

Senate Bill 532

By: Senator Mullis of the 53rd

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to state government,  
2 so as to provide for the Department of Economic Development, in conjunction with the  
3 Department of Public Health, to develop, implement, and promote the Georgia Safe program  
4 for participant businesses in this state that pledge to abide by certain health and safety  
5 protocols for sanitation, safety, and general operations; to provide for legislative intent; to  
6 provide for applications, fees, and for a certification and decertification process; to provide  
7 for a program website; to provide for adoption of rules and regulations; to provide a short  
8 title; to 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 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Georgia Safe Businesses Act."

12 **SECTION 2.**

13 Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to state government, is amended  
14 in Chapter 7, relating to the Department of Economic Development, by adding a new article  
15 to read as follows:

16 "ARTICLE 11

17 50-7-130.

18 The General Assembly finds that:

19 (1) It is important to provide the public and consumers of goods in this state with  
20 assurance that the businesses in Georgia are adhering to specific health and safety  
21 protocols for sanitation, safety, and general operations.; and

22 (2) The State of Georgia could substantially benefit from creating public awareness of  
23 those businesses in this state that have pledged to comply with clear and specific safety  
24 protocols for the protection of the Georgia citizens, visitors, and consumers.

25 50-7-131.

26 The Department of Economic Development shall, in conjunction with the Department of  
27 Public Health, create and implement a 'Georgia Safe' program, providing a state-wide  
28 certification program for businesses that pledge to follow specific sanitation, customer  
29 safety, and operation guidelines. This program shall:

30 (1) Develop specific guidelines for businesses to follow to become certified as Georgia  
31 Safe businesses. Such guidelines should be developed with input of other state agencies,  
32 local governments, and private business and consumer associations and organizations;

33 (2) Provide a certification process for businesses and provide signage and promotional  
34 materials to participating businesses that certify knowledge of, commitment to training  
35 its employees about, and intention to comply with such guidelines;

36 (3) Establish a participant application form and charge a reasonable fee to any applicant  
37 that covers or substantially defrays the costs of any such program; and

38 (4) Educate the public as to the specific guidelines of the Georgia Safe program and  
39 inform them of which businesses are participating in the program.

40 50-7-132.

41 (a) A business that the Department of Economic Development has certified as a Georgia  
42 Safe business under this article may be decertified by the Department of Economic  
43 Development if it is determined by the Department of Economic Development or the  
44 Department of Public Health that such business is not in compliance with the guidelines  
45 it pledged to follow.

46 (b) Upon receipt of a complaint that a business participating in the Georgia Safe program  
47 is not in compliance with the guidelines, the business that is the subject of such complaint  
48 shall respond to any inquiries by the Department of Economic Development or the  
49 Department of Public Health. Such business, in order to continue its participation in the  
50 Georgia Safe program, shall have the burden of proving that it has at all times been in  
51 compliance with the required guidelines or that it has taken all necessary steps to remedy  
52 any issues of noncompliance.

53 50-7-133.

54 The Department of Economic Development shall create and maintain a website informing  
55 business and the public about the Georgia Safe program.

56 50-7-134.

57 The Department of Economic Development may adopt any rules and regulations that it  
58 finds necessary to properly implement and effectuate the provisions of this article."

59 **SECTION 3.**

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

62 **SECTION 4.**

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