

Senate Bill 312

By: Senators Thompson of the 5th, Henson of the 41st, James of the 35th, Seay of the 34th,
Tate of the 38th and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to social services, so
2 as to create the New Americans program; to provide a short title; to provide for the
3 identification and contacting of legal immigrants to facilitate applications for naturalization;
4 to provide for definitions; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for
5 other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "New Americans Program Act."

9 **SECTION 2.**

10 Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to social services, is amended
11 by adding a new chapter to read as follows:

12 "CHAPTER 11

13 49-11-1.

14 As used in this chapter, the term 'legal immigrant' means a person who is lawfully admitted
15 for permanent residence within the United States as provided for in 8 U.S.C. Section
16 1101(a)(20) and is a resident of this state as defined by paragraph (7) of Code Section
17 40-2-1.

18 49-11-2.

19 To facilitate the naturalization of legal immigrants, the department shall:

20 (1) Make an affirmative effort to identify and contact legal immigrants for the purpose
21 of facilitating applications for naturalization of such legal immigrants;

- 22 (2) Develop programs to inform legal immigrants regarding how citizenship may be
23 attained;
- 24 (3) Coordinate with existing resources in local governments, schools, colleges and
25 universities, and community organizations;
- 26 (4) Within available funds, ensure that legal immigrants who qualify to apply for
27 naturalization are referred to or otherwise offered naturalization classes;
- 28 (5) Assist legal immigrants in obtaining appropriate test and other exemptions in the
29 naturalization process to the extent permitted under federal law; and
- 30 (6) Report to the General Assembly regarding the progress and barriers of the
31 naturalization facilitation effort provided for by this chapter; it is the intent of the General
32 Assembly that legal immigrants receiving naturalization assistance under this chapter be
33 facilitated in obtaining citizenship within two years of their eligibility to apply."

34

SECTION 3.

35 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.