

Senate Bill 397

By: Senators Goodman of the 8th, Tippins of the 37th, Payne of the 54th, Sims of the 12th, Rhett of the 33rd and others

AS PASSED**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED****AN ACT**

1 To amend Titles 15, 20, 25, 40, 42, and 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to courts, education, fire protection and safety, motor vehicles and traffic, penal
3 institutions, and professions and businesses, respectively, so as to update and replace
4 terminology related to general educational development (GED) diplomas; to provide for state
5 approved high school equivalency (HSE) diplomas; to update the minimum standards and
6 requirements for such diplomas to be established by the Technical College System of
7 Georgia; to revise provisions related to HOPE GED vouchers; to provide for related matters;
8 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

9 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:**

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SECTION 1.

11 Title 15 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, related to courts, is amended by
12 replacing "general educational development (GED)" with "state approved high school
13 equivalency (HSE)" in Code Section 15-10-22, relating to qualifications and restrictions on
14 the practice of law for magistrates.

15

SECTION 2.

16 Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, related to education, is amended by
17 replacing "general educational development" or "general educational development (GED)"
18 with "state approved high school equivalency (HSE)" wherever either of the former phrases
19 occur in:

- 20 (1) Code Section 20-2-69, relating to requirements and procedures for issuing and
21 awarding high school diplomas to honorably discharged World War II Veterans;
- 22 (2) Code Section 20-2-70, relating to requirements and procedures for issuing and
23 awarding high school diplomas to honorably discharged Korean Conflict and Vietnam
24 Conflict veterans;
- 25 (3) Code Section 20-2-204, relating to paraprofessional and permitted personnel and
26 classification of all certified or permitted personnel;
- 27 (4) Code Section 20-2-690, relating to educational entities, requirements for private
28 schools and home study programs, and learning pod protection;
- 29 (5) Code Section 20-2-690.1, relating to mandatory education for children between ages
30 six and 16;
- 31 (6) Code Section 20-3-66, relating to determination of in-state resident status of students
32 for tuition or fees;
- 33 (7) Code Section 20-3-395, relating to definitions relative to direct loans to students on the
34 basis of need and merit;
- 35 (8) Code Section 20-3-400.1, relating to definitions relative to graduate on time loans;
- 36 (9) Code Section 20-3-405.1, relating to definitions relative to education for public service
37 student loan;
- 38 (10) Code Section 20-3-411, relating to definitions relative to tuition equalization grants
39 at private colleges and universities;
- 40 (11) Code Section 20-3-519.2, relating to eligibility requirements for a HOPE scholarship
41 and award amount; and

42 (12) Code Section 20-3-660, relating to tuition waiver program for qualifying foster and
43 adopted individuals.

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SECTION 3.

45 Said title is further amended in Code Section 20-3-519, relating to definitions relative to
46 HOPE scholarships and grants, by revising paragraph (13.1) as follows:

47 "(13.1) 'HOPE GED HSE voucher' means a Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally
48 general educational development (GED) state approved high school equivalency (HSE)
49 diploma voucher for postsecondary education awarded issued in accordance with Code
50 Section 20-3-519.6."

51

SECTION 4.

52 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 20-3-519.6, relating to HOPE GED
53 vouchers, as follows:

54 "20-3-519.6.

55 Subject to the amounts appropriated by the General Assembly and provisions relating to
56 the shortfall reserve in Code Section 50-27-13, a HOPE GED HSE voucher ~~in the amount~~
57 ~~of \$500.00~~ shall be available ~~once~~ to each eligible student who receives pre-certification
58 ~~from receiving a general educational development (GED) diploma awarded by the~~
59 Department of Technical and Adult Education, now known as the Technical College
60 System of Georgia (TCSG), ~~to take an approved examination seeking a diploma through~~
61 ~~the high school equivalency (HSE) program. TCSG, upon issuance of a voucher in~~
62 ~~accordance with this paragraph, shall invoice the Georgia Student Finance Commission in~~
63 ~~accordance with rules, regulations, and instructions of the commission providing for~~
64 ~~identification of each student and compliance with this program after June 30, 1993. Such~~
65 ~~voucher shall be issued to such student upon enrollment in any eligible postsecondary~~
66 ~~institution in Georgia within 24 months from the date the general educational development~~

67 ~~(GED) diploma was awarded to the student and may only be used to cover postsecondary~~
68 ~~costs of attendance at such institution; provided, however, that for an individual who~~
69 ~~becomes eligible for such voucher while he or she is incarcerated in a penal institution in~~
70 ~~this state, such voucher may be used by such individual within 24 months from the date of~~
71 ~~release from the penal institution."~~

72 **SECTION 5.**

73 Said title is further amended in Code Section 20-4-11, relating to the powers of the state
74 board of the Technical College System of Georgia, by revising division (2)(B)(ii) as follows:

75 "(ii) Standards and requirements for the attainment of a high school equivalency
76 certificate which shall be comparable to the high school graduation requirements set
77 by the State Board of Education for public school programs and which shall also be
78 at least equal to the requirements established ~~for a general educational development~~
79 ~~(GED) diploma by a nationally recognized college and career readiness standard for~~
80 ~~adult education.~~ The state board shall also adopt and administer an instrument to
81 measure the level of achievement required to obtain a high school equivalency
82 certificate; and"

83 **SECTION 6.**

84 Title 25 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to fire protection and safety, is
85 amended by replacing "general education development equivalency" with "state approved
86 high school equivalency (HSE) diploma" in Code Section 25-4-8, relating to qualifications
87 of firefighters generally.

88 **SECTION 7.**

89 Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to motor vehicles and traffic, is
90 amended by replacing "general educational development (GED)" with "state approved high

91 school equivalency (HSE)" in Code Section 40-5-22, relating to requirements for issuance
92 of instruction permit or driver's license to person under 18 years of age, authority of
93 department to issue or renew a driver's license, probationary license, limited driving permit,
94 or ignition interlock device limited driving permit.

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SECTION 8.

96 Title 42 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to penal institutions, is amended
97 by replacing "the general educational development (GED)" with "a state approved high
98 school equivalency (HSE)" in Code Section 42-3-50, relating to definitions relative to
99 community service and assignment of community service for personal gain prohibited.

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SECTION 9.

101 Said title is further amended by replacing "general educational development (GED)" with
102 "state approved high school equivalency (HSE)" wherever the former phrase occurs in:
103 (1) Code Section 42-9-44, relating to terms and conditions of parole, adoption of general
104 and special rules, violation of parole, and certain parolees or releasees to obtain high school
105 diploma or general educational development (GED) diploma; and
106 (2) Code Section 42-9-45, relating to general rule-making power relative to grants of
107 pardons, paroles, and other relief.

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SECTION 10.

109 Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to professions and businesses,
110 is amended by replacing "GED", "general education development", "general educational
111 development", or "general educational development (GED)" with "state approved high
112 school equivalency (HSE)" wherever any of the former phrases occur in:

113 (1) Code Section 43-6-11, relating to qualifications of applicants for auctioneer's licenses;

114 (2) Code Section 43-10-2, relating to creation of the board of cosmetology and barbers,
115 members, meetings, officers, and powers;
116 (3) Code Section 43-10-9, relating to application for certificate of registration for barbers
117 and cosmetologists;
118 (4) Code Section 43-10-12, relating to regulation and licenses for schools, teachers, and
119 instructors, registration of apprentices, and certification as teacher by Department of
120 Education relative to barbers and cosmetologists;
121 (5) Code Section 43-18-41, relating to qualifications of embalmer or funeral director
122 applicants;
123 (6) Code Section 43-18-50, relating to application for funeral service apprenticeship and
124 period of apprenticeship; and
125 (7) Code Section 43-26-38, relating to license by endorsement and temporary permit for
126 licensed practical nurses.

127 **SECTION 11.**

128 Said title is further amended by replacing "general educational development (GED)
129 equivalency" with "state approved high school equivalency (HSE)" in Code Section
130 43-10A-7, relating to licensing requirement and exceptions for professional counselors,
131 social workers, and marriage and family therapists.

132 **SECTION 12.**

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