

The Senate Committee on Public Safety offered the following substitute to HB 990:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 6A of Title 35 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the
2 Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, so as to provide for the creation of a grant program
3 to assist former handlers and adopters of retired law enforcement dogs, charitable
4 organizations serving such dogs, and qualified law enforcement foundations with veterinary
5 care costs for such dogs; to provide for purposes and authority of the grant program; to
6 provide for sources of funding; to provide for administration of the program by the council;
7 to establish criteria and procedures for such grants; to provide for annual grant limit; to
8 provide for definitions; to provide for rules and regulations; to provide for related matters;
9 to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA

11 **SECTION 1.**

12 Chapter 6A of Title 35 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Criminal
13 Justice Coordinating Council, is amended by revising Code Section 35-6A-13, which is
14 reserved, as follows:

15 "35-6A-13.

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

17 (1) 'Charitable organization' means an organization that meets the requirements of
18 paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of Code Section 14-3-1302, provided that such
19 organization is recognized as tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue
20 Code and has been so qualified for not less than five years and that assists former
21 handlers or adopters of retired law enforcement dogs with their veterinary care.

22 (2) 'Correctional agency' means a governmental unit of one or more persons employed
23 full time or part time by the state, a state agency or department, or a political subdivision
24 of the state for the primary purpose of providing supervision, protection, care, custody,
25 control, or investigation of persons at a penal institution.

26 (3) 'Law enforcement agency' means a governmental unit of one or more persons
27 employed full time or part time by the state, a state agency or department, or a political
28 subdivision of the state for the purpose of preventing and detecting crime and enforcing
29 state laws or local ordinances, employees of which unit are authorized to make arrests for
30 crimes while acting within the scope of their authority.

31 (4) 'Licensed veterinarian' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code
32 Section 43-50-3.

33 (5) 'Penal institution' means any place of confinement for persons accused of or
34 convicted of violating a law of this state or an ordinance of a municipality or political
35 subdivision of this state.

36 (6) 'Qualified law enforcement foundation' shall have the same meaning as set forth in
37 Code Section 48-7-29.25.

38 (7) 'Retired law enforcement dog' means a dog that meets the following criteria:

39 (A) The dog was previously in the service of or employed by a law enforcement
40 agency or correctional agency in this state for the principal purpose of aiding in the
41 detection of criminal activity, enforcement of laws, apprehension of offenders, or
42 detection of accelerants, explosives, or narcotics, or for assisting with search and rescue
43 operations; and

44 (B) The dog received certification in obedience, apprehension, accelerant detection,
45 explosive detection, narcotic detection, or search and rescue from a nationally
46 recognized organization that certifies dogs performing that type of work.

47 (8) 'Veterinary care' means the practice of veterinary medicine by a licensed veterinarian
48 as set forth in Code Section 43-50-3. Such term shall include annual wellness
49 examinations, vaccinations, internal and external parasite prevention treatments, testing
50 and treatment of illnesses and diseases, medications, emergency care and surgeries,
51 veterinary oncology or other specialty care, euthanasia, and cremation.

52 (b) Law enforcement dogs provide critical support to public safety and are required to
53 undergo training and provide services that present special needs and adoption limitations
54 for such dogs upon their retirement. Ensuring that law enforcement dogs are properly
55 cared for in retirement and incentivizing and enabling former handlers and potential
56 adopters to provide such care thus serves the public interest.

57 (c)(1) The council shall establish a grant program to provide financial assistance for the
58 veterinary care of retired law enforcement dogs.

59 (2) The grants provided pursuant to this Code section shall be subject to funding from
60 gifts, grants, donations, devises, or other contributions of money or property from private
61 individuals, corporations, nonprofit organizations, or foundations, provided that such
62 contributions are voluntary and no contributor to the grant program receives any special
63 privilege, consideration, or benefit.

64 (3) Subject to available funding, the grants awarded under this Code section shall
65 disburse funds for the actual expenses incurred for a retired law enforcement dog's
66 veterinary care by such dog's former handler or adopter, a charitable organization, or a
67 qualified law enforcement foundation upon receipt and verification of:

68 (A) A grant application seeking reimbursement for veterinary care;

69 (B) Documentation from the law enforcement agency or correctional agency from
70 which the dog retired verifying that such dog was in the service of or employed by such
71 agency; and

72 (C) Documentation from a licensed veterinarian verifying the veterinary care provided
73 in this state to such retired law enforcement dog and the payment made by the former
74 handler or adopter, a charitable organization, or a qualified law enforcement foundation
75 for such care.

76 (d) The council shall establish and administer:

77 (1) Eligibility and selection criteria for grant applicants that comply with the provisions
78 of this Code section;

79 (2) Grant application procedures, including guidelines for the application and
80 documentation required by subsection (c) of this Code section;

81 (3) Guidelines relating to grant amounts which shall include a requirement that the
82 disbursements to an applicant for the veterinary care of a retired law enforcement dog
83 shall not exceed \$5,000.00 per dog per calendar year;

84 (4) Procedures for evaluating grant applications; and

85 (5) Procedures for monitoring and reporting on the use of any grant awarded under the
86 grant program and ensuring compliance with the provisions of this Code section.

87 (e) The council is authorized to promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary
88 to carry out the provisions of this Code section. Reserved."

89 **SECTION 2.**

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

92 **SECTION 3.**

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