

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas  
2 86th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2007

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 704

4  
5 By: Senator Steele

## For An Act To Be Entitled

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8 AN ACT REQUIRING USE OF RESPECTFUL LANGUAGE IN  
9 THE ARKANSAS CODE REGARDING PERSONS WITH  
10 DISABILITIES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
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## Subtitle

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13 AN ACT REQUIRING USE OF RESPECTFUL  
14 LANGUAGE IN THE ARKANSAS CODE REGARDING  
15 INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.  
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19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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21 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 1, Chapter 2, Subchapter 1 is amended to  
22 add an additional section to read as follows:

23 1-2-124. Respectful language – Disabilities.

24 (a)(1) The General Assembly recognizes that language used in reference  
25 to individuals with disabilities shapes and reflects society's attitudes  
26 towards people with disabilities. Many of the terms currently used demean the  
27 humanity and natural condition of having a disability. Certain terms are  
28 demeaning and create an invisible barrier to inclusion as equal community  
29 members.

30 (2) The General Assembly finds it necessary to clarify preferred  
31 language for new and revised laws by requiring the use of terminology that  
32 puts the person before the disability.

33 (b)(1) In any bill or resolution, the Bureau of Legislative Research  
34 shall avoid all references to:

35 (A) "Disabled";

36 (B) "Developmentally disabled";



- 1                    (C) "Mentally disabled";
- 2                    (D) "Mentally ill";
- 3                    (E) "Mentally retarded";
- 4                    (F) "Handicapped";
- 5                    (G) "Cripple"; and
- 6                    (H) "Crippled".

7                    (2) The Arkansas Code Revision Commission shall change such  
 8 references in any existing statute or resolution as sections including these  
 9 references are republished or otherwise amended by law.

10                   (3) The Bureau of Legislative Research and the Arkansas Code  
 11 Revision Commission shall replace the in appropriate terms in subdivision  
 12 (b)(1) of this section a with the following terms:

- 13                    (A) "Individuals with disabilities";
- 14                    (B) "Individuals with developmental disabilities";
- 15                    (C) "Individuals with mental illness";
- 16                    (D) "Individuals with mental retardation;" and
- 17                    (E) "Individuals with intellectual disabilities".

18                    (c) A statute or resolution is not invalid because it does not comply  
 19 with this section.

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21                    SECTION 2. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General  
 22 Assembly of the State of Arkansas that persons with disabilities and their  
 23 families should be provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute their  
 24 perspectives through their experiences concerning issues relating to  
 25 services, support, and standards that ultimately affect them; that they are  
 26 at risk every day that their needs and aspirations go unheard. Therefore, an  
 27 emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for  
 28 the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become  
 29 effective on:

- 30                    (1) The date of its approval by the Governor;
- 31                    (2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor,  
 32 the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the  
 33 bill; or
- 34                    (3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is  
 35 overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

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