in whole or in part, with such funds.

56 (3) In addition to the funds specified in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection, each  
57 member shall be authorized to direct an additional amount not to exceed \$1,000.00 each  
58 calendar year for the purpose of funding, in whole or in part, the establishment and  
59 operation of delegation-wide constituent services offices. Such amounts may be pooled  
60 by delegations to maximize impact and efficiency. The State Ethics Commission shall  
61 provide forms and procedures for the maintenance of records regarding the use of such  
62 funds and shall conduct annual audits of such records and may conduct random audits in  
63 the discretion of the State Ethics Commission of such records regarding the use of such  
64 funds."

**SECTION 4.**

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Chapter 4 of Title 28 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general provisions regarding legislative services, is amended by revising Code Section 28-4-8, which is reserved, as follows:

"28-4-8.

(a) There is hereby created the Office of Constituent Services which shall exist for the purpose of providing centralized resources and support for caucuses and delegations in the General Assembly. Such office shall be established and constituted in such form and manner as the Legislative Services Committee shall direct and shall be funded by annual appropriation by the General Assembly sufficient to fund its operations, including staffing, technology, and training programs. Such office shall operate on a year-round basis to ensure consistent constituent engagement and assistance.

(b) The Office of Constituent Services shall be headed by a director selected at the beginning of each odd-numbered year by the Legislative Services Committee. The office shall have such number of staff members as shall be determined by the Legislative Services Committee.

(c) The Office of Constituent Services shall, subject to appropriation, select, obtain, and implement computer programs and software for the purpose of modernizing constituent services, including, but not limited to, correspondence, case management, and data analytics. The Office of Constituent Services shall develop and conduct training programs in the use of such computer programs and software for members and members' staffs and regarding best practices for constituent engagement.

(d) The Office of Constituent Services shall develop standardized procedures and best practices for constituent case management, communication, and event coordination. The Office of Constituent Services shall develop and conduct training programs regarding such best practices for constituent case management, communication, and event coordination.

- 91 (e) The Office of Constituent Services shall develop guidelines for the use of the funds  
92 under paragraph (3) of subsection (a) of Code Section 28-1-8 which shall include, but not  
93 be limited to, approved activities, reporting requirements, and accountability measures.  
94 (f) The Office of Constituent Services shall coordinate the setup and management of  
95 delegation-wide constituent services offices throughout the state and shall assist members  
96 in the planning and execution of constituent services programs.  
97 (g) The Office of Constituent Services shall publish an annual report not later than  
98 January 31 of each calendar year, which shall be a public record, summarizing the activities  
99 of the office for the immediately preceding calendar year, including, but not limited to,  
100 support provided to delegations, training outcomes, and constituent impact metrics.  
101 (h) The Office of Constituent Services shall be fully operational as soon as possible, but  
102 not later than July 1, 2027. Reserved."

103 **SECTION 5.**

104 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law  
105 without such approval.

106 **SECTION 6.**

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