

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

## March 3, 2025

Often, as I sit in a Senate Judiciary Committee in the dark of night, waiting on a bill to be discussed, my mind is inclined to wander across the vast wasteland of my misspent youth, which is littered with stale pizza, cold coffee, highly questionable 1980's fashion choices (e.g., enough perms to make my head a [Superfund site](#) and no less than 32 [sweatshirts with the neck torn out](#)), countless last-minute essays (like this one), "exam-cram-jams", and of course, motion pictures. The multiplex of my brain is an endless chain of celluloid stories about humans, animals and space aliens, just like us, trying to find the meaning of life in one way or another - just like us. Whether a [Holy Grail](#), another [fish](#), a [parental bond](#), a [perfect meal](#) or a [place to raise cattle](#), the human (or fish) spirit is always on the hunt in these shows. Which then brings me back to Judiciary Committee, where I sometimes find myself asking, "What are we looking for this time?" On the surface it appears we are searching for the right place to put a comma (e.g., "Let's eat, Grandpa!" vs. "Let's eat Grandpa!") or to repair a scrivener's error (e.g., "Tobacco Help Line" instead of "Tobasco Help Line" – even if some need "help" with both!), but in truth, lawmaking and governing is – or is supposed to be – about finding a way forward for people, sea creatures ([HB 611](#) – Forever Chemicals), alligators ([HB 561](#)- Okefenokee Preservation), dogs ([HB 177](#) – Pet Protective Orders), cows ([HB 493](#)- Pineywood Cattle), and maybe space aliens ([HR 408](#) – GA Aerospace Day). Which, in the end is why I get up every day to do my job, why lawmakers, policy folks, government employees, nonprofit and many for-profit workers get up to do their jobs, and quite possibly why you are reading this legislative update. So thanks for "reading the book before the movie comes out" and in interest of helping us all find a happy ending, please act ASAP on the action alerts below ([especially the afterschool one!](#)). Then grab yourself some popcorn, [Jujubes](#) and a Coke and check out the trailer for the Amended FY25 budget, preview pending legislation and pick up a ticket to a showstopping Capitol advocacy event!

And remember the words of the incredible Francis Ford Coppola: "... each time I make a movie, I give it everything I have. I think everyone should, and I think everyone should do everything they do that way." And the Oscar goes to.....Y'all!

See you in the front row!

~Polly

## Jump to Section:

[AFY 25 Budget – Senate Changes](#)

[Justice, Public Safety, and School Discipline](#)

[Child Welfare and Protection](#)

[Health & Behavioral Health](#)

[Maternal & Infant Care](#)

[Early Childhood Education & Out-of-School Time](#)

[K-12 Education](#)

[Higher Education](#)

[Environmental Safety](#)

[Shelter & Nutrition](#)

[Miscellaneous](#)

[Advocacy Ask](#)

[Resources You May Find Helpful](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)



## Budget Information

### Amended Fiscal Year 2025 – Senate Version

Key:

Yellow = House Changes to Governor's Version

Turquoise = Senate Changes to House Version

#### Dept. of Administrative Services

- **\$59 Million Added** to payments to Georgia Technology Authority for DCH Integrated Eligibility System (IES) modernization, the DHS \$TARS modernization project, the Board of Dentistry licensing software, and the State Board of Pharmacy licensing software. (Governor had asked for \$104 Million Added, the House reduced to \$23.5 Million, and then Senate increased the amount)
- **\$0 Added** for DCH Integrated Eligibility System (IES) in the amount of \$70,000,000 in state funds to match in the most efficient and effective CMS FMAP for an estimated total project cost of \$218,750,000, with \$35,000,000 in state funds appropriated in this appropriations cycle and an additional \$35,000,000 in state funds appropriated in the next appropriations cycle to match cash flows and actual costs of the project and the federal draw of matching funds. (House added \$35 Million, but Senate eliminated it)
- **\$3.5 Million Added** in Risk Management section of the budget to capitalize the COVID-19 indemnity fund.

#### Dept. of Agriculture

- **\$200 Million Added** plus direction to recognize \$100 Million in funds previously authorized through the Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission in disaster relief assistance to farmers and timber producers impacted by Hurricane Helene (Total funds: \$300 Million) (House added \$150 Million and Senate increased it)

#### Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

##### ***Adult Developmental Disability Services***

- **\$3.6 Million Reduced** to reflect the delayed start date of the Macon Crisis Stabilization and Diagnostic Center for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. (Governor had reduced by \$1.6 Million and Senate further reduced)

##### ***Adult Forensic Services***

- **\$436,920 Reduced** to reflect the delayed start date of a 30-bed jail-based competency restoration program pilot in Dodge County.

##### ***Adult Mental Health Services***

- **\$500,000 Transferred** from the Georgia State Investment and Financing Commission to the DBHDD for the planning, design, and land acquisition of a new behavioral health crisis center in North Metropolitan Atlanta.

##### ***Child and Adolescent Developmental Disabilities***

- \$60,000 Added to assist families in connection and engagement with children with disabilities.

### **Dept. of Community Affairs**

- \$0 Added for the Georgia Fund to support water and wastewater infrastructure development through low-interest loans to local communities. (Governor recommended \$250 Million Added, House increased to \$250.38 Million, but Senate eliminated the full amount.)
- \$65 Million Added for state direct investment in water and sewer infrastructure.
- \$200 Million Added to fund water and wastewater infrastructure development through low-interest loans to local communities not benefiting from funding appropriated in the Amended FY2025 budget for development and construction of additional surface water resources for Georgia's coastal region to meet growth in demand.
- \$500,000 Added for the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District to complete the state's five-year water plan update.
- \$501.7 Million Added to support the development and construction of additional surface water resources for Georgia's coastal region to meet growth in demand.
- \$28 Million Added for grants and loans for rural workforce housing
- \$20 Million Added for grants for rural site development.
- \$25 Million Added in payments to the Georgia One Authority for Hurricane Helene relief efforts (House added \$10 Million and the Senate increased it.)

### **Dept. of Community Health**

#### ***Dept. Administration***

- \$342,563 Added to develop a pilot program to deploy predictive modeling to detect potential fraud, waste, and abuse within the state's Medicaid program. (House had added \$685,125, but Senate decreased it.)

#### ***GA Board of Dentistry***

- \$0 Added plus existing funds (\$83,100) for the implementation of new licensing software to enhance efficiency in licensure review. (Governor recommended to simply use existing funds (\$83,100), then House added \$342,563, but the Senate returned to the Governor's recommendation.)

#### ***GA State Board of Pharmacy***

- \$0 Added plus existing funds (\$192,566) for the implementation of new licensing software to enhance efficiency in licensure review. (Governor recommended to use existing funds (\$192,566) House added \$237,167, but the Senate returned to the Governor's recommendation.)

#### ***Healthcare Access and Improvement***

- \$15.64 Million Added for one-time grant funds for public rural and critical access hospitals included in the Major Disaster Declaration area to assist in financial stabilization and recovery efforts from Hurricane Helene. (House added \$35.64 Million in one-time grant funds for 45 public rural and critical access hospitals to assist in financial stabilization and recovery efforts from Hurricane Helene. The Senate decreased the amount and broadened the budget direction language.)

- \$100,000 Added for one-time grant funds for federally qualified health centers included in the Major Disaster Declaration area to assist in financial stabilization and recovery efforts from Hurricane Helene.
- \$300,000 Added for Side-by-Side Brain Injury Clubhouse.
- \$250,000 Added for school-based health centers.

#### **Medicaid - Aged Blind and Disabled**

- \$38.64 Million Added for growth in Medicaid based on projected utilization. (Governor recommended \$46 Million Added, but the House reduced it.)
- \$11.5 Million Added for new high-cost drugs.
- Budget Direction: Replace \$4,703,106 in state general funds with hospital provider fees.
- Budget Direction: Replace \$6,731,771 in state general funds with nursing home provider fees.

#### **Medicaid - Low Income**

- \$5.84 Million Added for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services requirement that the state provide 12 months of continuous eligibility for children under the age of 19 in Medicaid effective January 1, 2024.
- \$91.44 Million Reduced for Medicaid based on projected utilization. (Governor recommended \$85.33 Million Reduction and the House reduced it further.)
- Budget Direction: Replace \$41,494,598 in state general funds with hospital provider fees.

#### **PeachCare for Kids**

- \$449,825 Added for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services requirement that the state provide 12 months of continuous eligibility for children under the age of 19 in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) effective January 1, 2024.
- \$16.51 Million Reduced for Medicaid based on projected utilization. (Governor recommended \$16.15 Million Reduction and the House reduced it further.)

#### **GA Board of Healthcare Workforce**

- \$120,000 Reduced to reflect savings in the implementation of a Behavioral Health Care Workforce Database.
- \$79,402 Added for two child and adolescent psychiatric fellowship positions.
- \$12.5 Million Added for start-up funds for graduate medical education.
- \$1.5 Million Added for graduate medical education for Colquitt Regional Medical Center.
- \$20 Million Added for naïve graduate medical education programs south of State Route 540, with preference for programs reflecting high post-residency retention in Georgia.
- \$25 Million Added to replace and expand the existing Mercer School of Medicine building.
- \$25 Million Added for a new academic building for the Morehouse School of Medicine.
- \$250,000 Transferred nursing faculty loan repayment program from the Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Undergraduate Medical Education program to the Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Physicians for Rural Areas program to include all loan repayment funds under the same program.

- \$0 Added for one-time scholarship funding for Georgia medical students attending Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) South Georgia. (The House added \$3 Million but the Senate eliminated and directed “Reflect funds for medical education in South Georgia.”)

## **Dept. of Corrections**

### ***Administration***

- \$936,000 Added to develop a ten-year facility and population management plan, including target staffing ratios and classification review of offenders, to determine best future use of existing facilities and prioritize capital and security needs across the system. (House added \$5 Million but the Senate reduced it.)
- \$1.01 Million Added to develop and implement a statewide targeted marketing initiative to recruit and onboard new correctional officers. (Governor wanted \$2.8 Million Added.)
- \$900,000 Added to develop and implement updated training curriculum for correctional officers.

### ***Detention Centers***

- \$2.29 Million Added to add correctional officer positions to improve staff to offender ratios and reflect increased retention.

### ***Health***

- \$3.94 Million Added for the pharmacy services contract to support increased population. (Governor recommended \$9.94 Million Added but Senate reduced it.)
- \$7.89 Million Added for increased physical health contract risk share expenses for outside-the-wire care. (Governor added \$15.79 Million but the Senate reduced it.)

### ***Private Prisons***

- \$2.46 Million Added to add 188 private prison beds at Coffee Correctional Institution and 258 private prison beds at Wheeler Correctional Institution. (Governor wanted \$2.95 Million Added, then the House reduced that amount, and Senate slightly adjusted the total.)
- \$2.3 Million Added to provide for a cost-of-living-adjustment for employees at Coffee (\$712,681), Wheeler (\$856,800), Jenkins (\$450,000), and Riverbend (\$646,696) Correctional Institutions consistent with the state employee cost-of-living-adjustment provided in Fiscal Year 2025. (House added \$2.67 Million. The Senate reduced that amount.)

### ***State Prisons***

- \$28.51 Million Added to add correctional officer positions to improve staff to offender ratios. (Governor wanted \$10.43 Million Added for 300 positions, House increased to \$13.55 Million and Senate increased further.)
- \$30.92 Million Added for project backlog and major maintenance and renovation projects at facilities. (Governor wanted \$37 Million Added, House changed to \$35.92 Million, and Senate reduced further.)
- \$25 Million Added to address critical capital maintenance and repairs. (Governor recommended \$35 Million and the Senate reduced it.)
- \$9.28 Million Added for additional facility maintenance personnel and regional support staff to address critical facility maintenance needs. (Governor recommended \$15.27 Million Added.)

- **\$69.9 Million Added** for sitework and construction of three 126-bed modular correctional units to facilitate offender population movement necessary for capital and security improvements. (Governor recommended \$93.2 Million Added for 4 units, House reduced to 2 units (\$46.6 Million) and Senate added back a unit.)
- **\$34.26 Million Added** for design and construction to replace locking control systems at various facilities.
- **\$1.56 Million Added** for project management resources to oversee capital projects. (Governor recommended \$5.96 Million Added.)
- **\$248,062 Added** for a "tiger team" to support existing GDC locking team to address repairs needed on facility locks, locking controls, and security electronics.
- **\$636,469 Added** for skilled craftsman "tiger teams" focused on HVAC, plumbing, electrical, and fabrication needs in facilities. (Governor recommended \$1.19 Million Added.)
- **\$17.92 Million Added** to prevent contraband through the use of managed access and drone detection systems. (Governor recommended \$35.03 Million and the Senate reduced it.)
- **\$0 Added** to implement an off-site mail screening solution to inhibit contraband and ensure the safety of facility staff. (Governor recommended \$913,248 added and Senate eliminated it.)
- **\$2.26 Million Added** to continue operating the digital forensics unit through a contract. (Governor recommended \$1.47 Million Added.)
- **\$10.49 Million Added** to purchase 2,200 body cameras and 1,800 tasers for increased facility security. (Governor recommended \$7.22 Million Added for 1,460 cameras and 1,300 tasers.)
- **\$2.51 Million Added** for hardware and software licenses for additional officer tablets to improve documentation and information sharing on offender management.
- **\$337,500 Added** to replace 750 Chromebooks for technical education programs.
- **\$662,700 Added** for Technical College System of Georgia vocational education contracts.
- **\$176,326 Added** for the Residential Substance Abuse Treatment program contract.
- **\$2.29 Million Transferred** from State Prisons program to Detention Centers (\$1,572,489) and Transition Centers (\$718,679) programs for ongoing capital maintenance and repairs.
- **\$7.16 Million Added** for renovation, equipment and technology for the creation of an Over Watch and Logistics unit to increase safety of correctional officers and inmates throughout state facilities.
- **\$6.23 Million Added** for data intelligence advanced integration development
- **\$489,666 Added** for retention of experienced correctional officers to address compression beginning April 1, 2025.
- **\$2.77 Million Transferred** from State Prisons program to Offender Management program to recognize virtual court technology efficiencies in the appropriate program.

### ***Transition Centers***

- **\$489,666 Added** to add correctional officer positions to improve staff to offender ratios and reflect increased retention.

### **Dept. of Early Care and Learning**

- **\$100,000 Added** for startup grants of up to \$10,000 per provider to establish additional Summer Food Service Program meal sites in areas with high rates of child food insecurity.

**Pre-K Program**

- **\$7.42 Million Added** to provide salary parity between Pre-K teachers with K12 teachers by moving to the State Board of Education salary schedule.
- *Budget Direction:* Utilize existing funds (\$3,549,690) for development costs of the new Pre-K Management System.

**Dept. of Education****Agricultural Education**

- **\$600,000 Added** for one-time funding for agricultural improvements and facilities.
- **\$492,684 Reduced** for travel expenses and to reflect projected expenditures in personnel

**Central Office**

- **\$300,000 Added** for an adaptive sports program. (House added \$150,000 and Senate doubled it)

**Charter Schools**

- **\$265,501 Transferred** from the Charter Schools program to the State Charter School Commission Administration program pursuant to HB318 (2024 Session). (Governor recommended this transfer but the House disagreed and nixed the transfer. The Senate agreed with the Governor.)
- **\$151,393 Reduced** to reflect projected expenditures in personnel. State General Funds
- **\$330,000 Reduced** to reflect projected operations. State General Funds

**Curriculum Development**

- **\$249,424 Added** for PSAT exams and utilize existing funds for AP exams (House had added \$2.49 Million for AP exams (\$2,244,870) and PSAT exams (\$249,424) due to increased utilization, but the Senate changed it.)
- **\$475,000 Reduced** for an unused supplementary secondary math pilot program. State General Funds
- **\$438,981 Reduced** to reflect projected expenditures in personnel. State General Funds.

**Information Technology Services**

- *Budget Direction:* The Department of Education shall provide information on the progress and purpose of the unappropriated Information Technology Centralization Project to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, the House Budget and Research Office, and the Senate Budget and Evaluation Office by March 30, 2025.

**Quality Basic Education Program (QBE) Equalization Grant**

- **\$24.34 Million Reduced** to reflect a data correction for Gainesville City and Hall County Tax Digests.

**QBE Local Five Mill Share**

- **\$214,870 Reduced** to adjust funds for the Local Five Mill Share for two new State Commission Charter Schools.

**Quality Basic Education Program**

- **\$203,344 Added** for the Completion Special Schools Supplement. (Governor recommended \$1.88 Million Reduction.)
- **\$114.28 Million Added** for a midterm adjustment based on enrollment growth. (Governor recommended \$114.94 Million Added.)
- **\$267,110 Added** for a midterm adjustment to the charter system grant.
- **\$93,202 Added** for a midterm adjustment to the local charter school grant. (Governor recommended \$150,725 Added.)
- **\$2.63 Million Added** for a midterm adjustment to the State Commission Charter School supplement for training and experience. (Governor recommended \$5.69 Million Added, then the House reduced that ask to \$2.92 Million, and the Senate reduced further.)
- **\$12.9 Million Added** for the State Commission Charter School supplement for a total supplement of \$248,482,930.
- **\$0 Added** to reflect a data correction for two locally approved charter schools, Drew Charter School (\$137,098) and The Kindezi School (\$698,068), in the Atlanta Public Schools system. (Governor recommended \$835,166 Added.)
- **\$12.3 Million Added** to reflect growth in the Special Needs Scholarship. (Governor recommended \$12.44 Million Added, then the House increased to \$13.21 Million, and the Senate reduced it.)
- **\$291,068 Added** for a midterm adjustment to the training and experience for Discovery Regional High School.

### **School Security Grants**

- **\$50 Million Added** for security grants in the amount of \$21,635 per school allowing local school systems to enhance security system-wide.
- **Budget Direction:** The Department of Education shall provide an annual report to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, the House Budget and Research Office and the Senate Budget and Evaluation Office regarding the utilization of the \$108,905,000 base funding for school security by Local Education Agencies. Reports shall be provided annually on August 1, beginning August 1, 2025.

### **State Charter School Commission Administration**

- **\$265,501 Transferred** from the Charter Schools program (\$265,501) and provide additional funds (\$344,592) to implement the provisions of HB 318 (2024 Session). (Governor recommended \$610,093 Transferred, the House eliminated the transfer, and then the Senate restored some of it.)

### **Technology/Career Education**

- **\$95,859 Added** for two full-time and two part-time positions and operating costs to sustain Great Promise Partnership operations as a part of work-based learning programs for at-risk students at the Department of Education.

### **Employees' Retirement System of Georgia**



- \$500 Million Added to strategically invest in increasing the funded ratio in order to improve long-term financial viability of the pension system and support state retirees.

### **Governor's Emergency Fund**

- \$113 Million Added for Hurricane Helene emergency response expenses. (Governor recommended \$150 Million Added, then the House reduced to \$145 Million added and then the Senate reduced further.)
- \$82 Million Added for state and local match (25%) of debris removal from local roads and rights of way due to Hurricane Helene.
- \$5 Million Added to provide relief for county facilities complying with federal law.

### **Governor's Emergency management and Homeland Security Agency**

- \$5.75 Million Added for Next Generation 911 and emergency services.
- \$1 Million Added for start-up funds for a school threat assessment tracking system. (House added \$3 Million, but the Senate reduced it.)

### **Governor's Office of Student Achievement**

- \$160,000 Added for startup funds to establish a regional crisis recovery network in partnership with the Southern Regional Education Board to support student mental health in response to significant public safety or natural disaster incidents impacting schools or school systems.

### **Dept. of Human Services**

#### ***Child Support Services***

- \$5.77 Million in one-time funds added to maintain software applications on the Georgia Technology Authority mainframe.
- \$191,428 Added to support the attainment of child support for out of state non-custodial parents. (House added \$185,798 and the Senate adjusted)

#### ***Child Welfare Services***

- \$1.72 Million Added for Court Appointed Special Advocates to replace federal funds deemed ineligible by the Administration for Children and Families.
- \$1.7 Million of federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Added for the special victim's unit to support the rescue of sexually exploited foster children. (The House had added the same amount in state dollars, but the Senate used TANF instead.)

#### ***Departmental Administration***

- \$1.09 Million Eliminated for rent for a multi-service building in Coweta County.
- \$0 Million Added to integrate Pathways and Georgia Access into the Georgia Gateway integrated eligibility system. (Governor recommended using \$1.47 Million added but the Senate directed to use existing funds instead.)

### **Elder Community Living Services**

- \$100,000 Added for Project Healthy Grandparents.

### **Federal Eligibility Benefit Services**

- *Budget Direction:* Utilize existing funds (\$133,763) to enhance Medicaid disability evaluation capacity.
- \$0 Added to provide a \$3,000 additional salary enhancement for eligibility caseworkers effective April 1, 2025. (House recommended \$1.44 Million added but the Senate instead recommended “Consider increasing funds to provide a \$3,000 additional salary enhancement for eligibility caseworkers effective July 1, 2025”)
- \$11.15 Million Reduced for the staffing of 450 case managers, 75 supervisors, and one district manager for Medicaid redeterminations due to the Public Health Emergency (PHE) expiration. The senate also notes an additional Federal Medical Assistance Program reduction of \$21.67)
- \$2.06 Million Reduced for labor and wage data verification services.

### **Out-of-Home Care**

- \$38.59 Million state dollars Added (plus \$5.49 Million federal dollars) for utilization growth and increased costs of care. (House had added \$22.24 Million plus \$3.68 Million. The Senate increased both.)
- \$150,000 Added for transitional housing for children aging out of foster care placements.

### **Out-of-School Care Services**

- \$100,000 Added for out-of-school programs with locations in communities serving at-risk youth.

### **Residential Child Care Licensing**

- *Budget Direction:* Utilize existing funds (\$82,550) for one position and TRAILS electronic records management system enhancements to address new licensure and regulation responsibilities due to the creation of two new Child Caring Institution types in SB 377 (2024 Session) and HB 1201 (2024 Session).

### **Office of the Commissioner of Insurance**

#### **Reinsurance**

- \$10.82 Million Reduced based on projected expenditures. (The House had reduced by \$5.58 Million and the Senate further reduced) FYI, The purpose of this appropriation is to provide affordable healthcare insurance premiums and to operate a healthcare exchange for individuals to review and enroll in healthcare insurance.)

#### **Georgia Bureau of Investigation**

- \$1.25 Million Transferred from the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation for a gang case management system.
- \$200,000 Added for sexual assault centers with more than one location.
- \$165,466 Added for the start-up cost for two crime scene technical leaders and three digital forensic investigators. (Governor recommended \$221,866 Added.)
- \$96,472 Added for the start-up cost to establish a Strategic Threat Assessment Group responsible for addressing threats to public officials, investigating homeland security matters, and partnering with critical infrastructure partners to provide support during major events occurring in the state. (Governor recommended \$120,472 Added.)

- \$490,700 Added to replace federal funds with state funds for three human trafficking positions.
- \$0 Added for continued operation of the End Human Trafficking Georgia 24/7 Hotline. (Governor recommended \$101,076 Added.)

## **Dept. of Juvenile Justice**

### ***Community Service***

- \$0 Added for youth competency beds to address bed utilization costs. (House added \$348,298 but the Senate directed to use existing state funds)
- \$1.85 Million Reduced to align budget with expenditures.

### ***Secure Confinement (Residential Youth Detention Centers – RYDCs)***

- \$3 Million Transferred from Community Service program to Secure Detention (RYDCs) program to align budget with expenditures.
- \$681,688 Added to reflect increased retention of juvenile correctional officers.

## **Dept. Of Law**

- \$187,036 Added for three positions to expand the Human Trafficking Unit to the Augusta regions effective April 1, 2025. (Governor recommended \$187,036 Added for 6 positions in Macon and Augusta, then the House reduced to 3 positions (\$93,518), but the Senate returned to 6 positions.)

## **Public Defender Council**

- \$0 Added for the Juvenile Conflict Defender Division manager position. (Governor Recommended \$226,517 Added.)

## **Dept. of Natural Resources**

- \$8.05 Million Added for outdoor recreation. State General Funds (House added \$5.88 Million and Senate increased that.)
- \$1.5 Million Added for adaptive equipment and inclusive playgrounds for children with special needs.

## **Dept. of Public Health**

### ***Adolescent and Adult Health Promotion***

- \$250,000 Added for a campaign to educate Georgians on the signs and symptoms of colorectal cancer.
- \$0 Added for a campaign to educate Georgians on the adverse effects of vaping. (House had added \$250,000 but the Senate eliminated it.)

### ***Epidemiology***

- \$270,000 Added to study the impacts of social media on mental health for children in Georgia.

### ***Infant and Child Essential Health Promotion***

- \$437,000 Added for the cost of mailing Low THC Oil Patient registry cards pursuant to SB 495 (2024 Session).

### ***Public Health Formula Grants to Counties***

- \$0 Added one-time funds for health department equipment. (House added \$500,000 but the Senate eliminated it.)

### **Dept. of Public Safety**

#### ***Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council***

- \$325,000 Added to provide mandatory training for newly elected sheriffs. (Governor recommended \$246,000 Added.)

#### ***Georgia Public Safety Training Center***

- \$114,419 Added for additional training for jailers in accordance with SB 37 (2024 Session). (Governor recommended \$168,853 Added.)
- \$258,328 Added for two training instructors and supplies for increased basic law enforcement training. (Governor recommended \$316,996 Added.)

#### ***Office of Highway Safety: Georgia Driver's Education Commission***

- \$522,437 Added for driver's education and training in accordance with FY 2023 Joshua's Law Collections.

### **University System of Georgia Board of Regents**

#### ***Public Libraries***

- \$3.29 Million Added for one-time funding to increase the materials grant for public library systems from \$0.70 to \$1.00 per capita.

#### ***Public Service/Special Funding Initiatives***

- \$500,000 Removed in unutilized one-time funds for rural community projects at the Center for Rural Prosperity and Innovation.
- \$0 Added for dental clinical training. (House added \$577,681 but the Senate eliminated it.)
- \$70,337 Added for Georgia Youth Science and Technology Center.

#### ***Regents Central Office***

- \$75,000 Added to explore alternative college admissions tests.

#### ***Teaching***

- \$17.75 Million Added to reflect formula correction for FY 2025 cost-of-living adjustment in Teaching.

### **Dept. of Revenue**

- *Budget Direction:* Utilize \$1,000,000,000 in prior year undesignated state funds surplus to provide a one-time additional refund for tax year 2024 of \$250.00 for single filers, \$375.00 for head of household filers, and \$500.00 for married filing jointly.

### **Georgia Student Finance Commission**

#### ***Dual Enrollment***

- \$21.29 Million Added to meet projected enrollment.

#### ***Engineer Scholarship***

- \$400,000 Reduced with direction to utilize surplus funds to meet the projected need.

#### **Georgia Military College Scholarship**

- \$500,000 Reduced with direction to utilize surplus funds to meet the projected need.

#### **HERO Scholarship**

- \$330,000 Reduced funds and surplus funds used instead to meet the projected need.

#### **HOPE Grant**

- \$2 Million Added to meet projected enrollment.

#### **HOPE Scholarships - Public Schools**

- \$6.1 Million Added to meet projected enrollment.

#### **Inclusive Postsecondary Education (IPSE) Grant**

- \$300,000 Reduced funds and surplus funds used instead to meet the projected need.

#### **Public Safety Memorial grants**

- \$540,000 Replaced funds and surplus funds used instead to meet the projected need.

#### **North Georgia Military College Scholarship Grants**

- \$500,000 Reduced with direction to utilize surplus funds to meet the projected need.

#### **North Georgia ROTC Grants**

- \$1 Million Reduced with direction to utilize surplus funds to meet the projected need.

#### **Service Cancelable Loans**

- \$600,000 Reduced with direction to utilize surplus funds to meet the projected need.

#### **Tuition Equalization Grants**

- \$2.11 Million Reduced with direction to utilize surplus funds to meet the projected need.

### **Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission – Capital Projects Fund**

- \$17.95 Million Added for capital projects statewide. (Governor recommended \$70 Million Added, then House reduced to \$47.95 Million, and Senate reduced further.)
- \$500,000 Transferred for planning, design, and land acquisition for a new behavioral health crisis center in North Metropolitan Atlanta to the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.
- \$30 Million Added for GDC for design of new prison, statewide. (Governor recommended \$40 Million Added)
- \$3 Million Added for TCSG for One College and Career Academy.
- \$6.57 Million Added for GaDOE for Georgia School for the Deaf auditorium renovation and addition, Cave Spring, Floyd County.
- \$0 Added for debt defeasance to reflect the use of AFY 2024 and FY 2025 debt defeasance funds for Hurricane Helene relief. (Governor recommended \$100 Million Added)

- *Budget Direction:* Reflect the redirection of \$100,000,000 in funds appropriated for debt defeasance to be used to provide disaster relief financial support for farmers and debris cleanup for timber producers impacted by Hurricane Helene as approved by the Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission on November 1, 2024.
- **Budget Direction: Redirect funds (\$35,837,500) from an unrealized construction project and utilize for one-time funding for design, construction, and equipment for a recovery center for victims of human trafficking. (Governor had recommended \$35.84 Million Added, but the Senate eliminated it.) [Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission]**



## Justice, Public Safety, & School Discipline

**HB 123** (Werkheiser- 157th) In criminal cases involving a capital offense for which the death penalty is sought, the bill allows an accused person to file a pretrial notice of intent to raise a claim of intellectual disability. Such notice shall state that the accused has intellectual disability.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 138** (Neal-79th) Adds de-escalation techniques and training that include scenario-based training and methods to training for all POST certified peace officers.

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 194** (Byrd-20th) Revises standards of self-defense or self-defense of self or others to exclude the use or threat of force against a law enforcement officer in a public location.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

**HB 214** (Bell-75th) Prohibits creative or artistic expression (i.e., the expression or application of creativity or imagination in the production or arrangement of forms, sounds, words, movements, or symbols, including music, dance, performance art, visual art, poetry, literature, film, and other such objects or media) as admissible evidence at trial.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

**HB 237** (Carpenter-4th) Prohibits the use of a defendant's creative or artistic expression as evidence in a criminal trial unless the prosecution clearly proves its relevance through a strict legal process. Courts must first determine in a separate hearing that the defendant intended the work to be taken literally, that it has a strong factual link to the alleged crime, and that it is supported by additional admissible evidence. If admitted, courts must minimize prejudice through redactions, jury instructions, and the least biased presentation of the material.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**[HB 301](#)** (Gilliard-162nd) “Time Served Act of 2025” - Automatically restricts the criminal history of individuals convicted in a single incident who have completed their sentence and remained conviction-free for at least five years. This excludes serious violent felonies, sexual offenses, human trafficking, crimes against disabled or elderly individuals, sexual exploitation of minors, and offenses against law enforcement. The bill also requires the parole board to issue a certificate of employability if the parolee earns a high school equivalency diploma or higher, has no major disciplinary violations in the past year, and meets the board’s job skills assessment criteria.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil

**[HB 368](#)** (Sharper-177th) Requires law enforcement officers to inform drivers of the reason for a traffic stop and the suspected violation, provided the driver first presents a valid license.

STATUS: House Motor Vehicles Committee

**[HB 390](#)** (Fleming-114th) “HALO Act” - Establishes a misdemeanor penalty for anyone who impedes, interferes with, threatens, or harasses a first responder performing their duties.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**[HB 458](#)** (Cummings-39th) Revises the provision to classify fentanyl as a controlled substance, making it illegal to sell, manufacture, distribute, transport into the state, or possess.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

**[HB 464](#)** (Bell-75th) Grants immunity protections to victims of aggravated assault, aggravated battery, female genital mutilation, kidnapping, rape, aggravated sodomy, aggravated sexual battery, and armed robbery. Additionally, victims will not face penalties for violating a permanent or temporary protective order, restraining order, pretrial release, probation, or parole conditions due to a drug-related offense

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

**[HB 496](#)** (Clark-108th) Prohibits law enforcement to stop, search or request to search, a person or motor vehicle based solely on the scent of marijuana, cannabis, or hemp.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

[HB 497](#) (Clark-108th) Prohibits any sheriff, jailer, or other officer to require any person imprisoned in a penal institution to appear in any court for trial dressed in the uniform or dress of a prisoner or inmate, or in any uniform or apparel other than ordinary civilian dress, or with a shaved or clipped head by or under the direction or requirement of any sheriff, jailer, or other officer, unless the head was shaved or clipped while such person was serving a term of imprisonment for the commission of a crime.

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee

[HB 627](#) (Persinger-119th) Expands crimes for which 13 through 16 year olds may be tried as adults to include aggravated assault with a firearm (against anyone as opposed to just against a public safety officer) and terroristic threats or acts if the threat or act involves or is against a public or private school, transportation furnished by a school, a school function, or a person who, at the time of the threat or act, is physically present in a public or private school, transportation furnished by a school.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

[HB 673](#) (Lim-98th) Allows certain minor offenders adjudicated as adults to be permitted first offender treatment. The bill also provides for retroactive first offender treatment under certain circumstances for offenders who were adjudicated as minors previously. (Georgia's First Offender Act allows some first-time offenders to avoid a conviction by completing certain requirements. Note that it is an alternative to a conviction on the offender's record, rather than a substitute for punishment.)

STATUS: House Judiciary Juvenile Committee

[HB 675](#) (Cox-28th) Expands the definition of terrorism to include a person who intends to intimidate, injure, or coerce a civilian population, influence the policy of government intimidation, or affect the conduct of government through mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping. Increases the offense of terrorism to include imprisonment for no more than 20 years and/or a fine of not more than \$100,000.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

[SB 25](#) (McLaurin-14th) Allows offenders who have either maxed out their performance incentive credits or are serving life sentences and up for parole consideration to request a video conference with the parole board at least 30 days before their tentative parole date. During this meeting, they can present information regarding their offense, rehabilitation efforts, community support, and the impact of their release. Additionally, offenders can request written findings explaining the board's decision, including input from the victim's side and prosecution. If three board members tentatively deny parole, the remaining two members have 14 days to review and discuss before the decision is finalized.

STATUS: Senate Public Safety Committee



**SB 29** (Williams-25th) Requires the collection of DNA samples of individuals arrested for the commission of a felony at the time such individuals are booked or otherwise processed by a detention facility. This includes children who are under the age of 17 who have allegedly committed a felony. A detention facility is defined as "any place of confinement for juvenile or adult individuals accused of, convicted of, or adjudicated for violating a law of this state or an ordinance of a political subdivision of this state."

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill will be on the floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**SB 32** (Williams-25th) Increases the sentence for any person who willingly resists, obstructs, or opposes any law enforcement officer by committing violence to such officer from 3-15 years to 10-20 years.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**SB 61** (Dolezal-27th) Revises and adds to the set of offenses for which youth ages 13 to 17 are tried and sentenced as adults. The bill would require that, in addition to the existing nine offenses, youth alleged to have committed any of the 23 following offenses would be treated the same as adult criminal defendants: aggravated assault with a firearm, terroristic threats or acts upon a school, attempt to commit or conspiracy to commit murder, attempt or conspiracy to commit rape, attempt or conspiracy to commit aggravated sodomy, attempt or conspiracy to commit aggravated child molestation, attempt or conspiracy to commit aggravated sexual battery, attempt or conspiracy to commit armed robbery with a firearm, attempt or conspiracy to commit aggravated assault with a firearm, attempt or conspiracy to commit aggravated battery upon a public safety officer, and attempt or conspiracy to commit a terroristic threat or act upon a school. Cases involving the added offenses may be transferred to the juvenile court by the superior court after indictment for further proceedings. The bill also amends O.C.G.A. 20-2-67 to require any student in grade 6 or higher to authorize the release of records pertaining to any class A or class B designated felony acts subject to a misdemeanor punishable by \$1,000 fine or 30 days imprisonment, community service, or a combination. Further, the bill amends O.C.G.A. 20-2-701 to require courts and state child-serving agencies to notify the local school system whenever a child is subject to electronic monitoring, an intensive supervision program, or home confinement program and authorizes the school to use the information for the purpose of school safety. A new Code Section 20-2-1181.1 is added to create the offenses of a terroristic threat of a school and a terroristic act upon a school and provide for punishment of such offenses as a misdemeanor unless the threat suggested death of a person, which is a felony punishable by \$,1000 fine or imprisonment for 1-5 years, or both. If a person suffers a serious physical injury as a result of the threat, the felony punishment increases to a fine of \$250,000 and 5-40 years imprisonment, or both. Finally, O.C.G.A. 20-2-1185, relating to school safety plans and drills, is amended to require an annual site threat assessment of school buildings, facilities, and campuses by law enforcement, appropriate government agency, or certified individual or entity, to be included in the school safety plan submitted to the GaDOE. (A huge thank you to Barton Child Law and Policy Center for this excellent summary.)

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**[SB 116](#)** (Bearden-30th) Requires DNA collection from individuals charged with a misdemeanor or felony who are subject to an immigration detainer notice and expands the definition of detention facilities to include jails and municipal detention facilities.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Public Safety Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**[SB 147](#)** (Rhett-33rd) Requires the Department of Corrections to provide individuals released from custody with essential documents, such as vital records, to support post-release employment and to assist in obtaining identification cards or driver's licenses.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Public Safety Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**[SB 159](#)** (Jackson-41st) Requires the accused to submit a pretrial notice of intent stating whether they have an intellectual disability; if the court confirms the diagnosis, the state will not pursue the death penalty. Beginning July 1, 2025, if a jury finds the defendant guilty, the defendant may present evidence of an intellectual disability. The jury's verdict will include a separate finding specifying either the presence or absence of an intellectual disability.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**[SB 160](#)** (Kirkpatrick-32nd) Requires the installation of an intelligent speed assistance device upon a second conviction for stunt driving. The device will limit the vehicle's speed to a maximum of 70 miles per hour and must be installed within 10 days of issuance for a minimum of three months. The offender is responsible for installation costs. Failure to install the device will result in a misdemeanor charge.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Public Safety Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**[SB 185](#)** (Robertson-29th) Prohibits the use of state funds or resources for sex reassignment surgeries, hormone replacement therapies, and cosmetic procedures intended to alter the appearance of primary or secondary sexual characteristics of inmates in state correctional facilities.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Public Safety Committee. The bill will be on the floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**[SB 286](#)** (James-28th) Permits county and municipal jails to provide substance abuse and mental health treatment programs for inmates and applicants from drug court divisions and mental health court divisions. The bill also establishes procedures for voluntary admission into such programs.

STATUS: Senate Public Safety Committee



## Child Welfare & Protection

- HB 57** (Cameron-1st) Expands the definition of incest to include step-grandparents and step-grandchildren.
- STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee
- HB 136** (Newton-127th) Expands tax credits to qualified organizations for expenses relating to wrap around services for justice involved youth and expands the wraparound services that are qualified expenditures. The bill also provides for such tax credits to be used by certain insurance companies against insurance premium tax liability.
- STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Finance Committee.
- HB 171** (Thomas-21st) Prohibits distribution of computer-generated obscene material depicting a child and provides penalties and probation for such obscenities.
- STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee.
- HB 191** (Moore-91st) Permits the court to deliver a citation by certified mail, directly to the party's place of employment, known relative, or by any other reasonable means to either party if found to be avoiding delaying a hearing.
- STATUS: House Judiciary Committee
- HB 253** (Clark-100th) "Ethan's Law" - Requires that any judge hearing the issue of custody for a child appoint a licensed counselor to determine the best interest of the child in any unification or reunification treatments, programs, or services with the child's parent or legal guardian. Moreover, no judge shall order a family reunification or unification that result or require the following: 1. Violation of a court order requiring that a child have no contact with his or her parent or legal guardian, 2. An overnight, out-of-state, or multi day stay, 3. A transfer of physical or legal custody of the child, 4. The use of private youth transporters or private transportation agents engaged in the use of force, the threat of force, physical obstruction, acutely distressing circumstances, or circumstances that place the safety of the child at risk; or 5. A 90 day or more no-contact period between the child and his or her parent or legal guardian.
- STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Children & Families Committee.

**HB 256** (Wiedower-121st) Adds fictive kin and relative caregivers to the Foster Parents Bill of Rights. The bill also allows the right to a fair, timely, and impartial investigation of licensing complaints, including due process and the option to have a certified volunteer advocate present, with all related communications kept confidential; a request for mediation or an administrative review of licensing decisions and must receive clear explanations of any corrective action plans citing specific licensing standards; a certified volunteer advocate present at all meetings with the department, protection from retaliation for filing complaints, and the ability to seek independent legal counsel regarding their status.

STATUS: House Judiciary Juvenile Committee

**HB 325** (Martinez-11th) A member of the organized militia who alleges stalking by another member may file a verified petition for a protective order under Georgia Code Section 16-5-90. Jurisdiction exists if there is a connection between the alleged stalking and the militia, with a rebuttable presumption if either party is on state active duty or in Title 32 status during the alleged conduct. The petitioner files the request through their commander, who must forward it to the Office of the State Judge Advocate within 24 hours, and the respondent's commander serves the petition. A military judge may issue a temporary ex parte order if probable cause exists, and a hearing takes place within 10 to 45 days to determine whether to grant a temporary or permanent protective order. The order applies statewide and remains in effect unless the respondent leaves the militia, though it continues during active U.S. military service; appeals follow the same process as domestic relations cases.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Judiciary Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 421** (Taylor-173rd) Establishes the offense of traveling into the state to meet a minor for indecent purposes.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

**HB 430** (Sainz-180th) Authorizes the Georgia Bureau of Investigation to review the convictions of nonresidents relocating to Georgia from another state, territory, or jurisdiction to determine if registration on the state's sexual offender registry is required. To petition for exemption from the registration requirement, individuals must file a petition with both the sheriff and the chief superior judge of their intended county of residence.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 433** (Ballinger-23rd) Authorizes the Department of Human Services to access restricted and sealed information to conduct employee oversight in certain circumstances.

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 434** (Ballinger-23rd) Moves from OCGA Title 19 to OCGA Title 16 provisions related to adoption services as described here: Makes it unlawful for any unauthorized person, organization, or entity to advertise adoption services unless they are a licensed child-placing agency, a qualified adoptive parent with an approved home study, or an attorney representing such a parent. It explicitly prohibits offering or accepting financial inducements to persuade a biological parent to relinquish a child, except for allowable payments covering medical, legal, and reasonable living expenses for the birth mother. Violations, including fraudulently obtaining adoption-related funds or making false pregnancy claims for financial benefit, are classified as felonies, punishable by fines up to \$10,000 and imprisonment from one to ten years, with potential restitution to victims. The bill also allows civil lawsuits for damages, including treble damages and attorney's fees, for those harmed by violations. Certain personal communications regarding adoption, particularly when facilitated by a licensed attorney, are exempt from these restrictions.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Judiciary Juvenile Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 435** (Ballinger-23rd) Expands statute to include employees of the Division of Family & Children Services in the exclusions protects the procurement of sexual exploitation of children when completed in the capacity of their official job duties.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Judiciary Juvenile Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 465** (Gilliard-162nd) Provides for the Autism Missing Person Alert System Act whereby certain entities must cooperate in the development of the alert system, with an emphasis on the search of waterways in locating missing individuals with autism spectrum disorder.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Human Relations & Aging Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 490** (Bazemore-69th) Requires for employees at hotels to complete a human trafficking training within six months of being employed by a hotel during a two-calendar year period.

STATUS: House Economic Development & Tourism Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 500** (Smith-18th) Increases the monthly maximum benefit for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance to 40% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) based on family size, with a monthly maximum of up to 75% of that amount per family. Extends the lifetime limit from 48 months to 60 months. The bill also allows a family to have up to \$5000 in assets/savings and to own one vehicle, which is not counted as an asset provided it is used for work, training, or education preparatory to employment or job search. The bill also allows a \$4,650.00 exclusion of the equity value of one additional vehicle when computing assets.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Public & Community Health Committee. The bill moves on to House Rules Committee.

**HB 527** (Tran-80th) Revises the membership and certain parameters fo the state child abuse protocol.

STATUS: House Judiciary Juvenile Committee

**HB 552** (Kahaian-81st) Clarifies definitions related to child neglect and independent activities under Georgia's juvenile code. Specifies that neglect does not include allowing a child to engage in independent activities if the child is deemed mature enough to do so safely. This bill outlines that independent activities of a child may include: travel independently to and from school by walking, running, bicycling, public transit, or other means, travel independently to and from nearby commercial or recreational facilities, engage independently in outdoor play, remain in a vehicle without an adult present if the circumstances do not create imminent risk of harm to the child, including but not limited to if the temperature inside the vehicle is not and will not become dangerously hot or cold or the child has the capacity and ability to open the door or windows of the vehicle in case of need, remains at home without an adult present as long as the parent or guardian returns home same day by ensuring the child has the capacity and ability to contact the parent guardian or responsible adult rapidly when needed, makes provisions for the child to be cared for and protected in the event of any reasonably foreseeable emergency and in the event the child is left unsupervised outside the home without an adult present of the parent or guardian is following relevant guidelines as published by the Division of Family and Children Services of the Department of Human Services. Further, this bill prevents any parent or guardian from being detained, arrested, investigated, or charged criminally, under the gross deviation standard of child cruelty when the parent acts on good faith in the care for their child.

STATUS: House Judiciary Juvenile Committee

**HB 582** (Gunter-8th) Provides for defendants to support a justification defense by offering evidence of family violence, dating violence, or child abuse committed by the alleged victim, and provides for petitions for the opportunity to present such evidence. The bill also revises provisions for the defense of coercion and to provide for the application of such defense in all criminal cases. It also provides for resentencing for certain murder convictions and provides a privilege for participation in victim centered programs and victim-offender dialogues.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 626** (Lupton-83rd) Extends the evidence retention period from 12 months to 30 years for cases where the victim chooses not to immediately report a sexual assault.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 636** (McQueen-61st) Reduces the penalty for prostitution from a misdemeanor to a system of fines. A first offense carries a \$75 fine, while second and subsequent offenses incur a \$100 fine. All fines will be made available to the Department of Human Services and directed to the Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund Commission.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

**HB 639** (Wiedower-121st) Provides that a juvenile court may direct that reasonable efforts to eliminate the need for placement of an alleged dependent child shall not be required and shall cease if the court determines by clear and convincing evidence and makes written findings of fact that a parent of such child has been convicted of murder or murder in the second degree of another one of their children. The bill adds requirements for DFCS and the court pertaining to written findings, revises requirements for non-reunification hearings and requires the court to consider the child's attachments when ruling on a petition to terminate parental rights.

STATUS: House Judiciary Juvenile Committee

**HB 671** (Rice-139th) Provides for a right of action against any person who knowingly or negligently engages in restricted sexual conduct in the presence of a minor or who knowingly or negligently allows, permits, encourages, or requires a minor to be present while another engages in sexually explicit conduct. The bill also gives the Department of Revenue full power and authority to suspend or revoke the license of any hotel or food service establishment or any establishment holding a license for the sale of alcohol when it is determined that such establishment admitted a minor to be present while another engaged in sexually explicit conduct or restricted sexual conduct.

STATUS: House Judiciary Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HR 428** (Reese-140th) Creates the House Study Committee on the Affordability and Accessibility of Georgia's Legitimation Process.

STATUS: House Judiciary Committee

**SB 8** (Kirkpatrick-32nd) Adds juvenile court judges to the list of judges who may issue a warrant for the arrest of any offender against the penal laws, based on probable cause either on the judge's own knowledge or on the information of others given to the judge or officer under oath.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Recommended Do Pass by the House Judiciary Juvenile Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**SB 9** (Albers-56th) Prohibits distribution of computer-generated obscene material depicting a child and provides penalties and probation for such obscenities.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill moves on to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 27** (Albers-56th) Establishes the offense of 'doxing' by criminalizing the malicious publication of private information online to intimidate, harass, or harm someone. Offenders face a misdemeanor for first-time offenses and a felony (1-10 years imprisonment) for serious harm, repeat offenses, or if an adult targets a minor. Victims can seek protective orders and sue for damages, including legal fees. Legal action can be filed where the communication originated, was received, or where the victim lives.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**SB 42** (Hatchett-50th) Eliminates ambiguity in sentencing laws for the offenses of prostitution, keeping a place of prostitution, pimping, and pandering. The rule of lenity, which now could allow for lighter sentencing, will no longer be an option for traffickers of minors.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee.

**SB 85** (Brass-6th) “Georgia Foster Care Scholarship Act” - Establishes a financial aid program to support foster youth pursuing postsecondary education. Administered by the Georgia Student Finance Authority (GSFA), the scholarship provides grants covering tuition, room, board, meal plans, and books for eligible students attending approved institutions. To qualify, students must be under 26 years old, currently or formerly in foster care, an independent living program, or an adoption program, and either enrolled or accepted into an eligible institution within three years of completing high school. The GSFA contracts with a nonprofit grant coordinating organization to ensure 100% of appropriated funds are allocated to student grants. Eligible students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), maintain good academic standing, and comply with program regulations. The total award amount is adjusted based on other federal and state aid received. Institutions receiving funds must ensure proper certification of student eligibility and refunds for unused scholarships, with penalties for misreporting. The bill includes audits and compliance measures to prevent fraud and misrepresentation.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Higher Education Committee. The bill will be on the floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**SB 92** (Merritt-9th) “Georgia Red Flag Protective Order Act” - Establishes a process for issuing temporary and long-term risk protection orders to restrict firearm possession by individuals deemed dangerous to themselves or others. A petitioner must provide the respondent’s name and address and submit an affidavit under oath, detailing statements or actions that demonstrate a significant risk. A superior court hearing must be held within 14 days of issuing a temporary order. If the court finds clear and convincing evidence that the respondent poses a danger, it may issue a risk protection order for up to 12 months. The order must include the reason for issuance, start and end dates, any required mental health or chemical dependency evaluations, and instructions for surrendering all firearms and ammunition to law enforcement. It also prohibits the respondent from possessing, purchasing, or attempting to acquire firearms or ammunition while the order is in effect. The respondent has the right to request a hearing to challenge the order and may request another hearing after any extension. The Administrative Office of the Courts will develop standardized petition forms, instructions, and training materials for court staff to ensure consistent implementation of the process.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**SB 98** (Cowsert-46th) Revises the definition of a county conservator and county guardian to a general county conservator. Provides clarity that if one individual serves as a both conservator and county guardian in the same matter, the individual is responsible for giving both separate bonds with good security.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to Judiciary Juvenile Committee.



**SB 100** (Robertson-29th) “Andee's Law” - Allows individuals born in Georgia who are at least 18 years old and had a new birth certificate issued due to adoption, legitimation, or paternity determination to request a copy of their original birth certificate. The copy will be marked as unofficial and cannot be used for legal purposes. If the individual is deceased, their parent, sibling, or descendant may request the original birth certificate.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Children & Families Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 110** (Anavitarte-31st) Clarifies definitions related to child neglect and independent activities under Georgia’s juvenile code. Defines blatant disregard as the conscious exposure of a child to an obvious and imminent risk of harm without precautionary measures. Specifies that neglect does not include allowing a child to engage in reasonable independent activities if the child is deemed mature enough to do so safely. The bill defines "independent activity" as the activity of a child who is not under the direct supervision of a legal custodian or person acting in loco parentis and shall include, but shall not be limited to, playing indoors or outdoors alone or with other children; walking to or from school; running errands; or traveling to local commercial or recreational facilities. Additionally, it amends reckless conduct laws to ensure that allowing a child to engage in independent activities does not constitute a criminal offense unless it meets the legal definition of neglect.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Children & Families Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 211** (James-28th) Creates and implements a statewide alert system of behalf of missing persons (adults) with autism spectrum disorder.

STATUS: Senate Public Safety Committee

**SB 245** (Hodges-3rd) Includes grandparents within the category of persons who may seek to revoke or amend an existing grandparent visitation order.

STATUS: Senate Children & Families Committee

**SB 259** (Brass-6th) Grants physicians the right to seek an independent medical evaluation or specialty consultation when a child is in temporary protective custody. Requires them to inform DFCS of their findings, including whether a physical examination was performed, and which medical records were reviewed. The bill also allows any parent or legal guardian of a child who is taken into temporary protective custody to have the right to obtain an independent medical evaluation or pediatric specialty consultation of such child at his or her own expense unless prohibited by court order.

STATUS: Senate Children & Families Committee

**SB 296** (Avaviarte-31st) Establishes the offense of operating a school bus while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The penalty includes imprisonment for no less than one year and no more than five years, a fine between \$1,000 and \$5,000, or both. If convicted of causing an accident while operating a school bus and endangering its occupants, the first 90 days of any imprisonment cannot be suspended, probated, deferred, or withheld by the sentencing court.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**SR 310** (Kirkpatrick-32nd) Creates the Senate Study Committee on Additional Services and Resources for Transition Youth Age Youth in Foster Care.

STATUS: Senate Hopper



## Health & Behavioral Health

**HB 20** (Scott-76th) Requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules requiring all certificated public school personnel to receive annual training in depression and suicide awareness and prevention. The bill also establishes the Student Mental Health Screenings Grant Program, and requires GaDOE to develop a model policy for student depression and suicide awareness, plus help schools establish certain healthcare related partnerships to conduct mental health screenings.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 26** (Scott-76th) Requires DBHDD to establish a school-linked behavioral health grant program to identify early interventions in K-12 schools for students that may have mental health or substance use disorders.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 59** (Glaize-67th) Reduces the legal counselor ratio from 1 counselor to 450 students to 1 counselor to 250 students.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 81** (Ballard-147th) "Interstate Compact for School Psychologists" - Joins Georgia to state pathway that allows school psychologist to obtain and practice in schools in any member state. If passed, the Act would become effective once 7 states are in the compact.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Education and Youth Committee.

**HB 83** (Au-50th) Increases the taxes on packs of cigarettes from 37¢ to 57¢ per pack.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee

- HB 84** (Au-50th) Increases the taxes on packs of vapor products from 7% of the wholesale price to 15%.
- STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee
- HB 87** (Clark-100th) Requires health insurance benefits to cover medically necessary orthotic devices and prosthetic devices for affected persons during a three-year period. Additionally, healthcare insurance beneficiaries are to be provided with at least two distinct healthcare professionals under their coverage for each issuance and renewal of their coverage. Allows health insurers to deny coverage for the replacement or repair of an orthotic or prosthetic device if the damage or loss is due to misuse, malicious damage, gross neglect, loss, or theft.
- STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Health Committee. The Bill moves on to Rules Committee.
- HB 96** (Park-107th) Increases the taxes on packs of cigarettes from 37¢ to \$1.37 per pack.
- STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee
- HB 97** (Park-107th) Provides the expansion of Medicaid for low-income individuals making less than 138% of the (FPL).
- STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee
- HB 100** (Douglas-78th) Requires that health insurers cost share the price of prescription drugs with enrollees, covering at least 80% of the rebates they receive or anticipate receiving for each drug.
- STATUS: House Insurance Committee
- HB 101** (Douglas-78th) Requires for the Board of Community Health to report annually the amount of prescription drug rebates and related concessions applied to the premium reductions for state health benefits plan participants.
- STATUS: House Insurance Committee
- HB 102** (Cooper-45th) Facilitates the establishment of the Georgia Quality Reporting Project, which would gauge the quality of treatment for opioid use disorder and healthcare overall, improve the quality of care, reduce the overall cost of medical treatment, and foster clinical research.
- STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee
- HB 109** (Bonner-73rd) Provides for a five-year pilot program for the purpose of creating emergency psychiatric assessment, treatment, and healing units or EmPATH units in hospitals.
- STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 124** (Scoggins-14th) Requires the State Health Benefits Plan to cover healthcare services for pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal infection (PANDAS) and pediatric acute onset neuropsychiatric syndrome (PANS) in accordance with nationally recognized clinical practice guidelines.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Insurance & Labor Committee

**HB 139** (Jones-25th) Prohibits drug manufacturers and wholesalers from withholding or limiting the supply of medications to pharmacies which participate in the federal 340B drug discount program.

STATUS: House Health Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 144** (Newton-127th) Includes dentistry in the tax credit for medical preceptor rotations, providing \$1,000 per physician or licensed dentist and \$750 per APRN, with a total annual cap of \$6 million.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Ways & Means Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 154** (Richardson-125th) Designates ambulance services as essential services.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Health Committee. The Bill moves on to Rules Committee.

**HB 170** (Mathiak-82nd) Healthcare benefit providers must provide a written record of all payments and reimbursements made to an injured party within 30 days of receiving a written request from the treating healthcare provider.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Insurance Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 196** (Kelley-16th) Amends the State Health Benefits Plan by establishing a transparent reimbursement structure for drugs dispensed for self-administration. The bill mandates that insurers reimburse pharmacies based on a transparent, index-based pricing system, such as the national average drug acquisition cost or Georgia's estimated acquisition cost, plus a professional dispensing fee. The legislation prohibits insurers from passing dispensing fees to beneficiaries through cost-sharing measures like deductibles. Additionally, it prevents insurers from circumventing these reimbursement requirements through discount programs or alternative pricing methods. Violations of these provisions would allow affected pharmacies or beneficiaries to seek legal remedies.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Insurance & Labor Committee

**HB 197** (Hawkins-27th) Implements a callback telecommunications system or website in which a provider or provider's appropriately qualified designee can communicate a potential treatment plan for a patient.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by House Health Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 209** (Romman-97th) Declares ambulance service, whether provided by a public, private nonprofit, or private for-profit entity, as an essential service.

STATUS: House Health Committee

**HB 218** (Dempsey-13th) Lowers the age from 50 to 18 years old at which hospitals shall offer inpatient vaccinations for the influenza virus prior to discharge.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by House Health Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 227** (Dickey-134) Revised Georgia's Medical Cannabis laws. Replaces language of "Low THC oil" to "medical cannabis" and keeps consistent criminal provisions to include "hemp" or "medical cannabis." The bill expands the duties of the Georgia Access to Medical Cannabis Commission to include public awareness efforts on the potential benefits of medical cannabis for eligible patients, and specifically directs that marketing does not "include any medical claim, unless such claim is supported by reliable scientific evidence; make any false or misleading claim; or be attractive to children or otherwise directly or indirectly targeted to individuals under 21 years of age." It also removes or relaxes certain medical criteria for eligibility.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Health & Human Services Committee.

**HB 231** (Neal-79th) Requires all health benefit policies to include coverage, either as part of the policy or through a required endorsement, for complementary and alternative therapies provided by a licensed physician, acupuncturist, chiropractor, or massage therapist. Additionally, policies must offer optional coverage, either in part or through an endorsement, for complementary and alternative therapies provided by a qualified herbalist, homeopath, or naturopath, provided the therapy is prescribed by a licensed physician.

STATUS: House Insurance Committee

**HB 251** (McDonald III-26th) Permits for a certified registered nurse anesthetist to order and administer anesthesia and an anesthesia plan in coordination with a licensed physician (as opposed to under direct supervision of a licensed physician).

STATUS: House Regulated Industries Committee

**HB 258** (Buckner-137th) "PeachCare for Adults Act" - Expands healthcare coverage to adults aged 18 to 64 with incomes at or below 133% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and not enrolled in Medicaid. Enrollees will not pay a monthly premium unless their income is at least 100% of the FPL. In that case, the premium will be the lower of either the cost of the second-lowest silver-level plan in the state's health insurance marketplace or 2% of the enrollee's gross income. The program does not impose work requirements, and all Medicaid providers will be automatically recognized as providers under this program.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health

**HB 265** (Sainz-180th) Expands the provisions to include THC and other cannabinoids as listed hemp products that are not to be sold or distributed in this state if such product has a total concentration that exceeds 0.3% for dry products and 150 milligrams per serving in the form of gummy.

STATUS: House Agriculture & Consumer Affairs

**HB 291** (Taylor-173rd) Establishes the Georgia Community Health Worker Certification Committee in order to oversee qualifications and certify community health workers. The bill also establishes grounds for complaints related to the practice of certified community health workers, and implements procedures for the review, investigation, and resolution of such complaints. The bill also provides for criminal background checks and some other criteria for CHW certification.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Public & Community Health Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 298** (Kelley-16th) Requires hospitals to develop and implement a written nurse staffing plan to ensure adequate nurse staffing and skill levels for patient care. Each hospital must establish a standing nursing staff committee, with the chief nursing officer as a voting member and at least 75% of the committee composed of registered nurses (RNs) who provide direct inpatient care for at least half of their work hours. All proceedings, records, and reports of the committee shall be deemed confidential review organization records. If unsafe staffing conditions arise, DCH must refer the report to its Healthcare Facility Regulation Division for further investigation.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Health Committee. The Bill moves on to Rules Committee.

**HB 322** (Hawkins-27th) Requires applicants with a doctoral degree in dentistry from a non-accredited dental school to meet the following criteria for a teacher's or instructor's license: Hold a valid dental license from another state, country, or territory, submit a recommendation letter from the dean or director of their teaching institution to the prospective employer, have never failed the Georgia licensure examination, have never had a dental license revoked in Georgia or any other jurisdiction, maintain a current CPR certification. Furthermore, the bill authorizes the licensee to practice dentistry only while an employee of such accredited school or college or only in connection with programs or training clinics affiliated with or endorsed by such school or college.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Health Committee. The Bill moves on to Rules Committee.

**HB 326** (Au-50th) “State Health Benefit Plan Non-Opioid Coverage Parity Act” - Requires the State Health Benefit Plan to provide equal coverage for qualifying non-opioid pain management drugs. Prohibits the plan from offering greater coverage for opioid pain management drugs or imposing prior therapy or authorization requirements on non-opioid alternatives.

STATUS: House Health Committee

**HB 332** (Herring-145th) Creates an advisory workgroup to update, amend, or develop tools and protocols for screening children for trauma within the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) Program.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 334** (Crawford-89th) “Sickle Cell Disease Protection Act” - Requires DCH to conduct an annual review of all medications, forms of treatment, and services that are eligible for coverage under the Medicaid program for those with a diagnosis of sickle cell disease.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 335** (Crawford-89th) Requires athletic associations to collaborate with DBHDD to develop and share mental health education materials for student athletes, parents, school staff, and coaches. Public and participating private schools (grades 6–12) must provide annual mental health resources to parents, and coaches must review training materials each year before coaching. The bill limits liability for schools and athletic associations regarding student mental health decisions and encourages youth athletic organizations to adopt similar policies.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Education Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 336** (Crawford-89th) Requires local school systems that provide health information to parents and guardians, including immunizations, infectious diseases, and medications, to also include information on sickle cell disease for students in grades six through twelve. This information includes a description of the disease, risk factors, warning signs, recommended actions if symptoms appear, screening processes, and the importance of consulting a primary care provider to develop a treatment plan after a diagnosis.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 341** (Newton-127th) Allows eligible employer taxpayers with fewer than 100 employees who contribute at least \$100 per month to an individual coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) to receive a tax credit of up to \$600 per covered employee for the first three years, \$400 in the fourth year, and \$250 in the fifth year. Employers must submit a preapproval application by October 1 of the preceding year to qualify for the credit. The department of Revenue Services will review properly completed applications and notify approved taxpayers of their certified credit amount by November 1 each year.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee. The bill will be heard in subcommittee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 352** (Seabaugh-34th) Expands Medicaid coverage for glucose monitors to include Medicaid recipients with gestational diabetes.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Health & Human Services Committee.

**HB 382** (Stephens-164th) Revises the definition of the Schedule I controlled substances psilocybin to exclude drugs containing crystalline polymorph psilocybin that are approved by the Federal and Drug Administration (FDA).

STATUS: House Health Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 420** (Taylor-173rd) Requires certain health insurance benefit policies to cover genetic testing for cancer and certain cancer imaging without cost-sharing.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Insurance Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 422** (McCollum-30th) Mandates the State Health Benefits Plan to offer at least two high-deductible health plans from different insurance providers. Allows covered employees to make pre-tax contributions to their high-deductible health plans through payroll deductions. This applies to local education school boards who are further encouraged to ensure that individuals who are enrolled are able to make pretax contributions.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Awaits Assignment to Senate Committee.

**HB 459** (Carter-93rd) Requires the Department of Community Health to develop and implement statewide, culturally relevant public awareness campaigns on cardiovascular health, including risk factors, prevention, and treatment. The department must also collaborate with schools, colleges, and local organizations to educate youth on cardiovascular health and disease. These efforts aim to enhance research and improve access to screenings and preventive services.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 473** (Stephens-164th) Expands the list of Schedule 1 controlled substances.



STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Health Committee. The Bill moves on to Rules Committee.

**HB 499** (Buckner-137th) Creates a sales and use tax exemption for menstrual discharge collection devices.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee

**HB 506** (Hilton-48th) Provides Medicaid coverage for tobacco cessation treatments.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Public & Community Health Committee. The bill moves on to House Rules Committee.

**HB 522** (Gullet-19th) Prohibits health care providers and facilities from discriminating against potential organ transplant recipients due solely to their vaccine status of COVID-19.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Health Committee. The bill moves on to House Rules Committee.

**HB 554** (Townsend-179th) “APEX Now Program” - Provides support for mental health services to students and school personnel experiencing incidents of violence, threats of violence, natural disasters, and other crisis situations. Established within the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the program will create a mental health crisis plan, provide a 24-hour online and telephonic hotline, and facilitate mental health evaluations within 24 hours for urgent cases. Schools will have access to designated mental health providers, and parents can provide prospective consent for services. The program also ensures statewide telehealth contracts for mental health services, protects school personnel from retaliation for making referrals, and allows funding for equipment, training, and uninsured students. The Department of Education will oversee implementation, with regulations set to ensure statewide access and effectiveness.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 564** (Berry-56th) Requires the Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities and the Suicide Prevention Program to develop a mental health crisis plan to rapidly provide mental health services to students experiencing incidents of violence, threats of violence, natural disasters, or other crisis situations.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 567** (Dempsey-13th) Adjusts criteria for teledentistry as well as requirements for insurance coverage for such.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Health Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 573** (Stephens-164th) Removes dentists from participation with Medicaid care management organizations.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 577** (Gaines-120th) "Georgia Nicotine Vapor Products Directory Act" - Establishes a statewide directory of authorized nicotine vapor products, prohibiting the sale of any product not listed. The GA Department of Revenue will oversee compliance, requiring manufacturers to certify their products meet FDA and state regulations. Unlisted products will be subject to seizure and destruction, and violators, including retailers and distributors, will face fines, license suspensions, and revocations. The Act mandates compliance checks, requires nonresident manufacturers to designate an in-state agent for legal service, and ensures annual reporting to the General Assembly on enforcement and revenues. The Act will take effect only if funds are appropriated for its implementation.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee. The bill will be heard in subcommittee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 584** (Petrea-166th) Reassigns licensing and oversight of drug abuse treatment and education programs, narcotic treatment programs, community living arrangements, and adult residential mental health programs from the Department of Community Health to the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Public & Community Health Committee. The bill moves on to House Rules Committee.

**HB 605** (Lim-98th) Requires the Department of Public Health to continue to operate the "Georgia Tobacco Quit Line" 24/7 to help Georgians quit smoking, vaping, and using all form of tobacco products.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 607** (Lim-98th) Creates a two-year pilot program under the Department of Public Health that provides home visiting in homes of children with asthma to access and provide education about the home environment and potential asthma triggers and make recommendations to reduce exposure to such triggers.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 612** (Dempsey-13th) Adds the state's Commissioner of Insurance to the Behavioral Health Coordinating Council. The bill also establishes a parity compliance review panel under the BHCC to which health care providers will be required to report suspected mental health parity violations.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Health Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 654** (Campbell-35th) Prohibits insurers or third-party administrators from conditioning payment of any medical test or procedure or prescription drug benefit on prior authorization, preapproval, or precertification for members of the state health benefits plan or of private insurance.

STATUS: House Insurance Committee

**HB 657** (Hagan-156th) Mandates that peer specialists who work for Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) must be certified by DBHDD. The bill further requires that all recovery community organizations for substance use employ certified peer specialists to provide peer services; and creates, subject to funding, a state-wide recovery community organization to act as the coordinator for the statewide recovery community organization network.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 658** (Holcomb-101st) Ensures that key consumer protections from the Affordable Care Act (ACA) remain in place in Georgia if the ACA is repealed. It mandates that health insurance plans cover preventive services at no extra cost, allow dependents to stay on their parents' plans until age 26, and prohibit annual or lifetime coverage limits. The bill also bans insurers from denying coverage or charging higher premiums based on preexisting conditions. Additionally, it prevents insurers from canceling policies for reasons other than nonpayment or fraud. These provisions would apply to all health insurance policies issued in the state if the ACA is repealed.

STATUS: House Insurance Committee

**HB 660** (Cox-28th) Prohibits the use of state dollars, including through the state health benefits plan or public benefits, for gender reassignment surgery, or any other transition-related intervention except if a child's medical procedure is of congenital defect, precocious puberty, disease, or physical injury. The bill also prohibits state healthcare facilities, healthcare providers employed by the state, state-owned or operated correctional facilities and healthcare providers employed by such facilities from providing any transition related intervention.

STATUS: House Insurance Committee

**HB 677** (Dempsey-13th) Establishes protocols for the placement of children who remain in hospitals or psychiatric residential treatment facilities after being medically cleared for discharge because their parent, guardian, or legal custodian fails to resume custody within 48 hours. The bill requires the formation of a task force, including a care coordinator, a licensed psychiatrist, and representatives from the Department of Human Services, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the child's health insurer, and Medicaid care management organizations—to ensure the child is placed in an appropriate environment without delay. Additionally, the bill mandates that managed care organizations and Medicaid care management organizations provide per diem payments to hospitals and psychiatric facilities when a discharged child remains in their care due to the lack of a placement. These payments amount to \$650 per day for psychiatric care in a residential treatment facility and \$780 per day for acute psychiatric care in hospitals, psychiatric facilities, or crisis stabilization units. These payments will continue until the child is placed in an appropriate setting. To implement these provisions,

the state may need to seek amendments or waivers from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for Medicaid coverage.

STATUS: House Health Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HR 8** (Schofield-63rd) Creates the "State Workgroup to Increase Chronic Disease Information and Screening in Communities of Color."

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HR 72** (Hawkins-27th) Creates a House Study Committee on Cancer Care Access.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Health Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HR 304** (Au-50th) Creates a House Study Committee on the Cost and Effects of Smoking.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HR 368** (Sainz-180th) Creates the Joint Study Committee on Intoxicating Cannabinoids in Consumable Hemp Products.

STATUS: House Motor Vehicles Committee

**HR 397** (Cooper-45th) Creates the House Study Committee on Healthcare Quality and Reporting.

STATUS: House Health Committee

**SB 5** (Kirkpatrick-32nd) Provides that each insurer that utilizes prior authorization requirements shall implement and maintain a program that allows for the selective application of reductions in prior authorization requirements based on the stratification of healthcare providers performance and adherence to evidence-based medicine. Such program shall promote quality, affordable healthcare and reduce unnecessary administrative burdens for both the insurer and the healthcare provider.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Recommended Do Pass by the House Insurance Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**SB 30** (Watson-1st) Prohibits the prescription or administration of puberty-blocking medication to a minor if such procedure or treatment is performed, prescribed, or administered for the purpose of attempting to alter the appearance of or affirm such minor's perception of his or her sex if such appearance or perception is inconsistent with such minor's sex.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Health & Human Services Committee. The bill will be on the floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**SB 39** (Tillery-19th) Prohibits coverage of expenses for gender-affirming care under the State Health Benefit Plan or with any state funds and prohibits state healthcare facilities and healthcare providers employed by the state from providing gender-affirming care. Exceptions are made for medically necessary treatments unrelated to gender dysphoria, disorders of sex development, partial androgen insensitivity syndrome, and similar conditions permitted under the State Health Benefit Plan as of January 1, 2026.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Health Committee.

**SB 50** (Lucas-26th) PeachCare Plus Act of 2025-Expands Medicaid eligibility for individuals earning less than 138% of the federal poverty level. Mandates that by October 31, 2026, Georgia's Department of Community Health will submit a federal waiver request to enroll eligible individuals in state or federal marketplace healthcare plans, covering all associated premiums and costs. The program will remain in effect as long as federal funding covers at least 90% of expenses, with state savings directed to the Indigent Care Trust Fund. The bill also establishes an Advisory Commission on the PeachCare Plus Program, to assist in drafting, reviewing, and implementing the waiver request and provide ongoing recommendations for program success.

STATUS: Senate Regulated Industries & Utilities Committee

**SB 60** (Hufstetler-52nd) Increases regulation and duties of pharmacy benefits managers to include the duties to balance the interest of the care of the insured, health plans, and providers.

STATUS: Senate Insurance & Labor Committee

**SB 72** (Brass-6th) Creates a pathway for patients who are terminally ill to be considered for individualized investigational treatment by providing written informed consent. Provides that medical insurance is not required for related treatments and prohibits sanctions against physicians or manufacturers for any harm done to such patients.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Health Committee.

**SB 79** (Goodman-8th) Revises the threshold amounts of fentanyl and related substances required to constitute offenses such as possession, sale, distribution, and manufacturing. It also increases penalties for these offenses and amends sentencing provisions for trafficking in fentanyl and other controlled substances. Additionally, bond will not be granted for individuals charged with trafficking any Schedule II controlled substances.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee.

**SB 80** (Summers-13th) Revises the definition of 'rural hospital organization' to include rural freestanding emergency departments.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**SB 91** (Tillery-19th) Prohibits the Board of Community Health from entering into, executing, or renewing a contract or contracts with any pharmacy benefits manager that owns or has an ownership interest in any retail pharmacy or any legal entity that contracts with or uses such pharmacy benefits manager.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Health & Human Services Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 113** (Dixon-45th) Establishes a professional health program to provide for monitoring and rehabilitation of impaired healthcare professionals.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**SB 130** (Hodges-3rd) Expands the definition of eligible loan recipient hospitals to include teaching hospitals that contract with the state to offer residency or fellowship programs accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) and medical facilities with a certification number for Medicare and Georgia Medicaid services. Additionally, requires that residents or fellowship physicians receiving loans under this program must be U.S. citizens.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Health Committee.

**SB 131** (Hodges-3rd) Creates the Georgia Health Care Professionals Data System to collect and disseminate non-identifying descriptive data on licensed healthcare professionals in the state. The data provided by the state licensing boards shall include the healthcare professionals' age, race, gender, ethnicity, location of practice, and license type.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Regulated Industries Committee.

**SB 140** (Dolezal-27th) Permits doctors of optometry to dispense and sell pharmaceutical agents to patients.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Health & Human Services Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 142** (Jackson-41st) Provides that a board-approved medical school may issue a provisional medical license to an international medical graduate who has practiced for at least three of the past ten years, holds a valid Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates certificate, has passed USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 (Clinical Knowledge), secured full-time employment with an institution, and meets any additional board requirements. After two years with a provisional license in good standing, passing USMLE Step 3, and securing full-time employment in an underserved area, the individual may apply for a limited license. After an additional two years with a limited license, they become eligible for a full medical license.

STATUS: Senate Regulated Industries & Utilities Committee

**SB 162** (Hufstetler-52nd) Requires the Georgia Composite Medical Board to implement a data management software system to automate the credentialing process of physicians, advanced practice registered nurses, licensed physician assistants, and anesthesiologist assistants.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Regulated Industries & Utilities Committee. The bill rests in Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 192** (Esteves-35th) Requires the Department of Insurance to establish an affordability program by September 30, 2025, which includes state premium subsidies for enrollees earning up to 400% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), additional cost-sharing reductions for individuals earning below 250% of the FPL, and a state-funded plan for those earning below 200% of the FPL. The affordability program will become effective on January 1, 2026 in the event that the United States Congress allows the enhanced premium tax credits under the Affordable Care Act expire on December 31st, 2025.

STATUS: Senate Insurance & Labor Committee

**SB 195** (Hufstetler-52nd) Allows pharmacists to dispense a 30- to 60-day supply of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) or administer a long-term injectable PrEP dose. It also permits pharmacists to distribute a 28-day supply of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) under CDC guidelines for eligible patients, provided they notify the patient's primary care doctor. No prescription from a licensed practitioner is required if the pharmacist completes a Georgia State Board of Pharmacy training program covering pharmacology, contraindicated medications, financial assistance programs, and relevant federal CDC guidelines on PrEP and PEP.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Health & Human Services Committee. The bill will be on the floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**SB 205** (Watson-11th) Requires the State Health Benefits Plan to cover healthcare services for pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal infection (PANDAS) and pediatric acute onset neuropsychiatric syndrome (PANS) in accordance with nationally recognized clinical practice guidelines.

STATUS: Senate Insurance & Labor Committee

**SB 220** (Brass-6th) Revised Georgia's Medical Cannabis laws. Replaces language of "Low THC oil" to "medical cannabis" and keeps consistent criminal provisions to include "hemp" or "medical cannabis." The bill expands the duties of the Georgia Access to Medical Cannabis Commission to include public awareness efforts on the potential benefits of medical cannabis for eligible patients. It also removes the requirement that qualifying medical conditions must be severe or in the end stage to receive a registration card. Additionally, individuals with a valid registration card may lawfully possess or purchase up to 20 ounces of medical cannabis, provided it is labeled by the manufacturer and contained in its original bottle.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Health & Human Services Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 233** (Jones II-22nd) Extends the Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission until December 31, 2026 and officially changes some of the subcommittees, in particular, replacing subcommittees as follows: Involuntary Commitment replaced by Addictive Diseases, and Workforce and System Development with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Health & Human Services Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 262** (Halpern-39th) Requires health insurance policies in Georgia to cover preventive services without cost-sharing, ensuring access to screenings, immunizations, and other preventive care as recommended by nationally recognized clinical guidelines. The bill defines preventive services broadly, including evidence-based screenings, immunizations, and services for women, infants, children, and adolescents. It also ensures that the law does not interfere with health savings account eligibility under federal tax rules. The Georgia Commissioner of Insurance is tasked with reviewing compliance annually, starting in 2026, and issuing necessary regulations by October 2025.

STATUS: Senate Insurance & Labor Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**SB 265** (Still-48th) Requires health insurance benefits to cover medically necessary orthotic devices and prosthetic devices for affected persons during a three-year period. Additionally, healthcare insurance beneficiaries are to be provided with at least two distinct healthcare professionals under their coverage for each issuance and renewal of their coverage. Allows health insurers to deny coverage for the replacement or repair of an orthotic or prosthetic device if the damage or loss is due to misuse, malicious damage, gross neglect, loss, or theft.

STATUS: Senate Insurance & Labor Committee

**SB 269** (Hatchett-50th) Includes a nurse examiner at an emergency receiving facility, evaluating facility, or treatment facility in the list of professionals who can determine and certify that a patient admitted to or examined at a facility is a mentally ill person requiring involuntary treatment, and who can discharge a patient meeting outpatient care criteria. The bill also sets criteria for when outpatient treatment is recommended, that written notice must be provided to the referring facility within three days. This notice must include a copy of the service plan, notification of the consequences if the patient does not adhere to the service plan, and any other necessary clinical information.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**SB 277** (Tillery-19th) Revises the definition of drug to include alcohol and other related substances in regards to drug abuse treatment and education programs.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**SB 287** (Halpern-39th) Establishes the Georgia Parties Advisory Group within the Department of Community Health (DCH) to advise, consult, and provide recommendations to the department. Additionally, requires DCH and DBHDD to mandate that Medicaid-covered home and community-



based service agencies submit annual reports, beginning January 1, 2026, detailing the number of employees, employee demographics, and payroll status of care workers they employ or engage with.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**SB 290** (Anavitarte-31st) Establishes the Georgia Community Health Worker Certification Committee in order to oversee qualifications and certify community health workers. The bill also establishes grounds for complaints related to the practice of certified community health workers, and implements procedures for the review, investigation, and resolution of such complaints.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**SB 297** (Robertson-29th) Creates a sales tax exemption for menstrual discharge collection devices.

STATUS: Senate Finance Committee

**SR 201** (Harrell-40th) A resolution urging Governor Brian Kemp to include full-time caregivers for the elderly, sick, and disabled in the Georgia Pathways health insurance program.

STATUS: Senate Insurance & Labor Committee

**SR 311** (Robertson-29th) Creates the Senate Study Committee on Recovery Residences.

STATUS: Senate Hopper



## Maternal & Infant Care

**HB 25** (Scott-76th) Allows GA DHS to apply for a waiver allowing SNAP and WIC beneficiaries to purchase diapers and menstrual hygiene products with the benefit once the US Department of Agriculture makes such an application available.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 46** (Davis-87th) Ensures additional representation of healthcare and mental health experts, community members, and relevant nonprofits on the Maternal Mortality Review Committee. Also addresses Committee vacancies and establishes privacy protocols.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 89** (Cooper-45th) Amends the duties of the Maternal Mortality Review Committee to include review of psychiatric or other clinical records provided by healthcare facilities and pharmacies. Additionally this bill establishes the "Regional Perinatal Center Advisory Committee" which shall advise the Commissioner of Public Health on related perinatal centers and adequacy of the regional perinatal system. The bill also sets provisions for the consideration of any hospital wishing to be designated as a regional perinatal center, and allows for the authorization of release of a copy of the record of a deceased patient or deceased former patient to the Maternal Mortality Review Committee.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Public & Community Health Committee. The bill will be on the floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 94** (Lumsden-12th) Requires health insurance benefits to cover standard fertility preservation services when medically necessary treatments such as radiation therapy, and chemotherapy have potentially infertility side effects.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Insurance & Labor Committee

**HB 149** (Barnes-86th) Creates a three-year pilot program to provide postpartum care program through mobile health clinics in counties that do not have a hospitals or birth centers offering obstetric care or fewer than 60 obstetric providers per 10,000 births.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 263** (Bennett-94th) Creates a three-year pilot program to provide Medicaid coverage for doula care for pregnant Medicaid recipients. Reimbursements may include up to 5 doula visits for each Medicaid recipient.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 329** (Hilton-48th) Allows certified nurse practitioners and physician assistants to administer or perform artificial insemination if delegated and authorized by a physician or surgeon. Additionally, if both spouses provide written consent authorizing the procedure, the certified nurse practitioner or physician assistant is relieved of civil liability.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Health & Human Services Committee.

**HB 347** (Kendrick-95th) Mandates state compensation for pregnant women who would have chosen to terminate their pregnancies but are legally prohibited due to a detectable fetal heartbeat. Compensation includes coverage for medical, psychological, and living expenses related to pregnancy, birth, and postpartum care, as well as automatic eligibility for public assistance programs like TANF, SNAP, and WIC. Additional benefits include home nurse visits, child-related tax credits, child support in certain cases, coverage of medical expenses for disabilities in the mother or child, funeral and lost wages compensation if the mother or fetus dies, and a fully funded 529 education savings plan. To receive compensation, a woman must file an affidavit with the Department of Human Services (DHS), which will assign a case manager to oversee prenatal and postnatal care, ensure access to benefits, and conduct regular check-ins. The General Assembly is required to establish a dedicated fund to cover these expenses and support DHS in implementing the program.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 350** (Cameron-1st) Adds ambulance services and newborn safety devices to the list of places where a mother can surrender a newborn without legal repercussions. The bill also defines newborn safety device and provides criteria for operation and oversight.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 428** (Franklin-160th) Grants the right to access in vitro fertilization.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Health & Human Services Committee.

**HB 441** (Dunahoo-31st) Bans abortion.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

**HB 471** (Cheokas-151st) Requires licensed general hospitals and birthing center make available a water safety education video to parents or guardianship of newborn infants within 24 hours of birth.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Public & Community Health Committee. The bill moves on to House Rules Committee.

**HB 488** (Westbrook-163rd) Mandates that no person limited services pregnancy center shall disseminate to the public any untrue or deceptive materials or advertisements related to the nature of emergency contraception, abortion, or other related products or services. Failure to comply to these provisions, enforcement from the Attorney General and local District Attorneys with jurisdiction may impose civil actions on the person or entity that can result in the paying for and disseminating corrective and appropriate advertising, restitution damages made to the person(s) adversely affected by the false information, and mandatory notice(s) signage in the waiting area examination area. Of note, the bill requires the Attorney General to develop a portal on its public website to receive, review, and investigate public complaints of noncompliance and the portal must be understandable for someone with a fifth grade reading level, accessible to people with disabilities, and take an average user no more than ten minutes to complete the complaint form.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health

**HB 520** (Mathiak-82nd) Provides for the licensure and regulation of midwives, with renewals every two years. Establishes an advisory board for Licensed Midwives and mandates healthcare coverage for midwifery services under health insurance plans, including Medicaid.

STATUS: House Health Committee

**HB 588** (Drenner-85th) Requires private health insurance coverage, for fertility diagnostic care, treatment, and preservation services. Prohibits insurers from imposing a waiting period, considering prior diagnoses or fertility treatments, or placing limitations on coverage based on an enrollee's use of donor gametes, donor embryos, or embryo transfer to a surrogate. Insurers may only impose coverage limitations based on an enrollee's medical history.

STATUS: House Health Committee

**HB 589** (Drenner-85th) Permits the Department of Community Health to apply for an amendment to the state Medicaid plan to allow Medicaid to cover fertility diagnostic care, fertility treatment, and fertility preservation services. Such amendment would prohibit denial of fertility coverage based on an enrollee's prior diagnoses, previous fertility treatments, or factors such as race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, mental disability, or physical disability. If the federal agency (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) permits, Medicaid would provide coverage for fertility preservation, infertility diagnoses, medically necessary ovulation-enhancing drugs, and related medical services.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 598** (Roberts-52nd) The bill restores the right to abortion and legal protections for providers as well as provisions relating to a physician's obligation in performance of abortions, among other provisions. The bill also provides for exceptions to the notice requirement of a pending abortion to the parent or guardian of an unemancipated minor by a physician or their qualified agent under the "Parental Notification Act".

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 649** (Bennett-94th) Requires all health insurance policies in Georgia provide coverage for maternal mental health screenings during pregnancy and the first year postpartum. It requires screenings at key points, including the first prenatal visit, later stages of pregnancy, postpartum checkups, and pediatric visits. Healthcare providers must conduct these screenings using evidence-based tools and provide referrals and educational materials as needed. The bill also establishes a quality metrics program to track screening rates, treatment access, and outcomes, with a focus on addressing disparities. Additionally, it creates a three-year pilot program for remote maternal mental health screening and monitoring, prioritizing high-risk populations and rural communities through telehealth services. The state may allocate funding for technology, provider training, and program evaluation to support these initiatives.

STATUS: House Insurance Committee

**HB 672** (Park-107th) Requires every perinatal facility to implement an evidence-based implicit bias program for all healthcare professionals involved with the perinatal care of patients. Each perinatal facility is further required to provide a certificate of training completion to another perinatal facility upon request. Additionally, the Department of Public Health shall collect and track data on severe maternal morbidity health conditions and all pregnancy-related deaths and publish at least once every three years, provided that the data has been aggregated by state regions and the data has been disaggregated by racial and ethnic identity.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HR 274** (Westbrook-163rd) A resolution encouraging the GA General Assembly to appropriate an additional \$2 million annually to the Georgia Pregnancy and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, in lieu of all moneys currently being appropriated to fund crisis pregnancy centers.

STATUS: House Appropriations Committee

**HR 426** (Schofield-63rd) Urges the General Assembly to support the creation of a Black Maternal Health Caucus.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**SB 101** (Robertson-29th) Revises current statute to include newborn screenings for Duchenne muscular dystrophy in the list of prevention of serious illness, severe physical or developmental disability, and death caused by inherited genes.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Public & Community Health Committee.

**SB 136** (James-28th) Provides for the licensure and regulation of community midwives and creates the Certified Community Midwife Board.

STATUS: Senate Regulated Industries & Utilities Committee

**SB 183** (Islam Parkes-7th) Creates a sales and use tax exemption for baby products including child diapers, child restraint devices or booster seats, cribs, and strollers.

STATUS: Senate Finance Committee

**SB 196** (Orrock-36th) Mandates that no person limited services pregnancy center shall disseminate to the public any untrue or deceptive materials or advertisements related to the nature of emergency contraception, abortion, or other related products or services. Failure to comply to these provisions, enforcement from the Attorney General and local District Attorneys with jurisdiction may impose civil actions on the person or entity that can result in the paying for and disseminating corrective and appropriate advertising, restitution damages made to the person(s) adversely affected by the false information, and mandatory notice(s) signage in the waiting area examination area. Of note, the bill requires the Attorney General to develop a portal on its public website to receive, review, and investigate public complaints of noncompliance and the portal must be understandable for someone with a fifth grade reading level, accessible to people with disabilities, and take an average user no more than ten minutes to complete the complaint form.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**SB 197** (Jackson-41st) Eliminates the Positive Alternatives for Pregnancy and Parenting Grant Program.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**SB 200** (Moore-53rd) Recognizes that life is protected and valued at the time of moment of conception and is afforded all the rights and privileges of the U.S Constitution.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**SB 246** (Harrell-40th) Clarifies that a natural person does not include an unborn child and shall not be included in certain population-based determinations. Provides exceptions to unemancipated minors seeking an abortion if the unemancipated minor such notice to the parent or guardian may lead to physical or emotional harm to the unemancipated minor and the unemancipated minor is capable of giving informed consent (freely without coercion) to the abortion (in the presence of professional judgment of the healthcare professional). Prohibits any healthcare professional or healthcare professional's qualified agent from being liable for civil damages or criminal penalty for his or her decision to give or not to give notice to a parent or guardian of an unemancipated minor. Prohibits the state from regulating or banning benefits, facilities, services, or information to deny or interfere with a person's decision to give birth or obtain an abortion (including those in physical or legal custody) and the option to choose sterilization. Authorizes healthcare professionals acting under the lawful scope of practice to perform abortions.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**SB 258** (James-28th) Establishes the Midwife-led Birth Centers Grant Program within the Department of Public Health to promote statewide access to midwife-led birth centers through grants to participating organizations. Funding covers services such as medical care, pregnancy tests, STI testing, ultrasound services, prenatal, intrapartum, and postpartum maternal care, nutritional services and education, housing, employment assistance, child assistance, information on healthcare benefits, and other related healthcare services. The program also provides for the licensure and regulation of midwives. An advisory board for licensed midwives is established, and midwifery services are covered under health insurance plans, including Medicaid.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**SB 307** (Islam Parkes-7th) Requires continuing education requirements for all physicians to include one hour on maternal health, including preventive and emergency care of pregnant and postpartum mothers.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**SB 308** (Islam Parkes-7th) Mandates Medicaid coverage for postpartum mental health care services for mothers, including screenings for depression and anxiety, and mental health support for one year after pregnancy.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**SR 207** (Orrock-36th) A resolution urging the GA General Assembly to appropriate an additional \$2 million annually to the Georgia Pregnancy and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, in lieu of all moneys currently being appropriated to fund crisis pregnancy centers.

STATUS: Senate Children & Families Committee



## Early Childhood Education & Out-of-School Time

**HB 118** (Townsend-179th) Requires childcare learning centers and family child care learning homes maintain at least one portable airway clearance device and each employee that cares or supervises children be trained in CPR.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 175** (Jones-25th) Revise the provisions to require comprehensive background checks for early care and education programs and Head Start programs. Further, it requires all early care and similar programs to provide documentation of each background check on personnel or risk revocation of licensure.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Education Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**[HB 269](#)** (Townsend-179th) Requires childcare learning centers to maintain a commercial general liability insurance policy or policies affording coverage for bodily injury and property in an amount not less than \$500,000 for a single occurrence and \$1 million in the aggregate.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HR 234](#)** (Olaleye-59th) Recognizes February 12, 2025, as Afterschool Day at the Capitol.

STATUS: House Read & Adopted.

**[SB 89](#)** (Strickland-42nd) Increases the amount of a tax credit based on the federal tax credit for certain child and dependent care expenses to 40 percent of such federal tax credit and creates a state child tax credit in the amount of \$250 per child for qualifying filers. The bill also expands the existing tax credit for employers providing child care by decreasing the number of children who use the facility that are required to be children of employees from 95% to 75% and by increasing the amount of the credit.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Ways & Means Committee.

**[SR 121](#)** (Strickland-42nd) Recognizes Afterschool Day at the Capitol on February 12th, 2025.

STATUS: Senate Read & Adopted

**[SR 128](#)** (Strickland-42nd) Recognizes Early Childhood Education Day at the Capitol on February 12th, 2025.

STATUS: Senate Read & Adopted

**[SR 237](#)** (Hickman-4th) Urges the Professional Standards Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Education, the Department of Early Care and Learning, the Office of Student Achievement, the University System of Georgia, the Technical College System of Georgia, and the Georgia Student Finance Commission, to provide recommendations to support the state's K-12 education workforce and teacher and school leader pipeline.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee



## K-12 Education

**[HB 12](#)** (Cannon-172nd) Reduces the actual or equivalent millage rate required millage rate from 14 mills to 10 mills for a school system to qualify for equalization grants.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Education Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.



**HB 20** (Scott-76th) Requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules requiring all certificated public school personnel to receive annual training in depression and suicide awareness and prevention. The bill also establishes the Student Mental Health Screenings Grant Program, and requires GaDOE to develop a model policy for student depression and suicide awareness, plus help schools establish certain healthcare related partnerships to conduct mental health screenings.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 26** (Scott-76th) Requires DBHDD to establish a school-linked behavioral health grant program to identify early interventions in K-12 schools for students that may have mental health or substance use disorders.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HB 27** (Scott-76th) Provides for grants by the State Board of Education to local units of administration to support students living in poverty under QBE funding formula for schools.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 37** (Leverett-123rd) Requires each school system to provide a notice of whether: 1. Social Security taxes will be withheld from the employee's pay, 2. The employee is eligible to be included in a plan with coverage for the benefits of Title II and, 3. if the employee is eligible to be included in one or more plans. This applies to new, current, and nearly new employees of local school systems.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Education Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 42** (Davis-87th) Revises the calculation for student transportation programs and remove the requirement of regular transportation services to be funded prior to other transportation services. Requires the State Board of Education to collaborate to determine actualized costs for transportation programs.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 47** (Davis-87th) Provides QBE funding to eligible public schools to enhance safety and infrastructure.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 48** (Davis-87th) Establishes the Refugee and International Students Equalization (RISE) program to provide comprehensive wrap-around services for eligible K-12 students from other countries.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 59** (Glaze-67th) Reduces the legal counselor ratio from 1 counselor to 450 students to 1 counselor to 250 students.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 81** (Ballard-147th) "Interstate Compact for School Psychologists"- Joins Georgia to state pathway that allows school psychologist to obtain and practice in schools in any member state. If passed, the Act would become effective once 7 states are in the compact.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Education and Youth Committee.

**HB 104** (Cox-28th) Establishes regulations requiring that interscholastic sports competitions be categorized based on the student-athletes sex assigned at birth rather than gender. Sports are designated as male-men, or boys, and female-women, or girls, or coed.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 105** (Wade-9th) Increases payment of indemnification for public school personnel in the event of death or disability from \$75,000 to \$150,000.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Education and Youth Committee.

**HB 106** (Barnes-86th) Authorizes local school boards and related bodies to offer driver education training courses as an elective to high school students.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 127** (Cox-28th) Increases the number of accumulated sick leave days teachers and other school personnel may take each school year for personal or professional reasons from three days to five days.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Education Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 133** (Clark-100th) "Student Character Development Act" - Requires (by August 1, 2025) that all local education agencies adopt policies allowing students to be excused for at least one hour per week to attend religious moral instruction, known as a "released time course." Participation requires parental consent, and transportation must be arranged by parents or the sponsoring organization, which also assumes full responsibility for the student during the course. Public school funds cannot be used for these programs, except for minimal administrative costs, and courses cannot be held on school property unless under a neutral equal-access policy. Schools may grant academic credit for completed courses, evaluated using secular criteria such as instruction hours, syllabus content, assessment methods, and instructor qualifications. Students attending these courses will not be marked absent, and GaDOE will ensure schools maintain state and federal funding regardless of participation levels.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 173](#)** (Taylor-173rd) Requires the DOE to provide all parents and guardians of students entering sixth grade with information on recommended adolescent vaccinations for meningococcal meningitis disease, HPV, and TDAP.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Public & Community Health Committee. The bill moves on to House Rules Committee.

**[HB 192](#)** (Gambill-15th) Revises from a graduation plan to an individual college and career plan for students and now includes grades 6–12. Requires the State Workforce Development Board to create a High-Demand Career List, which must be shared with the State Board of Education to guide the implementation of these plans. QBE grants must align with the High-Demand Career List, and the career plans will incorporate Georgia MATCH and GA Futures accounts.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Higher Education Committee.

**[HB 198](#)** (Chastain-7th) States that school systems of public elementary and secondary schools shall allow access to patriotic societies like the Boy Scouts of America if requested by such an entity. If access is denied, a written explanation must be provided to the requesting entity.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Education Committee, however, the bill was recommitted to House Education Committee.

**[HB 200](#)** (Bazemore-69th) Establishes a three-year pilot immersive writing program for public school students for 2nd to 5th grade to improve literacy skills. Provides playground construction requirements for new elementary school being constructed after July 1, 2027 which must include components of a communication board, one learning American Sign Language (ASL) alphabet panel or one learning Braille alphabet panel.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Education Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**[HB 202](#)** (Hilton-48th) Establishes a program for the purposes of promoting and supporting the approval of new local charter school petitions by local boards of education and provides incentive grants to local boards of education that approve new local charter school petitions.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 217](#)** (Hong-103rd) Changes the Dual Achievement Program from a pilot to a permanent statewide program. (FYI, the program awards a high school diploma to eligible students who complete the academic requirements for a technical college associate degree, diploma, or at least two certificate programs within a specific career pathway.) This act is repealed July 1, 2031.

STATUS: House Higher Education Committee

**[HB 221](#)** (Cannon-58th) Requires public schools to provide equal accommodations for teams of both genders, including equivalent funding, facility access, and the like. The bill also requires the GaDOE to report annually on local school systems to include information regarding expenditures and participation rates for each gender. Additionally, the bill allows for students to file a lawsuit should the provision of this bill be violated.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 229](#)** (Neal-79th) Exempts materials used in the construction of capital outlay projects for educational purposes from local sale or use taxes approved and funded through a constitutionally authorized education special purpose local option sales tax (ESPLOST). Effective date is July 1st, 2025 to December 31st, 2033. This exemption only applies to projects for local school systems that have in effect certain homestead exemptions from property taxation.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Ways & Means Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**[HB 235](#)** (Townsend-179th) Allows public school teachers, public school employees, and postsecondary employees to receive leaves of absence, without loss of pay or use of sick leave for not more than seven days for bone marrow donation, and not more than 30 days for the purpose of organ donation. Such notice must be given to the employer no less than seven days prior to any leave of absence scheduled.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Education Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**[HB 245](#)** (Olaleye-59th) Revises QBE formula by adding a program for students in foster care, living in poverty or in unstable housing as defined by federal law (McKinney-Vento Act) to the table of quality basic education instructional programs with certain weights and student-teacher ratios.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 267](#)** (Bonner-73rd) "Riley Gaines Act" - Defines male and female sports and who may participate in those sports, allows for some co-ed sports. The bill also provides for separate restroom and changing areas for males and females in schools, for sleeping arrangements on school trips to be made according to sex with exceptions for family members; requires any collector of vital statistics throughout this state to identify each individual as either male or female and replaces the term "gender" throughout the Code with "sex". Applies to public K-12 schools, interscholastic athletics, and postsecondary institutions. The bill was amended in an attempt to ensure enforceability of current Georgia "Hate Crimes" Law.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee.

**[HB 268](#)** (Persinger-119th) Establishes grants for local school systems to hire qualified mental health coordinators, who will be responsible for identifying at-risk students and evaluating behavioral health programs. By July 1, 2025, the State Board of Education must define the duties and qualifications for these coordinators and create regulations for grant distribution. Additionally, the bill mandates youth violence and suicide awareness training for school personnel and

introduces state-approved behavioral and emotional screening assessments, which must be recommended by the DBHDD by July 1, 2025, and designated by the State Board of Education by August 1, 2025. These assessments will be administered at no cost to students or their legal guardians, with public funds available for school reimbursement. The bill also requires the timely transfer of student records between schools, law enforcement, and other relevant agencies, while also defining critical student records, including academic history, discipline records, and criminal offenses. Schools must provide electronic copies of requested student education records within three business days, and by October 1, 2025, any existing MOUs regarding student records must be reviewed and updated. The bill also introduces a dispute resolution process, requiring regional education service agencies (RESAs) to mediate conflicts over student record disclosures. If a record cannot be legally released, the responsible agency must provide a written explanation and attempt to secure parental consent within five days. If disputes remain unresolved, they will be escalated to the Office of the Attorney General and GaDOE's chief privacy officer. The bill requires every local school system to establish a threat management team and mandates the creation of a statewide behavioral threat management system. By July 1, 2026, the Office of Safe Schools—which will be housed within the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA)—must develop a statewide behavioral threat assessment operational process and a set of behavioral threat assessment indicators. By this same deadline, the state must also procure and implement the School and Student Safety Database (S3 Database) to track and assess student behaviors that may pose safety risks. Schools will be required to update their safety plans to include behavioral threat assessment management by July 1, 2025, and a statewide school safety compliance inspection report must be adopted and enforced by August 1, 2025. Additionally, each local board of education must develop a family reunification plan to facilitate the safe return of students and staff following an emergency. The bill also updates legal provisions regarding terroristic threats and school-related offenses allowing parents who intentionally encourage their child to make school threats to be held legally responsible, and stating that individuals accused of threatening the death or injury of a group at a school will face mandatory suspension and counseling. The bill requires progressive discipline policies for educators who fail to comply with school safety requirements, and it strengthens information-sharing agreements between schools and law enforcement. By August 1, 2025, the GaDOE must publish model terms and conditions for the disclosure of student information, ensuring that school officials and law enforcement have clear guidelines for handling such data.

STATUS: House Education Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**[HB 293](#)** (Miller-62nd) Repeals the Code Section 20-2-11 relating to the participation or advocating of divisive concepts, which repeals a provision which prohibits basing certification and classification of certain professional personnel upon completion of training programs which advocate for certain concepts.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 294](#)** (Miller-62nd) Requires the State Board of Education to review and update necessary policies, guidelines, and processes for awarding units of high school credit to students based on a demonstration of subject area competency for the 2025-2026 school year. The State school superintendent shall not authorize any denial, delay, or otherwise interfere with the approval of any performance-based assessment identified and approved by the state board.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 307](#)** (Ballard-147th) Clarifies that the three-cueing model is not the primary method for literacy instruction or considered high-quality material, though it may be used in supplemental resources. It revises dyslexia definitions, repeals a Reading Recovery provision, and establishes a three-year review cycle for state-approved literacy screeners. The bill requires the Georgia Department of Education to publish an annual dyslexia handbook and provide teacher training on the science of reading. The bill also extends the deadline for districts to create and implement plans for removing devices from classrooms, with plans due by Jan. 1, 2026, and implementation by July 1, 2026. It adds the Georgia Coach Coordination Council within the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA), which will employ a coordinator to guide literacy coaching efforts throughout the state.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Awaits Assignment to Senate Committee.

**[HB 310](#)** (Olaleye-59th) Provides grants of up to \$7,500 to eligible student teachers to support teacher recruitment, distributed in installments during their student teaching. The State Board of Education administers the program.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 313](#)** (Dunahoo-31st) Requires all public and elementary and secondary schools to display the Ten Commandments at the main entrance of the main building, the main entrance of the school library, media center and the main entrance of the cafeteria by July 1, 2025. Schools cannot use public funds to purchase such but are required to accept donated copies.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 328](#)** (Carpenter-4th) Increases the annual aggregate limit for tax credits available for certain student scholarships from \$120 million to \$200 million per year.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee. The bill will be heard in subcommittee TODAY (MONDAY).

**[HB 333](#)** (Herring-145th) Requires that the state minimum salary schedule for professionals in elementary and secondary education be updated each year based on annual inflation or deflation for the immediately preceding calendar year.

STATUS: House Education Committee

- [HB 340](#)** (Hilton-48th) Distraction-Free Education Act - Forbids public school students in kindergarten through 8th grade from using personal electronic devices during the school day unless otherwise protected by Individual Education Plan or medical plan.
- STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Education Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.
- [HB 371](#)** (Corbett-174th) Increases the State Board of Education's maximum authorization of capital outlay funding of QBE from \$300 million to \$347 million annually starting in fiscal year 2027.
- STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Education Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.
- [HB 372](#)** (Ballard-147th) Eliminates the requirement that specific subject areas, such as special education or a current dyslexia or reading endorsement, be designated as highest-need for the hiring of certain Teachers Retirement System of Georgia beneficiaries, instead granting public schools the authority to determine these areas, with an extension to 2030.
- STATUS: House Retirement Committee
- [HB 386](#)** (Barnes-86th) Changes the sales tax exemption period for clothing and school-related supplies from July 30-31 to beginning the last Thursday in July to midnight on the following Sunday.
- STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee
- [HB 436](#)** (Griffin-149th) Repeals sunset date of June 30th, 2035, of the Georgia Promise Scholarship Act, making the Georgia Promise Scholarship Act a permanent scholarship program.
- STATUS: House Education Committee
- [HB 437](#)** (Lim-98th) Requires the State Board of Education to set standards for foreign language interpreters in educational settings. Local school systems must provide limited-English-proficient parents with easily understandable information on key topics, including enrollment, school programs, discipline policies, report cards, and language assistance. They must also inform parents about available interpretation services, how to request an interpreter, their right to a neutral interpreter, and a contact for concerns or complaints.
- STATUS: House Education Committee
- [HB 44](#)** (Reese-140th) Provides that student performers shall not be counted absent from school due to performing in certain productions, subject to certain conditions, for no more than all or part of 25 school days; to authorize the Department of Labor, in consultation with the Department of Education, to develop such certification forms and promulgate rules and regulations.
- STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 451](#)** (Cannon-172nd) Permits local school boards to provide hunting safety courses, the curriculum of which shall be based on the hunter education courses offered by the Department of Natural Resources, as an elective for grades six through twelve beginning in the 2026-2027 school year.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Game, Fish & Parks Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**[HB 487](#)** (Ballard-147th) Requires students to complete a computer a science course or in order to graduate high school beginning in 2031. This course requirement may be earned by students in grades eight through twelve and must be made available in a traditional classroom setting, blended learning environment, or an online technology-based format. Moreover, this course requirement is not set to increase the number of credits required for graduation.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 505](#)** (Hilton-48th) Changes the Individual Graduation Plan for high schoolers to the Career Development Plan, and incorporates students' extracurricular activities and a portfolio showcasing their resume, skills, awards, and activities. The plan must also contain concrete strategies and steps for achieving students' postsecondary goals. High school students without an existing plan must complete it within 90 days of enrollment. Requires the GaDOE to develop an electronic platform for the creation and revision of career development plans which will be made accessible to school personnel, students, and parents. The electronic platform will include information regarding in demand high work ready certifications and technical skills by Georgia employers. The bill also requires GaDOE to use de-identified data collected through this platform developed to evaluate the effectiveness of career development plans.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 517](#)** (Berry-56th) Establishes a program providing a total of \$3 million annually in grants to local school systems and public schools for remedial education services aimed at addressing literacy and math deficiencies in students from kindergarten through 12th grade at public schools ranked in the lowest 5% statewide.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 542](#)** (Berry-56th) Requires private schools who participate in the Promise Scholarship accounts to comply with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 by fully implementing the most recent Individualized Education Program or Section 504 plan for each student. Requires parents of students to provide copies of their child's Individualized Education Plan within ten days of enrollment in such participating school.

STATUS: House Education Committee



**[HB 546](#)** (Kahaian-81st) Requires each local school system that offers the PSAT/NMSQT, ASVAB, SAT, PreACT, or ACT or an advanced placement exam to students enrolled in such local school system post the exams on their school system websites and make them free of charge for home school students who reside in that local school system.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 550](#)** (Bell-75th) Requires all participating schools in the Georgia Promise Scholarship account to prepare school safety plans.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 554](#)** (Townsend-179th) APEX Now Program: Provides support for mental health services to students and school personnel experiencing incidents of violence, threats of violence, natural disasters, and other crisis situations. Established within the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the program will create a mental health crisis plan, provide a 24-hour online and telephonic hotline, and facilitate mental health evaluations within 24 hours for urgent cases. Schools will have access to designated mental health providers, and parents can provide prospective consent for services. The program also ensures statewide telehealth contracts for mental health services, protects school personnel from retaliation for making referrals, and allows funding for equipment, training, and uninsured students. The Department of Education will oversee implementation, with regulations set to ensure statewide access and effectiveness.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 564](#)** (Berry-56th) Requires the Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities and the Suicide Prevention Program to develop a mental health crisis plan to rapidly provide mental health services to students experiencing incidents of violence, threats of violence, natural disasters, or other crisis situations.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 565](#)** (Townsend-179th) Increases the annual aggregate limit for tax credits for donations to nonprofit corporations awarding grants to public schools from \$15 million for tax year 2024 to \$25 million per calendar year.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee

**[HB 580](#)** (Barnes-86th) Requires each local school board to provide cursive writing instruction beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, with specific grade levels to be determined by the State Board of Education.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 599](#)** (Donatucci-105th) Extends (to June 30, 2030) the program to permit public school systems to employ certain retired public school teachers as classroom teachers in a full-time capacity.

STATUS: House Retirement Committee

**[HB 631](#)** (McQueen-61st) Mandates a minimum base salary for teachers, administrators, and other certified professional personnel employed by local school boards with bachelor's degrees based upon the national average living wage determined by the State Board of Education.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 634](#)** (Barrett-24th) Revises the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship to allow exceptions for expedited completion of a student's first Individualized Education Program. Allows for direct deposit payments that have been restrictively endorsed by parents into the account of such school, and also adds more requirements for the reporting of certain data by the GaDOE on the scholarship program.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 643](#)** (Townsend-179th) Authorizes local boards of education or other governing bodies of each public and private elementary and secondary school (public and private) to install key boxes at each school building in locations determined in collaboration with local law enforcement and emergency management agencies. Such box is installed in a location that permits law enforcement officers and emergency-management personnel emergency access to such building, contain keys and other access control devices necessary to access each building a room located on the school grounds, and accurate maps of the entire school ground. The bill also protects relevant school entities from civil liability for any damages arising out of the installation and use of key boxes, and protects key staff from the same unless it is shown that such employee acted with gross negligence or bad faith.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 674](#)** (Paris-142nd) Requires the State Board of Education to adopt content standards for instruction and local boards of education to provide instruction in financial literacy and money management for grades four and five.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HB 694](#)** (Lupton-83rd) Establishes a five-year school pilot program to increase the effectiveness of school counseling and postsecondary preparation services. Local boards of education are required to submit an application to the GaDOE outlining a plan which can include partnerships with nonprofit organizations. Priority shall be given to local education agencies that identify participating schools with dropout rates or percentages of students eligible for free and reduced-price school meals that exceed the statewide average.

STATUS: House Hopper

**[HR 174](#)** (Dubnik-29th) Constitutional Amendment which provides appointment of the state school superintendent by the State Board of Education and for the election of members of the State Board of Education for two-year terms by the members of the House of Representatives and Senate whose respective districts are embraced or partly embraced by each congressional district of this state. (Enabling legislation has yet to appear in the hopper.)

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[HR 275](#)** (Glaize-67th) A resolution supporting raising the minimum high school dropout age in GA from 16 to 17 years old.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**[SB 1](#)** (Dolezal-27th) "Fair and Safe Athletic Opportunities Act"- Establishes regulations requiring that interscholastic sports competitions be categorized based on the student-athlete's sex assigned at birth. Sports are designated as male, female, or coed, depending on the student-athletes actively participating in interscholastic competitions. Provides guidelines and restrictions for reasonable accommodations for student-athletes, including access to single-occupancy restrooms, changing areas, or sleeping quarters as needed. Extends the right to appeal decisions made by a covered entity to the superior court of the county where the local school is located for any student aggrieved by such decisions. The bill states that judgements on a student's ability to play will not be based on "visual inspection of such student's external sex organs." Additionally, the bill applies to local school systems, public schools, and participating private schools, as well as postsecondary schools.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to the House Education Committee.

**[SB 4](#)** (Dolezal-27th) Provides for criteria for ethics for school board members and for the filing of complaints relative to school boards.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**[SB 17](#)** (Anavitate-31st) "Ricky and Alyssa's Law" - Requires local school systems to implement a mobile panic alert system capable of connecting directly to emergency services and first responders. It states that each local school system may implement additional strategies or systems to ensure real-time coordination between multiple first responder agencies in the event of a school security emergency, but that no local school system shall be required to procure or implement new or additional capabilities if, as of July 1, 2026, the system has a functioning mobile panic alert system in place with capabilities that meet the requirements of this legislation. The bill also authorizes the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency to adopt rules and regulations for the requirements for school mapping data.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

- SB 22** (Tillery-19th) Requires the DOE to publish federal guidance documents within 15 calendar days.
- STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill moves on to Senate Rules Committee.
- SB 38** (Dolezal-27th) Imposes educational development impact fees on high-growth school systems experiencing a 20% or greater student enrollment increase over a 10-year period. The affiliated Constitutional Amendment is SR 52.
- STATUS: Senate Economic Development & Tourism Committee.
- SB 41** (Jackson-41st) Requires public schools to provide equal accommodations for teams of both genders, including equivalent funding, facility access, and the like.
- STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee
- SB 44** (Watson-11th) Reduces the minimum required millage rate from 14 mills to 10 mills for a school system to qualify for equalization grants.
- STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Education Committee.
- SB 54** (Jones-10th) Requires the State Board of Education to establish a statewide emergency alert system by 2026 for schools to notify law enforcement and first responders of threats. By 2027, a secure threat database will track verified school safety threats, with students only added after investigation and social worker evaluation. Schools must provide mental health support for affected students, and the Board may consult state security agencies to implement these measures.
- STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee
- SB 63** (Dixon-45th) Requires each local school system that offers the PSAT/NMSQT, SAT, PreACT, or ACT or an advanced placement exam to students enrolled in such local school system post the exams on their school system websites and make them free of charge for home school students who reside in that local school system.
- STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.
- SB 65** (Mallow-2nd) Mandates that all children prior to their fifth birthday be enrolled and attend a full day kindergarten program for one school year prior to enrolling in the first grade which shall be provided for all public schools of the state.
- STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**SB 82** (Dixon-45th) Allows local boards of education to reconsider the denial of local charter school petitions and requires the Office of Charter School Compliance to prepare guidelines for local boards of education for the evaluation of charter school petitions.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**SB 93** (Kemp-38th) Prohibit the three-cueing system from inclusion in high-quality instructional materials or structured literacy.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**SB 115** (Parkes-7th) Revises the sales tax exemption dates for clothing and school related supplies from July 30, 2016 through July 31st, 2016 to August 7th through August 13 of each year.

STATUS: Senate Finance Committee

**SB 120** (Harbin-16th) Prohibits public schools, local education agencies, and public postsecondary institutions from promoting, supporting, or maintaining any programs or activities that advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Any postsecondary institution that violates this shall be subject to the withholding of state funding or state administered federal funding which includes scholarships, loans, and grants.

STATUS: Senate Higher Education Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**SB 123** (Kennedy-18th) Prevents students from being expelled solely for absenteeism. Each local school system must establish policies to identify and support chronically absent students, including attendance review teams and intervention plans for students and their parents or guardians. School systems with a chronic absenteeism rate of 10% or higher must create a district-level attendance review team, while schools with a 15% or higher rate must establish their own school-level attendance review teams. These teams must meet at least monthly, review individual student cases, and develop intervention plans. They may include administrators, counselors, social workers, teachers, and parents to ensure effective support for students.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Education Committee.

**SB 124** (Still-48th) Mandates that the School Superintendent and the Department of Education take all necessary steps to implement federal agency guidance. Additionally, students with a parent on active military duty in the state qualify for a Promise Scholarship until they return to public school, graduate, turn 20, or, for special education students, turn 21.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**[SB 126](#)** (Dixon-45th) Lowers the age of eligibility from 18 to 16 for certain students to be enrolled in a completion special school.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**[SB 128](#)** (Esteves-35th) Provides for grants by the State Board of Education to local units of administration to support students living in poverty under QBE funding formula for schools.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee

**[SB 134](#)** (Sims-12th) Repeals sunset date of June 30th, 2035, of the Georgia Promise Scholarship Act, making the Georgia Promise Scholarship Act a permanent scholarship program.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee

**[SB 148](#)** (Hatchett-50th) Directs the Department of Education to establish a pilot program at select elementary and secondary school properties to assess implementation strategies and design standards for outdoor learning spaces. The bill also includes language replicated in HB 147 and SB 247 which increases the number of accumulated sick leave days teachers and other school personnel may take each school year for personal or professional reasons from three days to five days.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**[SB 150](#)** (Hickman-4th) Lowers the required years of creditable service for public school beneficiaries from 30 to 25 and shortens the retirement election period from one year to 60 days. The program is now extended through June 30, 2034.

STATUS: Senate Retirement Committee

**[SB 152](#)** (Dolezal-27th) Allows biological or adopted children of individuals who have been foster parents in the last ten years to qualify for Promise Scholarship funds regardless of their school attendance zones. Foster children are not eligible.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Awaits assignment to House Committee.

**[SB 171](#)** (Anavitarte-31st) Requires the State Board of Education to establish an advanced mathematics pathway for local school systems, allowing students in grades three through eight to take high school-level mathematics. Annual reports on the program's implementation and outcomes must be submitted to the Senate Education and Youth Committee.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**SB 179** (Dixon-45th) Requires schools to transfer academic and disciplinary records of transferring students within five days and mandates written reports to school officials and parents regarding law enforcement encounters with students. The bill introduces evidence-based suicide awareness, prevention training, and youth violence prevention programs, along with student violence prevention clubs and an anonymous statewide reporting system for potential threats. It also establishes criminal penalties for making terroristic threats or committing violent acts on school property, including felony charges for serious offenses. The legislation provides guidelines for the surrender and return of firearms in relation to school threats and outlines responsibilities for state agencies in implementing these provisions.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**SB 181** (Anavitarte-31st) Provides that no public school, local education agency, or public postsecondary institution shall, directly or indirectly, accept funding from or enter into a contract with a foreign adversary or individuals or entities working on behalf of such foreign adversary.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Higher Education Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 225** (Anderson-43rd) Prohibits discrimination on the basis of an individual's race due to a protective hairstyle or length in any student dress or grooming policy, program or activity conducted by an educational institution.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee

**SB 236** (Wicks-34th) Allows students whose parents or guardians are on active duty to be eligible for enrollment in the public school of the attendance zone in which they intend to reside, regardless of whether they have entered into a lease, purchased a house, or otherwise secured housing within such attendance zone.

STATUS: Senate Veterans, Military, & Homeland Security Committee.

**SB 249** (Dixon-45th) Requires students to complete a computer science course or in order to graduate high school beginning in 2031. This course requirement may be earned by students in grades eight through twelve and must be made available in a traditional classroom setting, blended learning environment, or an online technology-based format. Moreover, this course requirement is not set to increase the number of credits required for graduation.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee

**SB 250** (Dixon-45th) Creates the Wesley's Law Grant Program and requires the Department of Education to provide up to \$3 million in grant funding for the purpose of providing annual grants to participating local school systems or public schools, including charter schools, to acquire and maintain a supply of opioid antagonists.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee

- [SB 252](#)** (Halpern-39th) Allows municipalities to lease out, grant easements over, or convey certain property to an independent school system operating in such municipality for a valuable consideration. The bill states that if such property is conveyed, the governing authority of such municipality shall subsequently replace such property with one or more properties which are determined by such governing authority to be, in the aggregate, of substantially equivalent benefit to the citizens of such municipality.
- STATUS: Senate State & Local Governmental Operations
- [SB 253](#)** (Halpern-39th) Establishes a three-year pilot robotics program starting in the 2026-2027 school year for up to 10 eligible public high schools ranked in the lowest 25% statewide. STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee
- [SB 263](#)** (Mallow-2nd) Expands jurisdictional authority of school security personnel to include a specified area surrounding school property within five miles of school property.
- STATUS: Senate Public Safety Committee
- [SB 295](#)** (Avaviarte-31st) Requires local school systems to maintain and publish, within 60 days of from the initiation of a contract, a registry of all contracts worth more than \$10,000 involving state funds and the details of the contract. This will become effective January 1, 2026.
- STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).
- [SB 300](#)** (Jones-10th) Establishes a program to support the recruitment of teachers by providing grant funds to be paid by public schools to student teachers participating in the required student teaching component of their teacher education programs. The maximum grant funds allowed to each student teacher is \$7,500 and can be distributed in installments during the student teaching component of their education programs.
- STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee
- [SB 309](#)** (Mangham-55th) Repeals the Georgia Promise Scholarship Act.
- STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee
- [SR 52](#)** (Dolezal-27th) Constitutional Amendment-Imposes educational development impact fees on high-growth school systems experiencing a 20% or greater student enrollment increase over a 10-year period. The enabling legislation is SB 38.
- STATUS: Senate Economic Development & Tourism Committee
- [SR 217](#)** (Kennedy-18th) Creates a Senate Study Committee on Combating Chronic Absenteeism in Schools.



STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SR 237** (Hickman-4th) Urges the Professional Standards Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Education, the Department of Early Care and Learning, the Office of Student Achievement, the University System of Georgia, the Technical College System of Georgia, and the Georgia Student Finance Commission, to provide recommendations to support the state's K-12 education workforce and teacher and school leader pipeline.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee

**SR 301** (Davenport-17th) Creates the Senate Rosenwald School Study Committee.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee



## Higher Education

**HB 7** (Kendrick-95th) Provides for a \$4,000/year tax credit (3 year maximum) for workforce-ready graduates employed in high-tech full-time jobs in rural counties for at least 40 weeks during a 12-month period.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee. The bill will be heard in subcommittee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 18** (Sainz-180th) States that eligible Dual Enrollment high school students must currently be and remain legal residents of Georgia while in the program.

STATUS: House Higher Education Committee

**HB 38** (Martin-49th) Alters the definition of an "eligible student" for a need-based financial aid program to include a person who has also completed 70% of the credit requirements for a four-year program instead of 80%, and includes students who have completed 45% of the credit requirements for a two-year program.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Higher Education Committee.

**HB 56** (Petrea-166th) Expands postsecondary tuition grants to include spouses of law enforcement officers, firefighters, prison guards, emergency medical technician, or highway emergency response operators. The bill also provides for postsecondary tuition grants for a spouse and children of a public school employee killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty. The bill limits both types of grants to \$18,000 per academic year (lifetime maximum of \$72,000) at approved schools.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Higher Education Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 130** (Jaspere-11th) "Pay As You Earn Education Program (PAYE)"-Establishes a student loan program under the Georgia Student Finance Authority. Georgia residents attending eligible institutions can receive loans, contributing \$1,000 annually while repaying 3% of their income for 15 years post-graduation or opting for a 10-year fixed repayment with interest. Schools must enroll at least 1% of their freshman class, and participating private institutions receive a \$1,000 tax credit per student. Eligibility excludes non-citizens, defaulters, certain felons, and incarcerated individuals.

STATUS: House Higher Education Committee

**HB 150** (Fleming-114th) Requires the university system to produce quarterly reports related to funding from the People's Republic of China or any entity or official of the People's Republic of China or the Chinese Communist Party.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Higher Education Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 203** (Griffin-149th) Requires the Board of Regents to include graduates from historically black college or university (HBCU) that is a unit of the University System of Georgia.

STATUS: House Higher Education Committee

**HB 206** (Bell-75th) Removes provisions making students ineligible for HOPE scholarships or grants based solely based on a conviction for an offense involving marijuana or a controlled substance.

STATUS: House Higher Education Committee

**HB 284** (Schofield-63rd) Authorizes baby bond saving programs in which public funds can designated for qualified expenses such as paying for higher education, purchasing a home, investments, and other permitted purposes for the beneficiary coming of age. The affiliated Constitutional Amendment is HR 99.

STATUS: House Appropriations Committee

**HB 286** (Neal-79th) Creates a sub fund to provide startup capital to certain small businesses that are majority owned by students or graduates of a small business program of study of TCSG.

STATUS: House Higher Education Committee

**HB 385** (Holcomb-101st) Allows academically successful students pursuing both a baccalaureate and a first professional degree to use their full HOPE scholarship eligibility. Also extends full HOPE eligibility to students who begin a graduate program at an eligible institution within 18 months of earning their bachelor's degree.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Higher Education Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 417** (Gaines-120th) Revises the eligibility criteria for private colleges and universities, specifying that institutions in operation on or before January 1, 2021, qualify for tuition equalization grants.

STATUS: House Higher Education Committee

**HB 419** (Hawkins-27th) Authorizes the USG and TCSG personnel to carry and administer opioid antagonist (Naloxone) and requires such antagonist to also be stored on those campuses with automated external defibrillators (AEDs).

STATUS: House Higher Education Committee

**HB 505** (Hilton-48th) Changes the Individual Graduation Plan for high schoolers to the Career Development Plan, and incorporates students' extracurricular activities and a portfolio showcasing their resume, skills, awards, and activities. The plan must also contain concrete strategies and steps for achieving students' postsecondary goals. High school students without an existing plan must complete it within 90 days of enrollment. Requires the GaDOE to develop an electronic platform for the creation and revision of career development plans which will be made accessible to school personnel, students, and parents. The electronic platform will include information regarding in demand high work ready certifications and technical skills by Georgia employers. The bill also requires GaDOE to use de-identified data collected through this platform developed to evaluate the effectiveness of career development plans.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 510** (Jackson-68th) Allows courts to require one or both parents to provide financial assistance for a child enrolled in a postsecondary institution, including technical or vocational schools, colleges, or universities, but not beyond the child's 24th birthday. Verification of enrollment and attendance is required, and the court will consider tuition, fees, and related expenses when determining the amount. Enforcement of this support may be pursued by either parent, a non-parent custodian, a guardian, or the child receiving the support.

STATUS: House Judiciary Committee

**HB 541** (Dempsey-13th) Expands the eligibility for tuition equalization grants to private colleges and universities which offer programs in nursing, among other provisions.

STATUS: House Higher Education Committee

**HB 558** (Gaines-120th) Authorizes the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia to establish the adult workforce high school diploma program and provides for the selection of third-party providers to administer the program. The bill also sets criteria for selection, oversight and evaluation of such providers.

STATUS: House Higher Education Committee

**HB 602** (Fleming-114th) Requires post-secondary institutions that receive state funds to suspend state loans, grants, or scholarships for two academic years to students that are convicted of criminal offenses or that have violated the institution's Student Code of Conduct by means of material and substantial disruptive conduct on campus.

STATUS: House Higher Education Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 693** (Carpenter-4th) Expands the definition of "approved schools" relative to tuition equalization grants at private colleges and universities to include higher education schools that have existed in the state since January 1, 2015, have a baccalaureate degree-granting institution degree program in nursing, are accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, and are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

STATUS: House Hopper

**HB 695** (Santos-117th) Establishes a needs-based financial aid program under the Georgia Student Finance Authority to award grants to eligible postsecondary students who have not yet received their financial aid award with a lifetime maximum award amount of \$5,000.

STATUS: House Hopper

**HR 99** (Schofield-63rd) Constitutional Amendment authorizing baby bond saving programs in which public funds can be designated for qualified expenses such as paying for higher education, purchasing a home, investments, and other permitted purposes for the beneficiary coming of age. Enabling legislation is HB 284.

STATUS: House Appropriations Committee

**SB 149** (Hickman-4th) Revises the eligibility criteria for private colleges and universities, specifying that institutions in operation on or before January 1, 2021, qualify for tuition equalization grants.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Higher Education Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 154** (Hatchett-50th) Revises or removes references to the United States Department of Education from the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, and replaces a reference to student aid reports with FAFSA submission summary instead. STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 180** (Dixon-45th) Revises High Demand Apprenticeship Program to provide opportunities for apprenticeship sponsors to enter into apprenticeship program contracts with the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Higher Education Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 181** (Anavitarte-31st) Provides that no public school, local education agency, or public postsecondary institution shall, directly or indirectly, accept funding from or enter into a contract with a foreign adversary or individuals or entities working on behalf of such foreign adversary.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Higher Education Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 193** (Brass-6th) Establishes the Adult Workforce High School Diploma Program which allows eligible adults, 21 to 40 years of age, without a high school diploma to enroll in approved programs to earn a diploma. Third party providers are eligible for funding on the condition that graduation rates meet or exceed 50% and the cost per graduate must not exceed \$7,500 and that funding is based on student milestones.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Higher Education Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 225** (Anderson-43rd) Prohibits discrimination on the basis of an individual's race due to a protective hairstyle or length in any student dress or grooming policy, program or activity conducted by an educational institution.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee

**SB 266** (Esteves-35th) "College Success 529 Expansion Act" - Increases the maximum contribution limit for 529 savings trust accounts from \$235,000 to an amount determined by the State Board of Education, based on current and projected college costs. Additionally, raises the taxable income deduction for contributions to savings trust accounts per beneficiary from \$4,000 to \$5,000.

STATUS: Senate Finance Committee

**SR 237** (Hickman-4th) Urges the Professional Standards Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Education, the Department of Early Care and Learning, the Office of Student Achievement, the University System of Georgia, the Technical College System of Georgia, and the Georgia Student Finance Commission, to provide recommendations to support the state's K-12 education workforce and teacher and school leader pipeline.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee



## Environmental Safety

**HB 1** (Au-50th) Establishes the offense of making a firearm accessible to a child (except where possession of a firearm by a child is lawful) by charging a person with criminal negligence when a child gains access to a readily dischargeable firearm, and such person failed to secure the firearm or left the firearm in a place to which the person knew or should have known the child could gain access. The bill also provides for an affirmative defense to prosecution in certain circumstances. The bill also requires gun dealers to post a sign saying, "IT IS UNLAWFUL TO STORE, TRANSPORT, OR ABANDON AN UNSECURED FIREARM IN A PLACE WHERE CHILDREN CAN OBTAIN ACCESS TO THE FIREARM."

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee

**HB 2** (Au-50th) Provide a tax credit for firearm safe storage devices of up to \$300. This tax credit must be pre-approved and can only be applied once in a taxpayer's lifetime.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee

**HB 3** (Au-50th) Prohibits the transfer of firearms except when facilitated by a dealer and requires a universal background check for the transfer of firearms. Exceptions are made in certain circumstances.

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee

**HB 4** (Au-50th) Requires a three-day waiting period for the purchase or transfer of certain firearms.

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee

**HB 9** (Schofield-63rd) "Safer States Act" - Repeal and reduces the manufacturing and selling of chemical flame retardants or chemicals in such things as bedding, carpeting and certain children's products.

STATUS: House Natural Resources & Environment Committee

**HB 63** (Oliver-84th) Provides that any owner who fails to secure a loaded or unloaded firearm with knowledge that either a minor or any other person can possess such firearm will be guilty of a misdemeanor of when the firearm is obtained by a minor and exhibited in a public place or while making a threat of violence or by any individual, regardless of age, and used during the commission of a crime or during an act which results in the injury or death.

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee

**HB 64** (Oliver-84th) Requires assault weapon owners to maintain liability insurance in an amount not less than \$1 million for unintentional death, injury, or disability to a human being and for damage to property per incident arising out of the ownership, maintenance, operation, or use of an

assault weapon. Failure to provide proof of minimum liability insurance will result in a misdemeanor. Exceptions or affirmative defenses may apply.

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee

**HB 79** (Newton-127th) Provides a tax credit for firearm safe handling instructional courses and firearm secure storage devices of up to \$300. This tax credit must be pre-approved and can only be applied once in a taxpayer's lifetime. The aggregate limit of tax credits is capped at \$10 million per year.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Ways & Means Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 80** (Westbrook-163rd) Permits law enforcement agencies the option to destroy or sell certain firearms if left unclaimed.

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee

**HB 207** (Crawford-89th) Requires handguns and long guns in motor vehicles to be stored in a locked compartment.

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee

**HB 225** (Washburn-144th) Requires the removal of speeding radar devices in school zones and repeals the enforcement of automated traffic safety devices in those areas, effective July 1, 2026.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Motor Vehicles Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 344** (Parsons-44th) Defines civil liability penalties for motor vehicle owners who meet or overtake a school bus within a jurisdiction as \$300 for the first violation, \$500 for the second, and \$1,000 for the third.

STATUS: House Motor Vehicles Committee

**HB 393** (Cooper-45th) Updates state law to require cyclists to signal right and left turns with their hands unless doing so would pose a safety risk. Additionally, mandates that cyclists approaching a stop sign at an intersection with two or fewer lanes must come to a stop and yield the right of way to vehicles already in the intersection.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Motor Vehicles Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 424** (Meeks-178th) Clarifies that a manufacturer cannot be held liable for failing to warn consumers of health risks of pesticides above those required by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The bill specifically states that any pesticide registered with the Commissioner or the

Environmental Protection Agency that displays a label approved by the EPA shall be deemed a sufficient warning label in this state.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Agriculture & Consumer Affairs Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 452** (Roberts-52nd) Provides that persons convicted of family violence offenses or subject to family violence temporary protective orders cannot receive, possess, transport, purchase, or transfer firearms.

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee

**HB 453** (Roberts-52nd) Allows family members or law enforcement officers to petition the court for an order restricting firearm access if there is clear evidence that the individual poses a threat to themselves or others. It outlines procedures for issuing temporary and final risk protection orders, surrendering and returning firearms, and conducting hearings for order termination or extension. The legislation also includes penalties for violations, provisions for due process, and mandates the Administrative Office of the Courts to develop standardized forms and educational materials. The bill ensures law enforcement agencies manage firearm storage and retrieval while integrating orders into state and national criminal databases for enforcement.

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee

**HB 469** (Berry-56th) Prevents the carrying of weapons and firearms within school safety zones, school functions, or on transportation vehicles provided by a school.

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee

**HB 543** (Berry-56th) Mandates all child care learning centers and schools to test drinking water outlets for lead contamination and develop a remediation plan if contamination is found. If lead is detected, the facility must provide written notice of test results and the remediation plan to parents, guardians, students, and staff, publicly post test results and the remediation plan, submit test results and the plan to the Department of Public Health, provide an alternative source of safe drinking water. Subject to appropriations or other available funding, the Department of Education shall be authorized to provide grants to child care learning centers and schools in order to assist such centers and schools in complying with these requirements.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 601** (Jackson-68th) Makes it unlawful to intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly to sell or furnish a pistol or revolver handgun or long gun to a minor in certain circumstances. The bill also prohibits 3D printed firearms (commonly referred to as "ghost guns").

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee



**HB 611** (Lumsden-12th) "Forever Chemicals Transparency Act" - Regulate harmful chemicals known as PFAS (perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances) in industrial wastewater. It requires large industrial facilities that discharge at least 25,000 gallons of wastewater per day to follow strict federal treatment standards. Companies that release PFAS into public water treatment systems must disclose this information and report annually starting in April 2026. These reports must include details on the amount of PFAS discharged, the identity of known or suspected PFAS, and whether steps have been taken to reduce or eliminate these harmful chemicals. The information must also be shared with the Environmental Protection Division.

STATUS: House Natural Resources & Environment Committee

**HB 651** (Powell-33rd) Requires the installation of automatic traffic safety enforcement devices within 500 feet of any warning sign announcing a school zone speed limit reduction. Violations may be enforced using recorded images for drivers exceeding the speed limit by more than 10 miles per hour. Enforcement applies one hour before and after a school's official start time and one hour before and after its dismissal time.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Motor Vehicles Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 665** (McCollum-30th) Transfers all authorities and responsibilities relating to environmental health from the county boards of health to the Department of Public Health on or after January 1, 2028.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HR 9** (Moore-91st) Constitutional Amendment creating the Safe Water and Toxic Enforcement Fund. The enabling legislation is HB 193.

STATUS: House Natural Resources & Environment Committee

**SB 19** (Lucas-26th) Requires a ten-day waiting period for the purchase or transfer of certain firearms.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**SB 47** (Anavitarte-31st) Exempts sales taxes for eleven days each year on firearms, ammunition, gun safes, and related accessories, starting on the second Friday of October with a sunset date of July 1st, 2030.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Ways & Means Committee.

**SB 49** (Parent-44th) Establishes the offense of making firearms accessible to a child by failure to secure the firearm or leaving the firearm in a place where a child can knowingly gain access; a person commits the offense of making a firearm accessible to a child if such child gains access to a readily dischargeable firearm, and the person with criminal negligence Requires firearm dealers to display a conspicuous notice that reads: IT IS UNLAWFUL TO STORE, TRANSPORT, OR ABANDON AN UNSECURED FIREARM IN A PLACE WHERE CHILDREN ARE LIKELY TO BE AND CAN OBTAIN ACCESS TO THE FIREARM.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**SB 53** (Jones-10th) Requires the GA Department of Public Safety, in coordination with GaDOE, to develop a program to educate the public on safe storage of firearms, contingent upon funding.

STATUS: Senate Public Safety Committee

**SB 66** (Parent-44th) Prohibits persons convicted of misdemeanor crimes of family violence or persons subject to family violence protective orders from receiving, possessing, or transporting a firearm.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**SB 75** (Burns-23rd) Provides for standards for signs warning of a reduced speed limit in a school zone and signs warning of the use of automated traffic enforcement safety devices. The bill also authorizes district attorneys, solicitors-general, and prosecuting attorneys to enforce civil monetary penalties relative to the enforcement of laws regarding speeding in a school zone using recorded images.

STATUS: Senate Public Safety Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**SB 144** (Watson-11th) Clarifies that a manufacturer cannot be held liable for failing to warn consumers of health risks of pesticides above those required by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The bill specifically states that any pesticide registered with the Commissioner or the Environmental Protection Agency that displays a label approved by the EPA shall be deemed a sufficient warning label in this state.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Agriculture & Consumer Affairs Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 165** (Merritt-9th) Regarding social media and internet safety for minors, the bill provides for account termination upon the request of minors or their parents or guardians, and for the deletion of personal information, subject to exceptions. The bill also increases the amount of the fine for which providers of a social media platform may be liable and creates a civil remedy for minors to recover damages against providers of a social media platform.

STATUS: Senate Children & Families Committee

**SB 172** (Mallow-2nd) Repeals all laws relative to enforcement of speeding violations in school zones through the use of automated traffic enforcement safety devices and prohibits a local governing body or law enforcement agency from entering into or renewing a contract that provides for enforcement of laws relative to speeding violations in school zones through the use of automated traffic enforcement safety devices.

STATUS: Senate Public Safety Committee

**SB 224** (Harrell-40th) Establishes a voluntary "Do Not Sell" list for firearms, allowing individuals to voluntarily prohibit themselves from purchasing a firearm. This must be done in the presence of a healthcare provider and a witness under oath before a probate court judge in the person's county. Once registered, the healthcare provider or probate judge must transmit the information to the Georgia Crime Information Center within one business day. Any individual on the list who knowingly possesses a firearm will be subject to a \$25 civil penalty. A person may request removal from the list no sooner than seven days after the initial registration, and removal must be completed within 21 days upon confirmation of the request. Evidence of an individual's registration or removal from the list cannot be used in criminal prosecutions, for employment purposes, to deny or modify insurance coverage, or as grounds for discrimination under fair housing provisions. Records related to the registration or removal process will not be subject to public disclosure under Georgia's Open Records Act.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**SB 232** (Jones-10th) Requires that any firearm that is used as a weapon in the commission of any crime and is discharged at a person under 18 years of age is declared to be contraband and shall be destroyed.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**SB 264** (Goodman-8th) The Georgia Resilience Act establishes the Georgia Resilience Office within the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency, with the primary purpose of planning and coordinating statewide resilience and disaster recovery efforts. This office will create a statewide resilience plan and mechanisms to coordinate, integrate, and expand disaster recovery, hazard mitigation, and resilience-related programs and activities across state agencies. The plan, due by December 31, 2026, will include an assessment of known risks in each regional commission, an evaluation of the vulnerability of infrastructure systems—such as transportation, energy distribution, and critical infrastructure—an identification of data and information gaps that affect the capacity of state agencies and local governments, and a prioritized list of specific policies, programs, and resilience actions to reduce vulnerabilities and mitigate the adverse impacts of extreme weather and disasters.

STATUS: Senate Public Safety Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).



## Shelter & Nutrition

**HB 14** (Carpenter-4th) Designates cornbread as the official Georgia state bread.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Economic Development & Tourism Committee.

**HB 21** (Scott-76th) "Healthy Food Access Tax Credit Act" - creates a tax credit of 15% of incurred expenses for the development or improvement of a property that sells healthy foods in a less developed area.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee

**HB 60** (Barnes-86th) Ensures that all public school students have access to high-quality and high-nutrition free breakfast and lunch.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 65** (Moore-91st) Designates collard greens are designated as the official Georgia state greens, and 'potlikka' as the official Georgia state dipping sauce of the official Georgia state bread. (See HB 14).

STATUS: House Special Rules Committee

**HB 183** (Seabaugh-34th) Provides guidance on the termination and removal of unauthorized guests by an innkeeper, allowing them to request removal by a peace officer five days after giving notice of payment to the guest.

STATUS: House Judiciary Committee

**HB 188** (Lim-98th) Permits an adult resident, or the parent/guardian of a minor resident, who has obtained a civil or criminal court order, to submit a written request to terminate their rental agreement.

STATUS: House Judiciary Committee

**HB 193** (Moore-91st) "Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 2025" prohibits businesses from knowingly discharging, releasing, or exposing individuals to chemicals known to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity without providing a reasonable warning. It also requires the Governor to compile and maintain a list of chemicals linked to these health risks. The associated Constitutional Amendment is HR 9.

STATUS: House Natural Resources & Environment Committee

**HB 230** (Neal-79th) Establishes a tax credit for certain expenses incurred by taxpayers who sell newly constructed single-family homes to an individual or related party for a price not exceeding \$200,000. Eligible construction expenses include costs incurred on or after January 1, 2026. Taxpayers may claim an income tax credit equal to 20% of eligible expenses. Any unused tax credits may be carried forward for up to five years. Additionally, unused or previously claimed but unutilized tax credits may be transferred or sold, in whole or in part, to other Georgia taxpayers, with a minimum transfer amount of 60% of the tax credit value.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee

**HB 233** (Townsend-179th) Designates Brunswick stew as the official Georgia state stew.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Economic Development & Tourism Committee.

**HB 299** (Taylor-92nd) Repeals Code section 44-7-19 which prohibits local governments from regulating the amount of rent to be charged for privately owned, single-family or multiple-unit residential rental property.

STATUS: House Governmental Affairs Committee

**HB 302** (Gilliard-162nd) "Leave No Georgia Child Hungry Act" - Requires the State Board of Education to annually determine and allocate state funds to provide free, quality, and healthy meals to students enrolled in after-school and summer school programs in public schools. These state funds will supplement any available federal funds to ensure meal availability. It also mandates the State Board of Education to establish minimum nutritional requirements for these meal programs, ensuring they meet or exceed federal guidelines. Additionally, local school systems must submit compliance plans and will receive assistance in securing start-up grants for implementing the meal programs. Local school systems are encouraged to establish these free meal programs, and those that do will be reimbursed by the state according to policies set by the State Board of Education.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 305** (Olaley-59th) Protect the Dream Act - Prohibits investment firms with assets under management below \$6.25 million or ownership of at least 25 single-family homes in a single county from acquiring additional single-family homes in Georgia.

STATUS: House Governmental Affairs Committee

**HB 357** (Franklin-160th) Establishes a tax credit program for contributions made to certified exempted mortgage loan originators, with a statewide cap of \$20 million per year and a \$2 million limit per organization. From 2026 to 2030, taxpayers can receive credits based on their contributions, with limits varying by filing status and business type. Contributions require preapproval from the commissioner, and organizations must maintain compliance with reporting and expenditure requirements, including limiting administrative costs to 10%. Violations can lead to revocation of qualified status. Unused tax credits can be carried forward for up to five years but cannot be applied retroactively.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee

**HB 399** (Oliver-84th) Requires any landlord that is not a resident of this state that owns or operates 25 or more single-family or duplex residential rental properties in GA to shall a licensed broker (that may or may not reside within this state) and at least one person to be located within this state, who shall be responsible for receiving, coordinating, managing, and responding to communications from tenants of such landlord related to maintenance and other issues related to such properties.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Governmental Affairs Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**HB 415** (Jones-25th) Any property owner may file an affidavit with the Clerk of the Superior Court in the county where the property is located, requesting the removal of an unlawful tenant. The tenant may be removed within one calendar day upon confirmation of the owner's affidavit.

STATUS: House Judiciary Committee

**HB 555** (McCollum-30th) Prohibits any business enterprise to obtain, own, or possess, an interest in more than 2,000 single-family residences or more than ten multifamily residences located in the state. Allows for any claimant to bring a civil action in any court of competent jurisdiction against a business that obtains, owns, or possess an interest in a residential property to recover the greater of actual damages caused by such violation or statutory damages in the amount of \$15,000.00 for each violation and the cost incurred by the attorney fees. Moreover, each residential property in violation shall serve as a separate violation.

STATUS: House Judiciary Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 642** (Lim-98th) Prohibit public primary and secondary schools from serving or selling, or allowing a third party to serve or sell, food or beverages that contain synthetic dye. This does not apply to parents or guardians at a public school that provides food for a parent's or guardian's classroom or school event.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**HB 679** (Sanchez-42nd) Prohibits price-fixing; any agreement that is collecting historical or contemporaneous rental prices, supply levels, or rental agreement termination and renewal dates of residential properties, including nonpublic information, from two or more landlords that compete in the same or a similar market (price fixing) will be an unenforceable contract. Any person that enters into or causes to be entered into such agreement shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment for not less than one nor more than five years or by a fine not less than \$1,000, not more than \$5,000 or both by imprisonment and fine.

STATUS: House Judiciary Committee

**HB 689** (Carpenter-4th) Creates a flexible local grant program within the Georgia Department of Community Affairs State Housing Trust Fund for the Homeless to provide short term emergency rental and utility assistance, legal representation in eviction, mediation, and other homelessness prevention supports.

STATUS: House State Planning & Community Affairs Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 696** (Santos-117th) Requires breakfast and lunch to be offered at no cost to students who attend a public school which is among the lowest performing 25 percent of public schools in the state.

STATUS: House Hopper

**HR 191** (Olaley-59th) Creates a House Study Committee on the Use of Local Fees to Support Affordable Housing

STATUS: House Special Rules Committee

**HR 207** (Bell-75th) Creates of a House Study Committee on the Eradication of Homelessness.

STATUS: House Special Rules Committee

**HR 272** (Glaize-67th) A resolution encouraging the United Department of Agriculture to modify SNAP eligibility criteria for students enrolled in higher education.

STATUS: House Special Rules Committee

**SB 170** (Jackson-41st) Establishes the Georgia Interagency Council for Homelessness to ensure a coordinated statewide approach to addressing homelessness.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Government Oversight Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**SB 184** (Albers-56th) Authorizes some public safety personnel to remove an unauthorized occupant within five days of receiving an affidavit from the rightful occupant stating that the individual refuses to vacate the premises. Neither the rightful owner nor law enforcement personnel shall be liable for any loss, destruction, or damage to property during the removal process. Any person who violates these provisions shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature. Any person who commits forgery in connection with this process shall be guilty of a felony and subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of at least one year. The bill also applied to inns.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**SB 217** (Islam Parkes-7th) Ensures that all public school students have access to high-quality and high-nutrition free breakfast and lunch.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee

**SB 251** (Jackson-41st) Prohibits unlawful practices for a landlord to offer, display, or advertise the rental price of any residential property without clearly and conspicuously disclosing the total rental price, and enter into any rental agreement with, or accept payment from, a consumer before disclosing clearly and conspicuously to such consumer the total rental price for such residential property or charge or otherwise impose on a consumer any deceptive fee in connection with renting any residential property.

STATUS: Senate Economic Development & Tourism Committee

**[SB 257](#)** (James-28th) Allows local governments, certified by the Department of Human Services, to adopt and implement an affordable family housing assistance program through ordinance or resolution. The program must provide loans, grants, guarantees, or other forms of financial assistance solely for the purpose of constructing or rehabilitating affordable family housing, or for offering assistance with payment of security deposits, first month's rent, and last month's rent to low-income or very low-income individuals.

STATUS: Senate Children & Families Committee

**[SB 272](#)** (Kemp-38th) Prohibits landlords from requiring prospective tenants to provide income information that exceeds three times the monthly rent when the tenant is using a government voucher to subsidize their rent. Tenants are allowed to withhold rent payments for repairs, and may deduct up to \$500 or the amount of one month's rent for necessary repairs. This deduction can be made as often as needed, provided the tenant has notified the landlord of the required repairs. The repair must be essential to the tenant's physical health or safety. The tenant must also provide a subsequent written notice (via mail, email, or other methods) if the landlord has had a reasonable amount of time to repair the issue but has not made a diligent effort to do so.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**[SB 313](#)** (Esteves-35th) Allows for investigations or inspections of residential rental property containing four or more dwelling units when there are reasonable suspicions of a code violation. Authorizes a local government to request the registration of a residential property owned directly or indirectly by any person or entity that owns at least 20 residential properties in GA.

STATUS: Senate Hopper



## Miscellaneous

**[HB 34](#)** (Washburn-144th) The Secretary of State shall create a professional licensing board tracking solution that will track the compliance of all licenses and continuing education requirements for license renewal beginning on January 1st, 2026. Additionally, the bill provides that a professional licensing board shall not renew a license until the applicant has complied with all applicable continuing education requirements as verified using the continuing education tracking solution, with some exceptions.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Regulated Industries & Utilities Committee.

**[HB 98](#)** (Hugley-141st) Provides for a state income tax credit equal to 10% of the federal child tax credit.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee



[HB 99](#) (Hugley-141st) Increases state income tax credit from 30% to 100% based on the federal child/dependent care tax credit. The bill also states that if the total amount of the tax credit exceeds the taxpayer's income tax liability for a taxable year, the excess funds shall be refunded to the taxpayer.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee

[HB 107](#) (Ballard-147th) Permits the use and creation of digital verifiable professional licenses for spouses of servicemembers.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Defense & Veterans Affairs Committee. The bill moves on to Rules Committee.

[HB 111](#) (Hong-103rd) Reduces the state income tax rate from 5.39% to 5.19% until January 1, 2026, upon which such rate shall be reduced by 0.10% annually.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Ways & Means Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

[HB 112](#) (McDonald III-26th) Provides a one-time tax credit to individuals who filed on time tax returns for 2023 and 2024.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Ways & Means Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

[HB 122](#) (Byrd-20th) Recognizes that life is protected and valued at the time of moment of conception and is afforded all the rights and privileges of the U.S Constitution.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

[HB 147](#) (Thomas-21st) Requires Georgia Technology Authority an annual inventory of artificial intelligence usage by state agencies.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Economic Development & Tourism Committee.

[HB 161](#) (Crowe-118th) Permits Georgia Bureau of Investigation to issue electronic subpoenas for cyber enabled threats with the exception of disclosing ongoing investigations. Revises the definition of domestic terrorism and establishes new penalties including life imprisonment or death for cases of fatalities.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

[HB 166](#) (Franklin-160th) Recognizes the fourth Friday in November as "National Sugarcane Syrup Day" in Georgia.

STATUS: House Special Rules Committee

[HB 177](#) (Cooper-45th) Provides protection for household pets in both family violence and dating violence protective orders.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee.

[HB 181](#) (Ehrhart-36th) Creates the issuance of a "Certificate of Foreign Birth" by the state registrar in which the child must have automatically acquired U.S. citizenship following a foreign adoption and possess a Certificate of Citizenship.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Children & Families Committee.

[HB 259](#) (Sharper-177th) Recognizes the second Monday in August of each year as "Local Elected Officials Day in Georgia."

STATUS: House Special Rules Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

[HB 303](#) (Gilliard-162nd) Original 33 Memorial Act - This bill honors the Original 33, the Black legislators expelled from the General Assembly following the end of Reconstruction with a monument on the state capitol grounds.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Awaits Assignment to Senate Committee.

[HB 316](#) (Park-107th) Provides a state income tax credit equal to 20% of federal earned income tax.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee

[HB 319](#) (Clark-100th) Provides that any state or local official or employee who violates state law related to deterring the concealing, harboring, or shielding of an illegal alien will be guilty of a criminal offense and may be subject to removal and replacement from their position by the Governor and prosecuted by the Attorney General.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

[HB 342](#) (Horner-3rd) Allows licensees to advertise or market low THC oil or products to registered patients or the public.

STATUS: House Regulated Industries Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

[HB 346](#) (Parsons-44th) Prohibits municipalities and counties from using the public, educational, and governmental programming (PEG) channels for political purposes including, but not limited to broadcasting partisan political programming or content associated with the campaign of any candidate for public office.

STATUS: House Energy, Utilities & Telecommunications Committee. The bill will be heard in subcommittee TODAY (MONDAY).

[HB 364](#) (Neal-79th) Allows noncustodial parents to claim a tax credit for qualified child and dependent care expenses if such parent provided at least half of the qualifying child's support for the year.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee

[HB 375](#) (Smith-18th) Excludes overtime compensation from taxation for full time employees that work over 40 hours a week beginning on or after January 1st, 2026.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee

[HB 383](#) (Cox-28th) Provides for high school student athletes and prospective student athletes to receive name, image, or likeness compensation and for the automatic expiration of such contracts after the student athlete graduates or is no longer enrolled. The bill also to provides for application to certain athletic associations and allows for professional representation of student athletes and prospective student athletes.

STATUS: House Education Committee

[HB 418](#) (Schofield-63rd) Requires the establishment of blocked trust accounts for minors rendering artistic or creative services in this state and for the Commissioner of Labor to investigate and determine conditions of employment of child performers prior to the commencement of such employment. The bill also provides for requirements related to such accounts for minors engaged in online content creation and requires the conditions of employment for a child performer to not be detrimental to such minor's health, well-being, and education.

STATUS: House Industry & Labor Committee

[HB 479](#) (Carson-46th) Allows excess tax credits tax credits in excess of the amount that can be claimed in a given year for contributions to student scholarship organizations, rural hospitals organizations, grants to public schools, foster child support organizations, and law enforcement organizations to be carried forward to subsequent years.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee

[HB 678](#) (Hilton-48th) Provides that authorities with less than state-wide jurisdiction shall have the same sovereign immunities as provided to counties and that officers and employees of such authorities in the conduct of their official duties shall have the same official immunities as provided to officers and employees of a county performing duties on behalf of such county. The bill also sets limitations on the amounts and types of damages and interest recoverable against an authority.

STATUS: House Governmental Affairs Committee

[HB 681](#) (Clark-108th) Allows the sealing of name change petitions upon request.

STATUS: House Judiciary Committee

[HB 686](#) (Wiedower-121st) Authorizes and provides for the regulation and taxation of sports betting. The bill establishes the Georgia Sports Betting Proceeds Trust Fund and targets some proceeds to certain resources and safeguards for individuals with problem gambling or a betting or gambling disorder, as well as voluntary Pre-K (i.e., Georgia's Pre-K Program) and postsecondary scholarships (e.g., HOPE and Zell Miller scholarships and grants).

STATUS: House Hopper

[HB 691](#) (Crowe-118th) The Georgia Resilience Act establishes the Georgia Resilience Office within the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency, with the primary purpose of planning and coordinating statewide resilience and disaster recovery efforts. This office will create a statewide resilience plan and mechanisms to coordinate, integrate, and expand disaster recovery, hazard mitigation, and resilience-related programs and activities across state agencies. The plan, due by December 31, 2026, will include an assessment of known risks in each regional commission, an evaluation of the vulnerability of infrastructure systems—such as transportation, energy distribution, and critical infrastructure—an identification of data and information gaps that affect the capacity of state agencies and local governments, and a prioritized list of specific policies, programs, and resilience actions to reduce vulnerabilities and mitigate the adverse impacts of extreme weather and disasters.

STATUS: House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee. The bill will be heard in committee TODAY (MONDAY).

[HR 120](#) (Holly-116th) Constitutional Amendment extending the regular legislative sessions from a maximum of 40 legislative days to 90 legislative days. (Enabling legislation has yet to appear in the hopper.)

STATUS: House Special Rules Committee

[HR 257](#) (Hugley-141st) Creates the House Special Committee on Oversight of Federal Funds.

STATUS: House Budget & Fiscal Affairs Oversight Committee

[HR 396](#) (Campbell-35th) Constitutional Amendment that authorizes the General Assembly to create the Georgia's Children First Trust Fund which will provide financial assistance for child care services in the state, and authorizes the General Assembly to make a one-time funding of \$3 Billion.

STATUS: House Appropriations Committee

**[HR 450](#)** (Wiedower-121st) A Constitutional Amendment to authorize the operation and regulation of sports betting and casino gambling activities in this state. All authorized casino gambling activities shall take place at a casino facility. The proceeds of the sports betting and casino gambling activities at a rate of 20% of gross income will be paid into a special trust fund to be created by the General Assembly.

STATUS: House Hopper

**[SB 21](#)** (Tillery-19th) Waives sovereign and governmental immunities for local governments and their officials and employees for a violation of the prohibition on immigration sanctuary policies; and requires sheriffs, jailers, and deputies to honor immigration detainer requests issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee.

**[SB 36](#)** (Setzler-37th) Georgia Religious Freedom Restoration Act-Mandates that the government cannot substantially restrict a person's religious practice unless it can prove the restriction serves a compelling governmental interest and is implemented in the least restrictive way possible. These protections apply specifically to Georgia's state and local governments. Individuals who believe their religious rights have been violated can file a legal claim or defense and seek relief, including attorney's fees. However, the bill clarifies that it does not alter the Establishment Clause, meaning it does not require government funding or benefits for religious activities.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**[SB 37](#)** (Albers-56th) Creates the Georgia Board for Artificial Intelligence and requires that all governmental entities develop and maintain artificial intelligence system usage plans which are published on their website.

STATUS: Senate Economic Development & Tourism Committee

**[SB 46](#)** (Harbin-16th) Establishes a State Government Service Delivery Lead to coordinate improvements in public services across Georgia agencies. Each agency must appoint a service delivery official to enhance efficiency, transparency, and accessibility. Agencies will submit annual improvement plans.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Government Oversight Committee. The bill will be on the floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**[SB 55](#)** (Hickman-4th) Phased out the payment of subminimum wage to persons with disabilities and repeals provisions concerning exemptions to the state minimum wage law for persons with disabilities. The bill also states that no employer shall utilize a certificate issued by the United States Department of Labor pursuant to 29 U.S.C. Section 214(c) to pay individuals with disabilities less than the federal minimum wage.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Insurance & Labor Committee. The bill will be on the floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**[SB 67](#)** (Parent-44th) Establishes a state tax credit equal to 20% of the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for eligible taxpayers. If the credit exceeds the taxpayer's state income tax liability, the excess amount will be refunded.

STATUS: Senate Finance Committee

**[SB 68](#)** (Kennedy-18th) Introduces significant changes to civil practice, tort law, contracts, and motor vehicle regulation. Limits owner liability for injuries that occur on their property, prevents foreign adversaries from paying for lawsuits and mandates more disclosure and limits on outside groups paying for civil cases. The bill also prevents plaintiffs' lawyers from suggesting a monetary value to compensate for pain and suffering, and allows plaintiffs to show actual medical costs to jurors. It enables trials to be split into multiple stages so that juries can determine liability and damages separately. The bill allows juries to consider whether or not a plaintiff was wearing a seatbelt in injury lawsuits and prevents lawyers from recovering legal fees twice in certain cases.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Rules Committee.

**[SB 69](#)** (Kennedy-18th) This is part of the Administration's tort reform effort: Requires any third-party entities to be registered with the Department of Banking and Finance and limiting their ability to exert influence over the plaintiffs' legal decisions, such as when and how plaintiffs settle a case, and prevents foreign governments from becoming litigation financiers.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Rules Committee.

**[SB 71](#)** (Beach-21st) Provides that any compensation a student-athlete receives for the athlete's name, image, or likeness at a postsecondary education institution is not exempt from state or federal income taxes.

STATUS: Senate Finance Committee

**[SB 74](#)** (Burns-23rd) Provides an affirmative defense to prosecution if the charged person is employed to work in a public library or any library operated as a part of any school, college, or university, and such individual can demonstrate that he or she has made a good faith attempt to identify and remove from access to minors all physical or electronic material harmful to minors.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Education & Youth Committee. The bill will be on the floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**[SB 97](#)** (Setzler-37th) Provides that it is illegal to intentionally and secretly place or direct someone else to place an electronic monitoring device to track a person's physical location without their consent. Exceptions apply when the vehicle or aircraft owner, lessor, lessee, or lienholder consents, when U.S. military personnel act within their official duties, when a parent or legal guardian tracks a child under 21 or an incapacitated individual, when mobile service providers track users for service purposes, or when manufacturers install tracking devices in vehicles or

aircraft. Additionally, any other similar acts that invade privacy are also prohibited. This law does not apply to automated license plate recognition systems.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**[SB 133](#)** (Davenport-17th) Requires public schools to provide Braille instruction for blind or visually impaired students through individualized education programs, ensuring their proficiency in Braille reading and writing is comparable to that of their peers of similar ability and grade level. On and after July 1, 2025, the Professional Standards Commission shall not issue or renew a license to teach academic instruction to blind or visually impaired students unless the educator has, as part of his or her standard renewal requirements of completing a course in Braille instruction approved by the commission, demonstrates competence in reading and writing Braille by holding a nationally recognized certificate in Braille approved by the commission, or passing a test in Braille approved by the commission.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee

**[SB 207](#)** (Strickland-42nd) Creates a preclearance process in the licensing of individuals with criminal records who make an application to or are investigated by certain licensing boards and commissions. The bill also requires certain licensing authorities to provide evidence to support adverse licensing decisions based on criminal convictions, and requires a hearing prior to denying certain applicants on the basis of an individual's criminal record. The bill also allows an applicant to submit his or her own criminal record when applying for certain licenses, among other provisions.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**[SB 212](#)** (Still-48th) Prohibits the disclosure of public student directory information to political candidates, campaign committees, political action committees, political organizations, or persons or groups acting on their behalf. The bill also requires that each person who, while located on public school property, appraises any public school students of their right to register as an elector and to vote in elections or of their obligation to register with the Selective Service System or who arranges for or assists one or more public school students to register to vote shall attest in writing that he or she is not acting directly or indirectly on behalf of any candidate, political party, PAC or political organization. The requirements of this subsection shall not apply to a public school administrator, teacher, or other school personnel while engaged in the performance of official duties.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Ethics Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**[SB 213](#)** (Kirkpatrick-32nd) Bans commercial cheating services that target students and examinees seeking a professional license as an unlawful, unfair, and deceptive trade practice. The bill states "it shall be unlawful for any person, for a commercial purpose, to provide or otherwise cause to be provided any work product to a student or examinee in a substantially completed form that could, under the circumstances, reasonably be considered as being, or forming a part of, an assessment task."

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Regulated Industries & Utilities Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

**[SB 219](#)** (James-28th) Requires any retail establishment that has a toilet facility for employee use to allow a customer to use such toilet facility during normal business hours if the toilet is maintained in a reasonably safe manner. The customer requesting access must provide a copy of a written statement signed and issued by a healthcare provider that indicates the customer suffers from an eligible medical condition.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

**[SB 222](#)** (Davenport-17th) Creates the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The commission shall assume the duties and functions under set by the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency with respect to blind or visually impaired persons. The commission shall be assigned to the Department of Human Services for administrative purposes only. The commission is responsible to: carry out a state plan for vocational rehabilitation services for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, provide independent living services for blind or visually impaired individuals, contract with private agencies to provide services including the instruction of Braille, serve as the state licensing agency for blind and visually impaired individuals, create and maintain instructional media, coordinate with the Georgia Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled to ensure that all offerings of the program are robustly utilized many as many blind persons as possible, provide technical assistance to agencies to assist the Department of Education with aids and services to blind or visually impaired students, conduct customer satisfaction reviews, and develop and administer programs that will further the provision of services to the blind or visually impaired.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**[SB 247](#)** (Still-48th) Increases the number of accumulated sick leave days teachers and other school personnel may take each school year for personal or professional reasons from three days to five days.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee

**[SB 248](#)** (Dixon-45th) The bill defines "harmful to minors," "restricted materials," and "sexually explicit materials" and also establishes the Georgia Council on Library Materials Standards, which will establish standards for the designation of restricted materials by local boards of education, standards for the use and restriction of instructional materials, and standards for the use and restriction of public school library collection materials.

STATUS: Senate Education & Youth Committee



**SR 131** (Summers-13th) A Constitutional Amendment to authorize the operation and regulation of sports betting and casino gambling activities in this state. All authorized casino gambling activities shall take place at a casino facility. The proceeds of the sports betting and casino gambling activities at a rate of 20% of gross income will be paid into a special trust fund to be created by the General Assembly. (Enabling legislation has yet to appear in the hopper.)

STATUS: Senate Regulated Industries & Utilities Committee

**SR 167** (Kemp-38th) Constitutional Amendment to recognize marriage as any union between two persons legally authorized to marry, regardless of race, gender, or biological sex, who are of sound mind, who have no living spouse from a previously dissolved marriage, and who are not related to their prospective spouse by blood or marriage within the prohibited degrees.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee



## Advocacy Ask

### Ask #1: Out-of-School Time Funds and Liaison

### Ask #2: Expansion of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

### Ask #3: School Social Workers

### Ask #1: Out-of-School Time Funds and Liaison

#### The Ask:

Ask members of the House Appropriations - Education Subcommittee to:

1. Fund afterschool and summer learning programs by funding the Georgia Dept. of Education's BOOST 2.0 grants in the FY26 budget at \$20 million.
2. Create an Out-of-School Time liaison position to coordinate afterschool and summer learning policy across the state agencies that handle such programs: GaDOE, Dept. of Human Services, Dept. of Early Care and Learning.

#### What is BOOST?

For the last three years, GaDOE, in partnership with GSAN, used a total of \$85 Million in COVID relief funding to create the Building Opportunities in Out-of-School Time (BOOST) grant program, which has funded evidence-based afterschool and summer learning programs. The federal funds for the program have expired, but the BOOST outcomes for kids have been amazing! (SEE THIS MEMO!) SW pls add that new memo Uzma did on the 3 year

results *Therefore, in order to keep the progress for kids going*, Georgia needs to target dollars into more grants, which we are calling “BOOST 2.0”.

### The Why:

The BOOST 2.0 Grant Program, (housed at the Georgia Department of Education) will build off the existing infrastructure and partnerships of BOOST. This will:

- Create a statewide framework that expands access to and assures quality of afterschool and summer learning opportunities.
- Prioritize funding support to OST programs that serve vulnerable youth, such as those who are economically disadvantaged, have a disability, and English language learners.
- Use existing state infrastructure to provide training and technical assistance to OST providers fiscal administration, quality measurement, program effectiveness, and provider leadership.
- Leverage program evaluation and evidence collection strategies embedded within the BOOST grant to determine how to best serve current and prospective afterschool and summer learning providers in the future.

An Interagency Liaison can coordinate afterschool and summer programming between the Georgia DECAL, DHS/DFCS, and GaDOE. If such a liaison is placed in Georgia Department of Education (Office of Whole Child Supports), efficiencies and communications can be maximized in:

- Alignment and coordination of OST services provided to youth and families;
- Development of reliable protocols for interagency communication regarding implementation of similar youth enrichment programs;
- Streamlining of grant application and administration to help both large and small organizations; and
- Streamlining of training, technical assistance, and professional learning provided to organizations funded and/or licensed by the agencies.

For more on OST Funding and Programs in GA, [check out this Brief](#) from the Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network!

### The Message:

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_,

Please include funding in the FY26 budget to continue the BOOST (Building Opportunities in Out-of-School Time) grants, which have been critical to student success and are no longer supported by federal COVID relief dollars. These funds have supported afterschool and summer learning in 115 of Georgia’s 159 counties and served about 80,000 kids K-12 year round. Additionally, please fund an interagency liaison to coordinate afterschool and summer programs across GaDOE, DHS, and DECAL. BOOST supports working parents while enhancing student literacy, mental health, and career-ready skills.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests and thank you for all you do every day on behalf of Georgia’s children and families.

### The How (a.k.a. Who to Contact):

Call members of the House Appropriations Education Subcommittee:

Rep. Matt Dubnik, Chair	404-463-2246	<a href="mailto:matt.dubnik@house.ga.gov">matt.dubnik@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Will Wade, Vice Chair	404-651-7737	<a href="mailto:will.wade@house.ga.gov">will.wade@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Kimberly Alexander	404-656-7859	<a href="mailto:kimberly.alexander@house.ga.gov">kimberly.alexander@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Robert Dickey	404-656-5099	<a href="mailto:robert.dickey@house.ga.gov">robert.dickey@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Chris Erwin	404-656-7850	<a href="mailto:chris.erwin@house.ga.gov">chris.erwin@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Leesa Hagan	404-656-0177	<a href="mailto:leesa.hagan@house.ga.gov">leesa.hagan@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Edna Jackson	404-656-0265	<a href="mailto:edna.jackson@house.ga.gov">edna.jackson@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Jan Jones	404-656-5072	<a href="mailto:jan.jones@house.ga.gov">jan.jones@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Todd Jones	404-656-9210	<a href="mailto:todd.jones@house.ga.gov">todd.jones@house.ga.gov</a>

### Ask #2: Expansion of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

#### The Ask:

Call members of the House Rules Committee and ask that they put House Bill 500 on the floor before Crossover Day (that's THIS THURSDAY!).

#### What the Bill Does:

[House Bill 500](#) updates Georgia's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) law so that it can better support families'- and LOTS of children's! - overall well-being. This is what the bill does:

- Expands family's access to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) by extending the lifetime maximum time that a family can receive assistance from 48 months (4 years) to 60 months (5 years)
- Increases the monthly benefit amount to 40% of the federal poverty guidelines
- Increases the resource limit of an applicant to \$5,000, excluding the value of a vehicle if it is used for activities related to work, training, or education. (If there is an additional vehicle not used for these purposes, a \$4,650 exclusion is applied.)

#### The Why:

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a cash support program, with an employment component, for families with very low incomes
- The Georgia Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program is designed to help needy families achieve self-sufficiency. States receive grants to design and operate programs that accomplish one of the purposes of the TANF program.
- To be eligible for Georgia TANF, you must be a resident of Georgia, and a U.S. citizen, legal alien, or qualified alien. You must be unemployed or underemployed and have low or very low income.
- You must also be one of the following:
  - Have a child 18 years of age or younger, or
  - Be pregnant, or
  - Be 18 years of age or younger and the head of your household.

**The Message:**

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_,

Please vote to put House Bill 500 on the House floor before this Thursday, March 6 (Crossover Day). This bill updates Georgia's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) law so that it can better support families'- and LOTS of children. This bill adjusts for inflation and also excludes the value of a vehicle if it is used for activities related to work, training, or education. This is important because TANF is designed to help low income families achieve self-sufficiency, and is temporary. Thank you for all you do daily for Georgia's children and for your thoughtful consideration with regards to H.B. 500.

**The How (a.k.a. Who to Contact):**

Call members of the House Rules Committee:

Last Name	First Name	Party	District	House Phone	Legislative Email
Ballinger	Mandi	R	23	404.656.7153	mandi.ballinger@house.ga.gov
Blackmon	Shaw	R	146	404.656.5103	shaw.blackmon@house.ga.gov
Burchett	James	R	176	404.656.5025	james.burchett@house.ga.gov
Carson	John	R	46	404.656.7855	john.carson@house.ga.gov
Cooper	Sharon	R	45	404.656.5069	sharon.cooper@house.ga.gov
Dempsey	Katie	R	13	404.463.2248	katie.dempsey@house.ga.gov
Drenner	Karla	D	85	404.656.0202	karla.drenner@house.ga.gov
Efstration	Chuck	R	104	404.656.5052	chuck.efstration@house.ga.gov
Erwin	Chris	R	32	404.656.7850	chris.erwin@house.ga.gov
Evans	Stacey	D	57	404.656.0116	stacey.evans@house.ga.gov
Greene	Gerald	R	154	404.656.9210	gerald.greene@house.ga.gov
Gunter	Stan	R	8	404.656.5125	stan.gunter@house.ga.gov
Hatchett	Matt	R	155	404.463.2245	matt.hatchett@house.ga.gov
Hawkins	Lee	R	27	404.656.7855	lee.hawkins@house.ga.gov
Hitchens	Bill	R	161	404.656.5126	bill.hitchens@house.ga.gov
Holcomb	Scott	D	101	404.656.6372	scott.holcomb@house.ga.gov
Hugley	Carolyn	D	141	404.656.0109	carolyn.hugley@house.ga.gov
Jackson	Mack	D	128	404.656.7153	mack.jackson@house.ga.gov
Jasperse	Rick	R	11	404.656.7153	rick.jasperse@house.ga.gov
Jones	Jan	R	47	404.656.5072	jan.jones@house.ga.gov
Leverett	Rob	R	123	404.656.5132	robert.leverett@house.ga.gov
Lumsden	Eddie	R	12	404.656.7850	eddie.lumsden@house.ga.gov
Martin	Chuck	R	49	404.656.5146	chuck.martin@house.ga.gov
Miller	Tanya F.	D	62	404.656.0298	tanya.miller@house.ga.gov
Newton	Mark	R	127	404.656.7853	mark.newton@house.ga.gov
Park	Sam	D	107	404.656.5059	samuel.park@house.ga.gov
Parrish	Butch	R	158	404.656.5141	larry.parrish@house.ga.gov
Powell	Alan	R	33	404.463.3793	alan.powell@house.ga.gov
Smith	Lynn	R	70	404.656.7149	lynn.smith@house.ga.gov
Stephens	Ron	R	164	404.656.5115	ron.stephens@house.ga.gov
Taylor	Darlene	R	173	404.463.2246	darlene.taylor@house.ga.gov

Williams	Al	D	168	404.656.6372	al.williams@house.ga.gov
Williamson	Bruce	R	112	404.656.5025	bruce.williamson@house.ga.gov

### **Ask #3: School Social Workers**

#### **The Ask:**

Ask members of the House Appropriations - Education Subcommittee to fund School Social Workers with an additional \$5 Million in the FY 2026 Budget (under the Dept. of Education).

#### **What Do School Social Workers Do?:**

School Social Workers (SSWs) are essential in managing issues such as truancy, bullying, mental health, and crises like family instability - all of which directly impact student performance and well-being. Social workers play a vital role in supporting students' mental health, addressing behavior issues, and connecting families with essential resources.

#### **The Why:**

- Georgia averages one SSW per 1,911 students!
- While Georgia has approximately 14,300 licensed social workers across various fields, a shortage exists in K-12 settings because many school districts are unable to meet the recommended social worker-to-student ratio of 1 for every 250 students. This limits the ability of social workers to provide individualized attention and comprehensive services and leaves students without sufficient access to mental health and social support.

#### **The Message:**

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_,

Please support this request for an additional \$5 million in the FY 2026 budget to fund School Social Workers under the Georgia Department of Education. School Social Workers play a critical role in promoting school safety by addressing truancy, bullying, mental health crises, and family instability—issues that can escalate into safety concerns if left unaddressed. Currently, Georgia averages only one School Social Worker per 1,911 students, far below the recommended ratio of 1:250. This shortage hinders the ability to identify and intervene in potential safety risks, leaving students and schools vulnerable. By increasing funding, we can ensure more robust support systems that contribute to safer and more secure learning environments for all.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests and thank you for all you do every day on behalf of Georgia's children and families.

#### **The How (a.k.a. Who to Contact):**

Call members of the House Appropriations Education Subcommittee:

Rep. Matt Dubnik, Chair	404-463-2246	<a href="mailto:matt.dubnik@house.ga.gov">matt.dubnik@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Will Wade, Vice Chair	404-651-7737	<a href="mailto:will.wade@house.ga.gov">will.wade@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Kimberly Alexander	404-656-7859	<a href="mailto:kimberly.alexander@house.ga.gov">kimberly.alexander@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Robert Dickey	404-656-5099	<a href="mailto:robert.dickey@house.ga.gov">robert.dickey@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Chris Erwin	404-656-7850	<a href="mailto:chris.erwin@house.ga.gov">chris.erwin@house.ga.gov</a>

Rep. Leesa Hagan	404-656-0177	<a href="mailto:leesa.hagan@house.ga.gov">leesa.hagan@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Edna Jackson	404-656-0265	<a href="mailto:edna.jackson@house.ga.gov">edna.jackson@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Jan Jones	404-656-5072	<a href="mailto:jan.jones@house.ga.gov">jan.jones@house.ga.gov</a>
Rep. Todd Jones	404-656-9210	<a href="mailto:todd.jones@house.ga.gov">todd.jones@house.ga.gov</a>



## Resources You May Find Helpful

- [Find Your Legislator](#)
- [Contact Your Legislator](#)



## Upcoming Events

### March 2025

#### Thursday, March 6th Crossover Day

Sunday, March 9th

- Atlanta Community Food Bank: Hunger Walk Run
  - Time: 12:00PM- 4:00PM
  - RSVP: [Hunger Walk Run 2025 General - Atlanta Community Food Bank](#)

Tuesday, March 11

- Pre-K Week Launch: Voices for GA Children
  - *More Information to Come*
- Justice Reform Project: Talk Justice Tuesday – Post Cross Over Review
  - Time: 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM (Virtual)
  - RSVP: [Talk Justice Tuesday](#)

### April 2025

#### Friday, April 4th Sine Die (Last Day of Legislative Session)

Tuesday, April 8

- Justice Reform Project: Avoiding Burnout – Surviving Triumph
  - Time: 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM (Virtual)
  - RSVP: [Talk Justice Tuesday](#)