

House Bill 719

By: Representatives Scott of the 76th, Hitchens of the 161st, Jackson of the 64th, Glanton of the 75th, Prince of the 127th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 2 of Article 1 of Chapter 3 of Title 8 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to powers of housing generally, so as to require housing authorities to
3 develop and implement policies granting housing preferences to veterans who are homeless
4 individuals; to provide for exemptions; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting
5 laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Part 2 of Article 1 of Chapter 3 of Title 8 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating
9 to powers of housing authorities generally, is amended by adding a new Code section to read
10 as follows:

11 "8-3-37.

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

13 (1) 'Homeless individual' means an individual:

14 (A) Who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;

15 (B) With a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed
16 for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including
17 a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;

18 (C) In a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide
19 temporary living arrangements, including, but not limited to, hotels and motels paid for
20 by a government program for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations,
21 congregate shelters, and transitional housing;

22 (D) Who resides in a shelter or place not meant for human habitation and who is
23 exiting an institution where he or she temporarily resided; and

24 (E) Who:

25 (i) Will imminently lose his or her housing, including housing he or she owns, rents,
26 or lives in without paying rent, is sharing with others, and rooms in hotels or motels

27 not paid for by a governmental program for low-income individuals or by charitable
28 organizations, as evidenced by:

29 (I) A court order resulting from an eviction action that notifies the individual or
30 family that they must leave within 14 days;

31 (II) Such individual having a primary nighttime residence that is a room in a hotel
32 or motel and where he or she lacks the resources necessary to reside there for more
33 than 14 days; or

34 (III) Credible evidence indicating that the owner or renter of such housing will not
35 allow such individual to stay for more than 14 days, and any oral statement from an
36 individual or family seeking homeless assistance that is found to be credible shall
37 be considered credible evidence for purposes of this division;

38 (ii) Has no subsequent residence identified; and

39 (iii) Lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent
40 housing.

41 (2) 'Veteran' means an individual who is a former member of the armed forces of the
42 United States or a state's National Guard.

43 (b) Any housing authority created pursuant to this article shall develop and implement
44 policies granting housing preferences to veterans who are homeless individuals. Such
45 preferences shall be cumulative with any other preference allowed by such housing
46 authority for which the veteran qualifies. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to
47 supersede any federal law or regulation."

48 **SECTION 2.**

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