

Senate Bill 525

By: Senator Harbison of the 15th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 45 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to general provisions regarding eligibility and qualifications for office, so as to
3 provide for legislative findings; to provide that certain municipalities and counties may
4 require law enforcement officers employed by the municipality or county to reside within the
5 municipality or county; to provide for related matters; to provide an effective date; to repeal
6 conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

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

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 The General Assembly of Georgia finds that:

- 10 (1) In many areas of the state in larger cities and counties, citizens feel distant and
11 unconnected from the law enforcement officers who serve their communities;
- 12 (2) There should be more of a sense of community and a connection between law
13 enforcement officers and the communities in which they serve;
- 14 (3) Community oriented policing services have been effective in many areas, where they
15 have been implemented, by uniting the law enforcement officers with the communities in
16 which they serve in a collaborative effort to prevent crime and protect the public;
- 17 (4) It would facilitate a greater connection with the community if law enforcement officers
18 were actual residents of the area in which they serve;
- 19 (5) While requiring residence in the city or county in smaller jurisdictions may not be
20 feasible, such is not the case in larger jurisdictions;
- 21 (6) Residing in the community in which they serve would cause law enforcement officers
22 to engage the public at all levels and be a part of the fabric of the community; and
- 23 (7) Residing in the community in which they serve would also reduce response time to
24 emergency situations that arise in the community, as well as provide an off-duty law
25 enforcement presence in the community to deter crime.

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SECTION 2.

27 Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 45 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
28 general provisions regarding eligibility and qualifications for office, is amended by revising
29 Code Section 45-2-5, relating to municipal or county governments not to require residence
30 as condition of employment, as follows:

31 "45-2-5.

32 (a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this Code section, no ~~No~~ municipal or county
33 government in this state shall require as a condition of employment by such government
34 that applicants for employment as officers or employees, or such officers or employees
35 now or hereafter employed, must reside within the boundaries of the municipality or
36 county.

37 (b) In cities with a population of 50,000 or more persons or counties with a population of
38 150,000 or more persons in the most recent United States decennial census, a municipal or
39 county government may require as a condition of employment or continued employment
40 as a law enforcement officer that law enforcement officers reside within the boundaries of
41 the municipality or county."

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SECTION 3.

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

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SECTION 4.

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