

House Bill 1391

By: Representatives Bell of the 75th and Sharper of the 177th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 8 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the
2 Department of Community Affairs, so as to establish the Creating Hope and a New Georgia
3 for Everyone or CHANGE Task Force for the purpose of examining the complex issues
4 facing urban, suburban, and rural communities in this state and finding solutions focused on
5 labor and community development; to provide for definitions; to provide for such task force's
6 membership, duties, and powers; to provide for a grant program, subject to appropriation; to
7 provide for reporting; to provide for automatic repeal; to provide for related matters; to
8 provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

10 **SECTION 1.**

11 Chapter 8 of Title 50 the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the department of
12 community affairs, is amended by adding a new article to read as follows:

13 "ARTICLE 14

14 50-8-400.

15 As used in this article, the term:

16 (1) 'CHANGE Task Force' or 'task force' means the Creating Hope and a New Georgia
17 for Everyone Task Force as provided for in this article.

18 (2) 'Commissioner' means the commissioner of community affairs.

19 (3) 'Department' means the Department of Community Affairs.

20 50-8-401.

21 There is established the Creating Hope and a New Georgia for Everyone or CHANGE Task
22 Force for the purpose of examining complex issues facing urban, suburban, and rural
23 communities in this state; bringing together civic, community, business, and government
24 leaders to discuss solutions focused on labor and community development; recommending
25 such solutions to civic, community, business, and government leaders; and, to the extent
26 possible, facilitating the implementation of such solutions.

27 50-8-402.

28 (a) The CHANGE Task Force shall consist of 13 members as follows:

29 (1) Four members appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall be a civic or
30 community leader of the City of Atlanta or of the County of Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb,
31 Gwinnett, or Clayton; one of whom shall be an employer of more than 250 employees in
32 this state; one of whom shall be a representative of a public technical school, vocational
33 school, college, university, or other institution of postsecondary education in this state;
34 and one of whom shall be a representative of a private technical school, vocational
35 school, college, university, or other institution of postsecondary education in this state;

36 (2) Four members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, one of
37 whom shall be a civic or community leader outside of metro Atlanta; one of whom shall
38 be an employer of 250 employees or less in this state; and two of whom shall be members
39 of the House of Representatives;

40 (3) Four members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, one of whom shall be a civic
41 or community leader outside of metro Atlanta; one of whom shall be an employer of ten
42 employees or less in this state; and two of whom shall be members of the Senate; and

43 (4) The commissioner of community affairs or his or her designee.

44 (b) Each member of the task force shall be appointed to serve for a term of two years or
45 until his or her successor is duly appointed, except the members of the General Assembly,
46 who shall serve until the completion of their current terms of office. A member may be
47 appointed to succeed himself or herself on the task force. If a member of the task force is
48 an elected or appointed official, the member or his or her designee shall be removed from
49 the task force if the member no longer serves as such elected or appointed official.
50 Vacancies in the task force shall be filled by appointment in the manner of the original
51 appointment.

52 (c) The Governor shall designate the chairperson of the task force. The chairperson shall
53 call all meetings of the task force and preside over such meetings. The task force may elect
54 other officers as it deems necessary.

55 (d) The task force shall be attached for administrative purposes only to the department.
56 The department shall provide staff support for the task force and shall use any funds
57 specifically appropriated to it to support the work of the task force.

58 50-8-403.

59 (a) The CHANGE Task Force may conduct meetings at such places and times as it deems
60 necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform

61 its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this article. The task force shall
62 meet at least quarterly and at the call of the chairperson.

63 (b) A quorum for transacting business shall be a majority of the members of the task force.

64 (c) Any legislative members of the task force shall receive the allowances provided for in
65 Code Section 28-1-8. Citizen members shall receive a daily expense allowance in the
66 amount specified in subsection (b) of Code Section 45-7-21 as well as the mileage or
67 transportation allowance authorized for state employees. Members of the task force who
68 are state officials or state employees, excluding legislative members, shall receive no
69 compensation for their services on the task force, but they shall be reimbursed for expenses
70 incurred by them in the performance of their duties as members of the task force in the
71 same manner as they are reimbursed for expenses in their capacities as state officials or
72 state employees. The funds necessary for the reimbursement of the expenses of state
73 officials and state employees shall come from funds appropriated or otherwise available
74 to their respective departments. All other funds necessary to carry out the provisions of
75 this article shall come from funds appropriated to the Senate and the House of
76 Representatives.

77 50-8-404.

78 (a) The CHANGE Task Force shall:

79 (1) Identify the most important issues facing communities in this state through
80 stakeholder input and public hearings, research, data collection, evaluation, and analysis;

81 (2) Annually prioritize the issue the task force will examine;

82 (3) Define the root cause or causes of such prioritized issue;

83 (4) Brainstorm solutions to the prioritized issue focusing on labor and community
84 development; and

- 85 (5) Recommend solutions, including but not limited to the introduction of or changes to
86 legislation, programs, plans, policies, or strategies, to the public and to civic, community,
87 business, and government leaders, as applicable.
- 88 (b) The CHANGE Task Force shall have the power to:
- 89 (1) Conduct surveys or studies, hold public meetings, collect data, or take any other
90 action the task force deems necessary to fulfill its responsibilities;
- 91 (2) Request and receive data from state agencies to the greatest extent allowed by state
92 and federal law;
- 93 (3) Accept any public or private grants, devises, and bequests;
- 94 (4) Authorize entering into contracts or agreements through the task force's chairperson
95 necessary or incidental to the performance of its duties; and
- 96 (5) Establish rules and procedures for conducting the business of the task force.
- 97 (c) Subject to available funding, the task force shall establish a grant program for the
98 provision of funds to applicants for the purpose of labor and community development to
99 address a prioritized issue facing a community in this state. To the extent possible, grants
100 shall be awarded in a variety of geographic areas of the state.
- 101 (d) The task force shall be authorized to retain the services of attorneys, consultants,
102 subject-matter experts, economists, budget analysts, data analysts, statisticians, and other
103 individuals or organizations as determined appropriate by the task force.
- 104 (e) Beginning July 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, the task force shall submit a detailed
105 report to the Governor and notify members of the General Assembly of the availability of
106 such report in the manner which it deems to be most effective and efficient. The annual
107 report shall contain the task force's findings and recommendations regarding issues facing
108 communities in this state and shall evaluate the impact of task force activities. Prior to
109 dissolution, the task force shall send a final report to the General Assembly summarizing
110 its activities and making its final recommendations. The annual reports and final report

111 shall be published on the department's internet website and shall be made publicly
112 available.

113 50-8-405.

114 This article shall be automatically repealed on June 30, 2029, unless continued in effect by
115 the General Assembly prior to that date."

116 **SECTION 2.**

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

119 **SECTION 3.**

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