



# legislative update

from  
**Voices**  
for Georgia's Children

January 20, 2026

Hello everyone and happy new year! Welcome back to the Voices' weekly Legislative Update! As in years past, in exchange for a robust collection of legislative and budget summaries, action alerts and event reminders, you will be subjected to the weekly wanderings of my free-association mind in these COMPLETELY home-cooked, hand-typed and unpredictable introductions. There will be none of the annoying "moreover's", "furthermore's", or "in conclusion's" of the ChatGPT universe. Nor will anyone "transform", "elevate", or be "enhanced" by this text, no matter what your Co-Pilot tells you. Instead, expect to be mildly entertained, minimally educated and either spurred to action or put to sleep as you read. But whatever happens to you, know that I, Polly McKinney, and our band of merry legislative assistants (Joshua, Kelcie and Francesca) are playing here at the state house live-and-in-person (because who wants to go see a show of a dead-and-in-person person?!?!) throughout the legislative session (which has been scheduled to end on April 2, as you can see from this [Adjournment Resolution](#)). We welcome your feedback (at [pmckinney@georgiavoices.org](mailto:pmckinney@georgiavoices.org)), questions, good wishes and any doughnuts you care to send our way. We will do our best to be truthful, kind, and just weird enough to be interesting but not so weird that you feel like you are at your cousin's father-in-law's golfing partner's granddaughter's 5th grade interactive improv school play about how to make mayonnaise. (Obviously, that gives us a LOT of latitude!). Anyway, now for the update...

Session started with a big old bang this past Monday, as everyone recovered from the pork, mac-and-cheese and peach ice cream from the night before at the [Wild Hog Supper](#). Lots of new bills have already been posted on the General Assembly website and assigned to committees for vetting, and a few old bills (like [HB 57](#)) have come back from the leftovers icebox of 2025 for reconsideration. One old bill that was hiding in the back of the needs-an agree fridge, right behind that expired milk, already got that agree and now is on the governor's desk for him to consider. It is [SB 204](#), and would prohibit counties and municipalities from regulating the storage of firearms in vehicles.

On a fresher note, I already have one favorite new bill that improves child fatality review protocols ([SB 383](#)). Plus, I like a few bills that have zero to do with child policy. There is one about hunting feral hogs with drones ([HB 946](#)), which is just wacky to imagine, and a yummy bill that would designate [lemon pepper wings](#) as the official Georgia state chicken wing flavor ([HB 1013](#)). Why do I follow those bills? Why not?! It's like going on a mini-vacation in my brain to think about them and how big the legislative galaxy can be!

And speaking of how big legislative things can be, check out our summaries of the governor's Amended FY26 (\$42.268 Billion State Dollars) and New FY27 (\$38.5 Billion State Dollars) budget recommendations in the budget section below. If you have already caught up on [Stranger Things](#), and are looking for a Georgia-focused hour or so of video content without ectoplasm, click here for Governor Kemp's final [State of the State](#) address that he delivered this past Thursday.

And with that I am going to bid you adieu until next week!

~Polly McKinney  
Advocacy Director, Voices for Georgia's Children

## Jump to Section:

[Budget Information](#)

- [AFY26 – Governor's Recommendations](#)
- [FY27 - Governor's Recommendations](#)

[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 Asks](#)

[Resources You May Find Helpful](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)



## Budget Information

### **Amended Fiscal Year 2026 – Governor’s Recommendations**

*(The below are changes to the FY26 Budget as passed)*

***(Balanced to \$42.268 Billion State Dollars)***

#### **Statewide**

- **\$611,76 Million Added** to provide a \$2,000 one-time supplement to full-time, benefit-eligible state and Regents employees, formula earned K12 teachers, school administrators, custodians, nutrition workers, school nurses, and bus drivers.

#### **Dept. of Administrative Services**

##### ***Wrongful Conviction and Incarceration Compensation Trust Fund***

- **\$4.8 Million Added** to establish the Wrongful Conviction and Incarceration Compensation Trust Fund under the State Treasury pursuant to SB 244 (2025 Session).
- **\$200,000 Added** for the Office of State Administrative Hearings for hearings and adjudication of claims pursuant to SB 244 (2025 Session).
- *Budget Direction:* Change the name of the Compensation Per General Assembly Resolutions program to the Wrongful Conviction and Incarceration Compensation Trust Fund program to reflect the passage of SB 244 (2025 Session)

##### ***Payments to Georgia Technology Authority***

- **\$35 Million Added** for the Department of Community Health Integrated Eligibility System (IES) modernization.
- Budget Direction: Utilize existing funds (\$7,930,340) relating to interest revenue accrued in the Technology Empowerment Fund for the ERP modernization timeline extension and additional components of the State Ethics Commission e-filing software project due to the passage of HB 199 (2025 Session).

#### **Dept. of Agriculture**

##### ***Consumer Protection***

- **\$1.05 Million Added** for personnel to reflect increased retention of Consumer Protection positions
- **\$234,000 Added** for new licensing and inspection software for the Food Safety division.

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

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

- **\$243,750 Restored** for jail-based competency restoration in Cobb County Jail. \$243,750

Jump to Agency:

- [Statewide](#)
- [Dept. of Administrative Services](#)
- [Dept. of Agriculture](#)
- [Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities](#)
- [Dept. of Community Affairs](#)
- [Dept. of Community Health](#)
- [Dept. of Corrections](#)
- [Dept. of Defense](#)
- [Dept. of Early Care and Learning](#)
- [Departmental Administration](#)
- [Dept. of Education](#)
- [Office of the Governor](#)
- [Dept. of Human Services](#)
- [Office of the Commissioner of Insurance](#)
- [Dept. of Juvenile Justice](#)
- [Dept. of Public Safety](#)
- [University System of Georgia Board of Regents](#)
- [Dept. of Revenue](#)
- [Georgia Student Finance Commission](#)
- [Dept. of Transportation](#)
- [Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission – Capital Projects Fund](#)

**Dept. of Community Affairs****Housing Initiatives**

- **\$50 Million Added** for one-time funds for the State Housing Trust Fund to address homelessness through matching funds to local governments and nonprofit organizations.

**Dept. of Community Health****Departmental Administration**

- **\$5,349 Added** for a \$3,000 salary enhancement for Katie Beckett Medicaid caseworkers for parity with Department of Human Services Medicaid caseworkers.
- Budget Direction: The Department shall submit a 1915(i) waiver to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide a comprehensive suite of services as benefits to members enrolled in the Therapeutic Care Model program.

**GA Board of Dentistry**

- **\$30,389 Added** for one vehicle and protective equipment for an additional criminal investigator for which funding is appropriated in FY 2027.

**Medicaid - Aged Blind and Disabled**

- **\$223.98 Million Added** for growth in Medicaid based on projected utilization.
- **\$25.82 Million Added** for the hold harmless provision in Medicare Part B premiums.
- **\$3.2 Million Added** for Medicare Part D Clawback payment.
- **\$11.62 Million Removed** high-cost drugs based on projected utilization
- Budget Direction: Replace \$4,783,831 in state general funds with hospital provider fees.
- Budget Direction: Replace \$27,902,969 in state general funds with nursing home provider fees.
- **\$2.65 Million Added** for ambulance provider fees based on projected revenue.

**Medicaid - Low Income**

- **\$141.29 Million Reduced** for Medicaid based on projected utilization.
- Budget Direction: Replace \$42,206,820 in state general funds with hospital provider fees.

**GA Board of Healthcare Workforce**

- Redirect existing funds (\$734,438) for grants for graduate medical education programs based on the use of Medicaid Reimbursements for new residency slots pending approval of a State Plan Amendment to fund the Rural Surgery Initiative and child and adolescent psychiatry slots at Augusta University.
- *Budget Direction:* Change program name from Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Undergraduate Medical Education to Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Healthcare Education Programs to include nursing education.

**Dept. of Corrections****Health**

- **\$38.9 Million Added** for the physical health contract for a per diem increase (\$10,946,108), outside-the-wire care (\$15,000,000), and to reflect the opening of additional beds (\$12,923,790).
- **\$374,587 Added** for the dental health contract to increase staffing ratios.
- **\$479,411 Added** for the mental health contract to increase staffing ratios.
- *Budget Direction:* Utilize prior year funds (\$20,402,982) for physical health risk share obligations.

**Offender Management**

- **\$6.24 Million Added** for jail subsidy payments to local jails for housing Department of Corrections inmates.

**Private Prisons**

- **\$1.05 Million Added** for Jenkins Correctional Institution and Riverbend Correctional Institution to fully utilize available beds at correct tier rate added in HB 68 (2025 Session).

### ***State Prisons***

- **\$4.98 Million Added** for additional correctional officer positions to improve staff to offender ratios based on improved retention.
- **\$964,650 Added** for start-up costs for six canine handlers.
- **\$150,000 Added** for a pilot program at Autry State Prison to provide for peer led programming.
- **\$93,672 Added** for required staff needed to meet accreditation requirements to operate a high school diploma program.
- **\$137,802 Added** for start-up costs for three security threat group regional coordinators.
- **\$13.39 Million Added** for managed access and drone detection systems to prevent contraband in facilities.
- **\$2.45 Million Added** for the purchase of public safety supplies and equipment.
- **\$93,179 Added** for additional programming at Metro Reentry Facility.
- **\$880,104 Added** for operations at five modular correctional units
- **\$1.54 Million Added** for operations at Lee Arrendale State Prison.

### **Dept. of Defense**

#### ***Youth Educational Services***

- **\$1.04 Million Reduced** in state funds match to reflect a loss of federal funding from lower graduation targets.

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

#### ***Pre-K Program***

- **\$17.22 Million Added** to provide a one-time salary supplement of \$2,000 for formula earned teachers and assistant teachers

### **Departmental Administration**

- **\$10 Million Added** for the Georgia World Congress Center Authority for infrastructure and security costs related to the 2028 Super Bowl.

### **Dept. of Education**

#### ***Agricultural Education***

- **\$172,465 Added** for a one-time salary supplement of \$2,000 for area teachers and young farmers.
- **\$268,157 Eliminated** for camp-affiliated staff. (See HB 68 intent language considered nonbinding by the Governor.)

#### ***Charter Schools***

- **\$1 Million Added** for one-time funds for a completion schools planning grant for Southern Rivers Completion High School to support the opening of up to six locations.

#### ***Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS)***

- **\$2.07 Million Added** for a one-time salary supplement of \$2,000 for formula earned certified educators and administrative staff.

#### ***Non-Quality Basic Education Formula Grants***

- **\$35,200 Reduced** in formula funds to reflect a data correction for Residential Treatment Facilities.
- **\$557,245 Added** for sparsity to reflect accurate count of eligible schools.
- **\$19.58 Million Added** to provide a one-time salary supplement of \$2,000 for custodians.

#### ***Nutrition***

- **\$28.61 Million Added** to provide a one-time salary supplement of \$2,000 for nutrition workers.

***QBE Local Five Mill Share***

- **\$2.37 Million Adjusted Downward** for the Local Five Mill Share for four new State Commission Charter Schools.

***Quality Basic Education Program***

- **\$43.47 Million Added** for a midterm adjustment based on enrollment growth.
- **\$26.86 Million Added** for the State Commission Charter School supplement for a total supplement of \$292,144,723.
- **\$14.48 Million Added** to reflect growth in the Special Needs Scholarship.
- **\$44,952 Added** for a midterm adjustment to the charter system grant.
- **\$58,834 Added** for a midterm adjustment to the local charter school grant.
- **\$3.86 Million Added** for a midterm adjustment to the State Commission Charter School supplement for training and experience.
- **\$1.63 Million in formula funds Added** for the Completion Special Schools Supplement.
- **\$1.4 Million Added** for the employer share of TRS (Teacher Retirement Systems) for non-certified school management positions pursuant to O.C.G.A 47-3-63.
- **\$248,820 Added** to reflect corrected data for certified SHBP (State House Benefits Plan) enrollee count.

***Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs)***

- **\$389,568 Added** to provide a one-time salary supplement of \$2,000 for formula earned certified educators and administrative staff.

***Student Support Services***

- **\$1.3 Million Added** for mental health support grants to reflect accurate count of middle and high schools.
- **\$1.38 Million Added** to fully fund grants for social work services.
- **\$750,000 Added** in one-time funds for grants to districts to pilot programs that assist in maximizing reimbursement for mental health services.

**Office of the Governor*****Governor's Emergency Fund***

- **\$3.5 Million Added** to meet projected need.

***Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency***

- **\$5.7 Million Added** to meet federal matching requirements for emergency preparedness.
- **\$1 Million Transferred** from the Department of Public Safety to the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency for the protection of communities through the Nonprofit Security Grant Program.
- **\$9.97 Million Added** and \$5 Million of existing funds used to facilitate the transition to Next Generation 911 emergency services.

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

- **\$9 Million Added** for start-up costs and implementation of new responsibilities to support Top State for Talent initiatives including a Career Navigator system.

***Governor's Office of Student Achievement: Literacy Initiative Coordination***

- **\$282,688 Reduced** to reflect dyslexia screener savings.
- **\$300,000 Added** for one-time funds for America250 literacy initiatives.

**Dept. of Human Services*****Child Support Services***

- **\$2.63 Million in one-time funds Added** to maintain software applications on the Georgia Technology Authority mainframe.

**Child Welfare Services**

- **\$371,500 Transferred** for community action teams to deter child welfare involvement from Out-of-Home Care to Child Welfare Services to align budgets with expenditures.

**Federal Eligibility Benefit Services**

- **\$6.21 Million Added** for Gateway system modifications to reduce the SNAP payment error rate and ensure federal compliance.

**Out-of-Home Care**

- **\$41.53 Million Added** for utilization growth and increased costs of care.

**Office of the Commissioner of Insurance****Reinsurance**

- **\$25 Million Reduced** based on projected expenditures.

**Georgia Bureau of Investigation****Regional Investigative Services**

- **\$294,420 Added** to annualize three human trafficking positions.
- **\$800,000 Eliminated** for one-time connectivity to the statewide gang case management system.

**Dept. of Juvenile Justice****Secure Confinement (Residential Youth Detention Centers – RYDCs)**

- **\$2.54 Million Added** for personal services due to decreased turnover

**Dept. of Public Safety****Georgia Public Safety Training Center**

- **\$582,527 Added** for the new Metro Academy in Austell effective November 3, 2025.

**University System of Georgia Board of Regents****Regents Central Office**

- **\$325 Million total Added** for a state match for endowment (\$300,000,000) and scholarship funds (\$25,000,000) for the needs-based DREAMS Scholarship program.

**Dept. of Revenue****Taxpayer Services**

- Utilize **\$1.17 Billion** in prior year undesignated state surplus to provide a one-time additional refund for tax year 2025 of \$250 for single filers, \$375 for head of household filers, and \$500 for married filing jointly.

**Georgia Student Finance Commission****Dual Enrollment**

- **\$18.45 Million Added** to meet projected enrollment.

**Engineer Scholarship**

- **\$160,000 Reduced** to meet projected need.

**Georgia Military College Scholarship**

- **\$439,652 Added** to meet projected need to provide three scholars per congressional district.

**HOPE Scholarship – Private Schools**

- **\$927,063 Added** to meet projected need.

**HOPE Scholarships - Public Schools**

- **\$11.27 Million Added** to meet projected need.

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

- **\$554,815 Added** to meet projected need to provide three scholars per congressional district.

### ***Promise Scholarship***

- **\$85.96 Million Decreased** to meet projected need based on eligible applications for the 2025- 2026 academic year.

### ***Tuition Equalization Grants***

- Utilize existing funds (\$1,885,174) to meet projected need.

## **Dept. of Transportation**

### ***Capital Construction Projects***

- **\$36.98 Million Added** based on projected motor fuel excise tax revenue for increased project capacity.
- **\$200 Million Added** in state general funds for SR 316 interchange conversions.

### ***Capital Maintenance Projects***

- **\$100 Million Added** in state general funds for the rehabilitation and replacement of rural bridges.

### ***Local Road Assistance Administration***

- **\$250 Million Added** for additional support of local transportation infrastructure projects

### ***Payments to State Road and Tollway Authority***

- **\$1.8 Billion Added** in state general funds for the extension and bi-directional expansion of I-75 express lanes in Clayton and Henry counties.

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

- **Board of Regents, University System of Georgia**
  - **\$40 Million Added** for additional major rehabilitation and renovation projects, statewide.
  - **\$88.2 Million Added** to design and construct the Daniel Guggenheim School of Aerospace Engineering building, Georgia Institute of Technology,
  - **\$5.6 Million Added** to design the School of Nursing at the University of Georgia, Athens, Clarke County.
  - **\$11.43 Million Added** to equip the School of Medicine, University of Georgia, Athens, Clarke County.
- **Technical College System of Georgia**
  - **\$48 Million Added** to provide for additional major rehabilitation and renovation projects, statewide.
- **Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities**
  - **\$20.74 Million Added** for a 40-bed forensic restoration facility at East Central Regional Hospital, Augusta, Richmond County.
- **Dept. of Corrections**
  - **\$89.6 Million Added** to design and construction to replace locking controls, statewide.
  - **\$84.66 Million Added** to design and construct fire alarm replacement, perimeter security and lighting, thermal cameras, and CCTV, statewide.
- **Dept. of Juvenile Justice**
  - **\$600,000 Added** to replace Muscogee YDC CCTV system, Columbus, Muscogee County.
  - **\$2.83 Million Added** for facility repairs and sustainment, statewide.

**Fiscal Year 2027 Governor's Recommended Budget**  
**Total State Funds: \$38.5 Billion**

**Statewide**

- **Reduce funds** to reflect a reduction in the employer contribution rate for the State Health Benefit Plan from 29.454% to 20.264%.
- **Increase funds** for the Teachers Retirement System to reflect an increase in the actuarially determined employer contribution from 21.91% to 22.32%.
- **Reduce funds** to reflect an adjustment in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) from 66.40% to 66.63%. (DBHDD, DCH, DHS, DPH)
- Provide funds to enhance the retirement benefit for select POST certified law enforcement officers who are members of the Georgia State Employees' Pension and Savings Plan (GSEPS) by increasing employer contribution to the savings plan. (Various agencies)

**Judicial Council**

- **\$209,500 Added** for Civil Legal Services for families of indigent patients.
- **\$586,649 Added** for continuity for the Georgia Case Management System project.

**Juvenile Courts**

***Grants to Counties for Juvenile Courts***

- **\$493,168 Added** to reflect an increase in the Judicial Retirement System employer contribution rate due to the passage of HB 85 (2025 Session).

**Prosecuting Attorneys**

***District Attorneys***

- **\$5.07 Million Added** to implement a new salary structure for district attorneys.
- **\$3.94 Million Added** for a one step increase for assistant district attorneys to support recruitment and retention needs
- **\$5.07 Million Added** to annualize FY2026 revised pay scale and one step increase for assistant district attorneys.
- **\$414,015 Added** to annualize FY2026 salary increases for recruitment and retention of prosecution support.
- **\$11.45 Million Added** for year two of a revised pay scale for assistant district attorneys to support recruitment and retention needs.
- *Budget Direction:* Increase intra-state government transfers to reflect a change in the Department of Human Services Child Support Services contract (Department of Human Services grant funds).

***Superior Court Judges***

- **\$9.64 Million Added** to annualize the cost of implementing the new judicial salary structure pursuant to HB 85 (2025 Session).
- **\$6.23 Million Added** to increase Superior Court Judge salaries to the allowable annual salary pursuant to the funding formula in HB 85 (2025 Session).

Jump to Agency:

- [Statewide](#)
- [Judicial Council](#)
- [Juvenile Courts](#)
- [Prosecuting Attorneys](#)
- [Dept. of Agriculture](#)
- [Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities](#)
- [Dept. of Community Affairs](#)
- [Dept. of Community Health](#)
- [Dept. of Corrections](#)
- [Dept. of Defense](#)
- [Dept. of Early Care and Learning](#)
- [Dept. of Education](#)
- [Governor's Office](#)
- [Georgia Bureau of Investigation](#)
- [Dept. of Public Health](#)
- [Dept. of Public Safety](#)
- [University of System of Georgia Board of Regents](#)
- [Georgia Student Finance Commission](#)
- [Technical College System of Georgia](#)
- [Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission – Capital Projects Fund](#)
- [Georgia General Obligation Debt Sinking Fund](#)

**Dept. of Agriculture****Consumer Protection**

- **\$1.05 Million Added** for personnel to reflect increased retention of Consumer Protection positions.

**Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities****Adult Addictive Diseases Services**

- *Budget Direction:* Replace state general funds with other funds for the expansion of Hepatitis C screening services at core behavioral health provider sites. (\$142,919)
- **\$50,000 Eliminated** for one-time funding for Hope House.

**Adult Developmental Disability Services**

- **\$3.21 Million Added** to annualize the cost of 150 New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) slots for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- **\$2.32 Million Added** for 100 additional slots for the New Options Waiver (NOW) and the Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

**Adult Forensic Services**

- **\$1.62 Million Added** to annualize the operations of a 30-bed Project New Hope forensic stepdown unit at the West Central Georgia Regional Hospital in Columbus.
- **\$250,000 Restored** for jail-based competency restoration in Cobb County Jail.

**Adult Mental Health Services**

- **\$2.36 Million Added** for mobile crisis response teams to support mental health crisis services.
- **\$2.93 Million Added** to support mental health crisis intervention services through the '988' hotline.
- **\$9.32 Million Added** for the Georgia Housing Voucher Program for 404 additional housing vouchers to achieve substantial compliance with and termination of the behavioral health requirements of the Department of Justice (DOJ) Settlement Agreement

**Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services**

- **\$1.14 Million Added** to annualize the operational cost of the new Gateway child and adolescent crisis stabilization unit in Savannah.

**Dept. of Community Affairs****Departmental Administration**

- **\$2.77 Million Added** to reduce allocated administrative costs to affordable housing and community development programs resulting from unfunded cost-of-living adjustments and reduced federal funding.

**Housing Initiatives**

- **\$2 Million Reduced** in one-time funding for the State Housing Trust Fund and recognized instead in AFY 2026.

**Dept. of Community Health****Departmental Administration**

- **\$121,678 Added** for eight Katie Beckett Medicaid case workers to address increased workload.
- **\$20,222 Added** for a \$3,000 salary enhancement for Katie Beckett Medicaid caseworkers for parity with Department of Human Services Medicaid caseworkers.
- **\$64,991 Added** for one position in the Medical Assistance Plans division to continue oversight of long-term care.
- **\$300,000 Eliminated** in one-time funds for the submission of a State Plan Amendment (SPA) to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to change any rules, regulations, or policies necessary to allow for the use of Medicaid funding for Graduate Medical Education slots.

**Healthcare Access and Improvement**

- **\$250,000 Eliminated** in one-time funding for telecare and maternal health programs

- **\$407,000 Eliminated** in one-time funding to establish a regional vascular center allowed by passage of HB 1339 (2024 Session)
- **\$3 Million Eliminated** in one-time funding for behavioral and mental health services stabilization and augmentation.

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

- **\$307.85 Million Added** for growth in Medicaid based on projected utilization.
- **\$5.14 Million Added** for skilled nursing centers to reflect 2024 cost reports.
- **\$33.05 Million Added** for the hold harmless provision in Medicare Part B premiums.
- **\$11.19 Million Added** for the Medicare Part D Clawback payment.
- **\$11.82 Million Reduced** for high-cost drugs based on projected utilization.
- *Budget Direction:* Replace \$7,638,097 in state general funds with hospital provider fees.
- *Budget Direction:* Replace \$30,458,227 in nursing home provider fees with state general funds.
- **\$2.65 Million Added** for ambulance provider fees based on projected revenue.

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

- **\$22.66 Million Reduced** in Medicaid based on projected utilization.
- *Budget Direction:* Replace \$67,389,454 in state general funds with hospital provider fees.

#### **PeachCare for Kids®**

- **\$1.69 Million Reduced** for growth in Medicaid based on projected utilization.
- **\$1.02 Million Reduced** to reflect an adjustment in the Enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (eFMAP) from 76.48% to 76.64%.

#### **State Health Benefits Plan**

- **\$1.26 Million Added** to implement HB 196 (2025 Session).
- **\$3.1 Million Eliminated** for interim one-time funding for a \$3 per prescription dispensing fee for independent pharmacists awaiting the outcome of an SHBP Prescription Benefit Manager (PBM) study.
- *Budget Direction:* Recognize an increase in formula funds (\$207,516,476) in the Department of Education, Department of Early Care and Learning, and Georgia Military College, to reflect an increase in the employer healthcare contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) for certified school employees and lead and assistant teachers to \$2,028, effective July 1, 2026
- *Budget Direction:* Increase the employer health care contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) for non-certified school employees to match the PMPM for certified school employees, effective July 1, 2026, to maintain the financial stability of the plan.

#### **Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Graduate Medical Education**

- **\$2.1 Million Added** for 105 new residency slots in primary care medicine.
- *Budget Direction:* Redirect existing funds (\$734,438) for grants for graduate medical education (GME) programs based on the use of Medicaid Reimbursements for new residency slots pending approval of a State Plan Amendment to fund the Rural Surgery Initiative and child and adolescent psychiatry slots at Augusta University.

#### **Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Mercer School of Medicine Grant**

- **\$12,567 Added** for the seventh year of the seven-year plan for Mercer School of Medicine's medical school campus in Columbus.

#### **Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Healthcare Education Programs**

- **\$2.42 Million Added** for medical student capitation for 380 certified Georgia residents at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM).
- *Budget Direction:* Change program name from Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Undergraduate Medical Education to Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Healthcare Education Programs to include nursing education.

### ***Georgia Composite Medical Board***

- **\$500,000 Eliminated** in one-time funding to seed program to address career fatigue and wellness of healthcare professionals pursuant to HB 455 (2024 Session).

### **Dept. of Corrections**

#### ***Health***

- **\$47.88 Million Added** for the physical health contract for a per diem increase (\$23,627,395) and to reflect the opening of additional beds (\$24,253,500).
- **\$1.5 Million Added** for the dental health contract to increase staffing ratios.
- **\$1.92 Million Added** for the mental health contract to increase staffing ratios.
- **\$3.68 Million Added** for the pharmacy contract for a per diem increase.

#### ***Private Prisons***

- **\$1.05 Million Added** for Jenkins Correctional Institution and Riverbend Correctional Institution to fully utilize available beds at correct tier rate added in HB 68 (2025 Session).
- **\$4.23 Million Added** to add 160 private prison beds at Coffee Correctional Institution and 103 private prison beds at Wheeler Correctional Institution.

#### ***State Prisons***

- *Budget Direction:* Utilize existing funds (\$10,793,600) for managed access and drone detection systems to prevent contraband in facilities
- **\$26.82 Million Added** for additional correctional officer positions to improve staff to offender ratios based on improved retention.
- **\$1.24 Million Added** to annualize personnel for the Over Watch and Logistics (OWL) Unit.
- **\$39.79 Million Added** for additional programming at Metro Reentry Facility.
- **\$1.52 Million Added** for operations at Lee Arrendale State Prison.
- **\$5.52 Million Added** for additional technology costs for the Over Watch and Logistics (OWL) Unit to enhance safety, security, and technology.
- **\$953,033 Added** for required staff needed to meet accreditation requirements to operate a high school diploma program.
- **\$1.76 Million Added** for operations at five modular correctional units

### **Dept. of Defense**

#### ***Youth Educational Services***

- **\$1.01 Million Reduced** in state funds match to reflect a loss of federal funding from lower graduation targets.

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

#### ***Pre-K Program***

- **\$5.88 Million Added** in formula funds to reflect an increase in the health insurance employer contribution per-member-per-month (PMPM) rate for eligible employees from \$1,885 to \$2,028 effective July 1, 2026.
- **\$12 Million Added** for year three of a four-year phase in to reduce classroom size from 22 to 20 students to improve instructional quality.

### **Dept. of Education**

#### ***Agricultural Education***

- **\$268,157 Eliminated** for camp-affiliated staff.

#### ***Charter Schools***

- **\$2 Million Eliminated** in one-time funds for completion schools planning grant for Southern Rivers Completion High School.

- **\$500,000 Added** for grants to school systems to encourage the authorization of locally approved charter schools pursuant to SB 82 (2025 Session (Total Funds: \$1,000,000)).

#### ***Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS)***

- **\$2.47 Million Reduced** in formula funds based on enrollment and training and experience.

#### ***Non-Quality Basic Education (Non-QBE) Formula Grants***

- **\$399,652 Added** in formula funds for Residential Treatment Facilities based on attendance.
- **\$1.24 Million Added** in formula funds for Sparsity Grants based on enrollment data.
- **\$2 Million Eliminated** in one-time funds for character education programming.
- **\$64,000 Added** for custodian supplement grants.

#### ***Nutrition***

- **\$84,408 Added** in formula funds for school nutrition.

#### ***Pupil Transportation***

- **\$38.57 Million Added** for pupil transportation formula grants to reflect updated bus counts and operations.
- **\$79,200 Reduced** to reflect ongoing operating costs for required bus driver safety training
- *Budget Direction:* Utilize \$15,155,852 in existing funds from an AFY 2022 appropriation for bus replacement and safety equipment to provide funds to local education agencies to replace 172 out-of-cycle buses
- *Budget Direction:* Recognize the use of \$9,844,148 in Volkswagen Settlement funds to replace 98 out-of-cycle buses pursuant to the State's 2024 Mitigation Plan Update.

#### ***Quality Basic Education Equalization***

- **\$258.9 Million Added** in formula funds for Equalization grants.

#### ***QBE Local Five Mill Share***

- **\$50.15 Million Reduced** to adjust funds for the Local Five Mill Share.

#### ***Quality Basic Education Program***

- **\$9.3 Million Added** for enrollment growth and training and experience.
- **\$44.69 Million Added** for the State Commission Charter School supplement for a total of \$309,966,618.
- **\$456,997 Reduced** in formula funds for differentiated pay for newly certified math and science teachers.
- **\$1.63 Million Added** for the Completion Special Schools supplement.
- **\$630,085 Reduced** for the charter system grant.
- **\$14.48 Million Added** for the Special Needs Scholarship based on enrollment growth.

#### ***Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs)***

- **\$219,679 Added** in formula funds for Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs) based on enrollment.

#### ***School Nurse***

- **\$867,401 Reduced** in formula funds for school nurses.

#### ***State Schools***

- **\$2.37 Million Reduced** for training and experience.

#### ***Student Support Services***

- **\$15.28 Million Eliminated** in one-time pilot funds to districts for targeted support to economically disadvantaged students.
- **\$1.55 Million Added** in formula funds for grants for social work services.
- **\$1.3 Million Added** for mental health support grants to reflect accurate count of middle and high schools.

#### ***Technology/Career Education***

- **\$750,000 Added** for high-demand equipment grants.

#### **Governor's Office**

##### ***Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA)***

- **\$1.43 Million Added** to meet federal matching requirements for emergency preparedness.

- **\$1 Million Transferred** from the Georgia Bureau of Investigations to the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency for gang case management system support.
- **\$1 Million Transferred** funds from the Department of Public Safety to the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency for the protection of communities through the Nonprofit Security Grant Program.

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

- **\$5.01 Million Added** for ongoing operational costs associated with new responsibilities to support Top State for Talent initiatives including a Career Navigator system.
- **\$445,200 Added** for personal services and operating cost for three new policy and reporting positions.

#### ***Governor's Office of Student Achievement: Governor's School Leadership Academy***

- **\$2.62 Million Eliminated** for the Governor's School Leadership Academy.

#### ***Governor's Office of Student Achievement: Literacy Initiative Coordination***

- **\$2.03 Million Eliminated** in one-time funds for research contract.
- **\$1.58 Million Added** in one-time funds to conduct phase two research and landscape analysis, conduct a leadership pilot with selected RESAs, and establish a framework for the Georgia READS community collaborative.

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

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

- **\$456,374 Added** for judicial circuit contracts to restore FY 2021 budget reductions.

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

- **\$371,500 Transferred** for community action teams to deter child welfare involvement from Out-of-Home Care to Child Welfare Services to align budgets with expenditures.
- **\$50,000 Reduced** for technology platform for community service referral to reflect projected expenditures.

#### ***Departmental Administration (DHS)***

- **\$3,195 Reduced** to reflect an adjustment in the enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (eFMAP) from 76.48% to 76.64%.
- **\$5.93 Million Added** to reflect a reduction in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) administrative reimbursement from 50% to 25%.

#### ***Federal Eligibility Benefit Services***

- **\$40.43 Million Added** to reflect a reduction in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) administrative reimbursement from 50% to 25%.
- **\$12 Million Added** for a SNAP payment accuracy innovation effort to reduce the SNAP payment error rate.

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

- **\$6.23 Million Transferred** for a Commercial Sexual Exploitation Recovery Center (CSERC) from the Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund Commission to the Out-of-Home Care program to align expenditures with program purpose and allow for maximization of federal matching
- **\$122,759 Reduced** to reflect an adjustment in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) from 66.40% to 66.63%.
- **\$300,000 Eliminated** for one-time funding for essential clothing and supplies for foster youth.
- **\$250,000 Eliminated** for one-time funding to place foster youth closer to their biological families.
- **\$371,500 Transferred** for community action teams to deter child welfare involvement from Out-of-Home Care to Child Welfare Services to align budgets with expenditures
- **\$21.29 Million Total Added** as follows: (\$19,401,801) for utilization growth and increased costs of care and transfer funds from the Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund Commission (\$1,892,348) to recognize savings from federal match for the above referenced CSERC and increase funds (\$19,401,801) for utilization growth and increased costs of care.

***Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund Commission***

- **\$2,105 Added** to reflect FY 2025 collections of financial penalties for sex trafficking and sexual offenses pursuant to O.C.G.A. 15-21-208 and adult entertainment establishment assessments pursuant to O.C.G.A. 15-21-209.

**Georgia Bureau of Investigation*****Regional Investigative Services***

- **\$287,300 Added** to annualize three human trafficking positions.

***Criminal Justice Coordinating Council***

- **\$3.13 Million Reduced** for the offset of the loss of Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds for Federal Fiscal Year 2025.
- **\$250,000 Eliminated** for one-time funding for gang prevention activities in Chatham County.

***Criminal Justice Coordinating Council - Council of Accountability Court Judges***

- *Budget Direction:* Utilize Opioid Trust Funds for court grants to locals and Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)

**Dept. of Public Health*****Georgia Public Health Laboratory***

- **\$24.87 Million Transferred** as follows: laboratory funds and positions from the Epidemiology program (\$334,186), Infant and Child Essential Health Treatment Services program (\$456,117), Infant and Child Health Promotion program (\$10,239,731), Infectious Disease Control program (\$10,997,494), Inspections and Environmental Hazard Control program (\$831,259), and the Public Health Formula Grants to Counties program (\$2,007,773) to establish the Georgia Public Health Laboratory program to consolidate statewide laboratory services, align program structure with agency responsibilities, and reduce administrative burden.

***Infant and Child Essential Health Treatment Services***

- **\$2 Million Added** to expand the maternal home visiting program to an additional 21 counties to increase access to maternal fetal medicine in rural communities.

**Dept. of Public Safety*****Office of Highway Safety***

- **\$2.02 Million Added** for driver's education and training in accordance with FY 2025 Joshua's Law Collections.

**University System of Georgia Board of Regents*****Public Libraries***

- **\$458,862 Added** for the public libraries' formula based on an increase in the state population.

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

- **\$2.81 Million in state funds added** and existing funds recognized (\$375,000) to establish the Institute of Civic Thought and Leadership at the Georgia Institute of Technology (Total Funds: \$3,180,000).

***Teaching***

- **\$218.61 Million Added** to reflect a 4.95% increase in enrollment (\$216,513,365) and a 0.56% increase in square footage (\$2,096,877).
- **\$4.69 Million Eliminated** in start-up funds for Augusta University and Georgia Southern University medical school expansion.
- **\$9.55 Million Added** for advance funding for the University of Georgia School of Medicine based on Group 5 credit hour earnings

## **Georgia Student Finance Commission**

### ***College Completion Grants (Lottery Funds)***

- **\$1 Million Added** to support updated grant eligibility requirements for students at Technical College System of Georgia institutions pursuant to HB 38 (2025 Session)

### ***Dual Enrollment***

- **\$27.55 Million Added** to meet projected need.

### ***Foster Care Scholarship***

- **\$2.5 Million Added** to establish the Georgia Foster Care Scholarship pursuant to SB 85 (2025 Session).

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

- **\$756,237 Added** to meet projected need to provide three scholars per congressional district.

### ***HOPE Scholarships – Private Schools (Lottery Funds)***

- **\$3.18 Million Added** to meet projected need.

### ***HOPE Scholarships – Public Schools (Lottery Funds)***

- **\$54.83 Million Added** to meet projected need.

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

- **\$671,954 Added** to meet projected need to provide three scholars per congressional district.

### ***Tuition Equalization Grants***

- **\$3.99 Million Added** to meet projected need.

## **Technical College System of Georgia**

### ***Technical Education***

- **\$34.15 Million Added** to reflect a 9.4% increase in enrollment (\$33,594,041) and a 0.9% increase in square footage (\$553,441).

### ***Technical Education: High-Cost Programs - Special Project***

- **\$748,416 Reduced** to reflect a 1.8% decrease in enrollment for high-cost programs.

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

- **\$715.74 Million Reduced** funds for one-time projects appropriated in the FY 2026 budget (HB 68, 2025 Session).

## **Georgia General Obligation Debt Sinking Fund**

### ***State Board of Education (K-12 Local School Facilities)***

- **5 bonds | \$25,511,359 total**
  - Financing educational facilities for county and independent school systems

### ***Department of Education (State-level projects)***

- **1 bond | \$118,065 total**
  - Department of Education capital projects (not further specified)

### ***Board of Regents – University System of Georgia (USG)***

- **21 bonds | \$19,986,540 total**
  - University System of Georgia capital projects (campus facilities, renovations, equipment; not itemized in excerpt)

### ***Board of Regents – Georgia Military College***

- **4 bonds | \$102,786 total**
  - Georgia Military College capital projects

### ***Board of Regents – Georgia Public Telecommunications Commission***

- **4 bonds | \$290,675 total**
  - Georgia Public Telecommunications Commission facilities and infrastructure

***Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG)***

- **13 bonds | \$9,970,241 total**
  - Technical college facilities, renovations, and equipment statewide

***Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency***

- **1 bond | \$222,240 total**
  - Vocational rehabilitation facilities and capital improvements

***Department of Public Health***

- **1 bond | \$106,953 total**
  - Public health facilities and capital improvements

***Department of Veterans Service***

- **1 bond | \$169,921 total**
  - Veterans service facilities and capital improvements

***Department of Corrections***

- **1 bond | \$3,937,352 total**
  - State correctional facilities and infrastructure

***Department of Defense***

- **2 bonds | \$1,481,600 total**
  - Georgia Department of Defense facilities and infrastructure

***Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI)***

- **5 bonds | \$2,653,318 total**
  - GBI facilities, labs, and equipment (specific projects not itemized)

***Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)***

- **2 bonds | \$3,967,132 total**
  - Juvenile justice facilities and capital improvements

***Department of Public Safety (DPS)***

- **6 bonds | \$1,164,971 total**
  - DPS facilities and equipment (excluding training center)

***Georgia Public Safety Training Center (GPSTC)***

- **3 bonds | \$997,464 total**
  - Training center facilities, buildings, and equipment

***Department of Labor***

- **1 bond | \$623,198 total**
  - Labor department facilities and infrastructure

***Department of Agriculture***

- **3 bonds | \$3,095,988 total**
  - Agriculture facilities, labs, and capital improvements

***Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA)***

- **1 bond | \$3,074,320 total**
  - Loans for local government water, sewer, and solid waste infrastructure

***State Forestry Commission***

- **3 bonds | \$673,713 total**
  - Forestry facilities, equipment, and infrastructure

***Department of Natural Resources (DNR)***

- **2 bonds | \$2,747,514 total**
  - Parks, environmental, and natural resource facilities



## Justice, Public Safety, & School Discipline

Bill Number	Link to Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Status
HB 920	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72052">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72052</a>	(Roberts-52nd)	Prohibits any person who voluntarily associates (participation, formal affiliation, financial support, or public endorsement) with a hate group within the past ten years to serve as a peace officer or in a state militia role. Any person who currently serves as a peace officer or in a state militia role to have been a hate group member within the past ten years is subject to immediate investigation and potential removal from his or her position.	House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee
HB 954	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72179">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72179</a>	(Bell-75th)	"Eric's Law"- Provides that any person with a physical or mental disability that is not immediately obvious or visible may request to have a symbol placed on the front of their driver's license indicating such disability. An applicant may also request the removal of the symbol from their driver's license. Upon receipt of a request for removal, the Department of Driver Services shall delete any records related to the notation and shall be prohibited from disclosing any information regarding such request.	House Motor Vehicles Committee
HB 994	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72261">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72261</a>	(Cheokas-151st)	Changes the offense of riot from a misdemeanor to a felony with the resulting penalty being imprisonment of one to 20 years. The bill also adds riot to the list of offenses that are not eligible for bail.	House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee
HB 997	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72276">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72276</a>	(Leverett-123rd)	Limits how long the Department of Community Supervision may hold certain offenders in local jails while awaiting transfer, generally capping such holds at 30 days without local approval. The bill significantly increases the minimum per-diem reimbursement paid to counties for housing state inmates—from \$7.50 to at least \$50 per day—and revises when reimbursement begins and ends, tying payments more closely to sentencing, probation revocation, parole warrants, and arrest dates rather than transfer delays. It prohibits most felony offenders, probation violators, and parole violators from serving sentences in county facilities after conviction or revocation, with limited	House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

exceptions. The bill also clarifies transportation responsibilities, expands reimbursement eligibility (including potential enhanced payments for certain counties), and updates parole-related reimbursement provisions, including allowing reimbursement for medical costs when funds are appropriated.

**HB 1011** <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72318> (Gilliard-162nd)

Prohibits vehicle pursuits by law enforcement in residential areas unless there is an immediate risk to public safety or imminent threat of serious bodily injury or death, and probable cause exists to arrest the operator or an occupant for a serious violent felony. Each state, county, and local law enforcement agency must publish their pursuit policies online and establish a pursuit review committee to examine data, officer statements, and video recordings, and to recommend corrective actions, policy updates, training improvements, or disciplinary measures. Agencies conducting emergency response pursuits must publish an annual report detailing the number of pursuits initiated or terminated in residential areas, outcomes, injuries, fatalities, property damage, demographic information of individuals involved, and any disciplinary actions or policy changes resulting from pursuit reviews.

House Hopper

**SB 391** <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72174> (Parkes-7th)

Prohibits all government employees, including law enforcement, from conducting immigration enforcement activities without a judicial warrant issued. Prohibits action with the intent to assist in immigration enforcement on or in any school grounds, college campuses, public places of worship, hospitals, public libraries, and family violence shelters.

Senate  
Judiciary  
Committee



## Child Welfare & Protection

Bill Number	Link to Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Status
<b>HB 57</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/69355">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/69355</a>	(Cameron-1st)	Expands the definition of incest to include step-grandparents and step-grandchildren.	House Judiciary Non-Civil

		Committee. This bill will be heard in subcommittee on Wednesday Jan. 26.
<b>HB 943</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72141">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72141</a> (Silcox-53rd)	Requires the Division of Family and Children Services is required to develop and implement a five-year pilot program to provide autism spectrum disorder screenings and clinical evaluations for children in foster care, as well as training, services, and resources related to autism for division staff, healthcare providers, and caregivers, including online options. The pilot program must begin in three regional service areas in its first year and expand to additional regions each year until all regional service areas are included. The program is directed, to the extent possible, to prioritize screenings, evaluations, and services for children in foster care who have been diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactive disorder or reactive attachment disorder, or who have been prescribed psychotropic medications. As part of implementation, the division must plan for incremental expansion, develop communication strategies for caregivers, ensure the availability of medical consultants in regional service areas, and provide technical assistance and dedicated staff to support the pilot. By July 1, 2031, the division must submit a detailed report on the program's implementation and effectiveness, including recommendations for permanent adoption and identification of services to be provided, and is authorized to adopt rules and regulations necessary to carry out the pilot program. This pilot is subject to available appropriations.
<b>HB 965</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72214">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72214</a> (Kahaian-81st)	Requires medical providers to provide copies of, and/or access to, an unemancipated minor's medical records upon written request by a parent or legal guardian, except where prohibited by applicable federal or state privacy laws, a court order removes that right, or the parental rights of the parent or legal guardian have been terminated.

<b>HB 984</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72244">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72244</a> (Camp-135th)	Provides for a court order to locate the guardian of record of an alleged victim of child abuse, elder abuse, or abuse of a disabled adult when such victim is moved from a known address to an unknown location and there is an inquiry of the welfare and safety of such person.	House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee
<b>HB 1002</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72295">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72295</a> (Camp-135th)	Transfers Medicaid coverage for foster children from managed care to fee-for-service and gives the Dept. of Community Health permission to submit any Medicaid state plan amendments (to CMS) necessary to do so.	House Hopper
<b>HR 1023</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72264">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72264</a> (Jones-25th)	Constitutional Amendment providing that every parent has a fundamental right to direct the upbringing, education, care, and control of their children.	House Judiciary Committee
<b>SB 383</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72159">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72159</a> (Kirkpatrick-32nd)	Modifies the review to be performed by local child fatality review committees, adding members to such committees and requiring attendance for training. The bill also clarifies the scope of child deaths subject to review and modifies deadlines and requirements for reports relating to child deaths. In addition, it modifies the procedures of the coroner or medical examiner and the review committee in identifying child deaths that meet the statutory criteria for review by the committee.	Senate Children and Families Committee
<b>SB 398</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72204">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72204</a> (Hatchett-50th)	Establishes criminal offense for virtual peeping: Prohibits the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) to generate an image of an adult without that adult's consent; a person who commits such an act will be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature. If a person commits virtual peeping and causes a generative AI image of obscene material of an adult without consent, the offender shall be guilty of a felony, punishable by imprisonment of 1 to 10 years and a fine of up to \$50,000. If a person causes generative AI without a minor's consent or that of a legal guardian, the offender shall be guilty of a felony, punishable by imprisonment of 1 to 5 years and a fine of up to \$10,000. For obscene minor images produced by generative AI, the offender, upon conviction, will be guilty of a felony and punishable by imprisonment of 5 to 20 years and a fine of up to \$100,000. A person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor rather than a felony if all of the following conditions are met:	Senate Judiciary Committee

the minor depicted was at least 14 years old at the time the image was generated; the image was created with the minor's consent; the defendant was 18 years of age or younger at the time of generation; the defendant did not distribute the image to another person; and the court, in its discretion, determines that the image was not intended to harass, intimidate, embarrass, or be used for commercial purposes. Each image generated shall count as a separate offense. This law does not apply to activities by law enforcement or prosecutors in the investigation or prosecution of criminal offenses. If the offender is an immediate family member of the victim, the fines do not apply.

**SB 402** <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72251> (Tillery-19th)

Creates a five-year pilot program to provide autism spectrum disorder screenings and clinical evaluations for children in foster care, along with related training, services, and resources. The program shall be administered by the Division of Family and Children Services within the Department of Human Services. In the first year, the pilot program shall be established in three regional service areas and shall expand to additional regional service areas in each subsequent year of the pilot program. The program shall prioritize screenings, clinical evaluations, and services for children in foster care who have been diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or reactive attachment disorder, or who have been prescribed psychotropic medications.

Senate  
Children and  
Families  
Committee

**SB 404** <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72255> (Setzler-37th)

Provides for joint legal and physical custody as the default child custody arrangement and for the presumption that joint legal and physical custody is in the best interests of the child.

Senate  
Judiciary  
Committee



## Health & Behavioral Health

Bill	Link to Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Status
<b>HB 659</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/70938">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/70938</a>	(Greene-154th)	Expands medical education funding and the service cancelable loan program to include optometrists.	House Rural Development Committee. This bill will be heard in committee on Wednesday Jan. 26.
<b>HB 897</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71970">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71970</a>	(Au-50th)	Allows pharmacies to dispense a one-time, 30-day emergency supply of insulin to eligible individuals who provide proper identification, a valid insulin prescription, and a completed, signed application form. States that the maximum out-of-pocket cost for the 30-day supply is \$35. Pharmacies must notify the prescribing healthcare provider within 72 hours of dispensing the insulin. Eligible individuals include those who have applied for medical assistance, Georgia Medicaid, or PeachCare for Kids but have not yet been determined eligible or have not yet received coverage. The Department of Community Health must provide information on applying for medical assistance, details about the program, and guidance on accessing healthcare providers participating in drug discount programs. The bill establishes administrative penalties ranging from \$200,000 to \$600,000 for insulin manufacturers that fail to comply with procedures for making insulin available to eligible pharmacies. Fraudulent activity which may include false statements, failure to disclose information or impersonation, or obtains or attempts to obtain any assistance benefit may be guilty of a misdemeanor unless if the value of assistance exceeds \$1,500 and will therefore be guilty of a felony.	House Public & Community Health Committee
<b>HB 898</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71971">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71971</a>	(Au-50th)	Mandates that each drug manufacturer to make a patient assistance program that is made available to eligible individuals, provides a 90-day supply of insulin at no charge to an eligible individual or	House Public & Community Health Committee

		pharmacy and can be recorded for up to one year and is renewable annually if an individual still meets eligibility.	Health Committee
<b>HB 931</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72080">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72080</a> (Lupton-83rd)	Establishes the Prescription Drug Affordability Board to control the high costs of prescription drugs.	House Health Committee
<b>HB 950</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72175">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72175</a> (Kahaian-81st)	Requires schools and facilities to provide parents and guardians with information regarding each required immunization required by the Department of Public Health. Information regarding exemptions shall be provided in the same manner and format as the information regarding immunization requirements. Instructions on exemption shall also be included in the same manner and format.	House Education Committee
<b>HB 951</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72176">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72176</a> (Clark-100th)	Requires state health benefit policies to provide coverage to state employees for medically necessary orthotic devices and prosthetic devices and their materials and components. The bill also notes that public school teachers, employees, and members and employees of the Board of Regents, and the retirees of these groups are considered to be state employees.	House Health Committee
<b>HB 958</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72185">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72185</a> (Au-50th)	Requires manufacturers of consumable vapor products to disclose all ingredients and any chemicals of concern and list each ingredient of such vapor products in descending order of predominance by weight in such products. Also requires a statement regarding the nature and extent of research concerning the effects on human health of such ingredients. Also a statement regarding any evaluation of the availability of possible alternatives and hazards posed by such chemicals. Manufacturers are to publish this information on their website in a manner that is readily accessible to the public and machine readable. Updates should be made when changes are made to the product or as required by law.	House Ways & Means Committee
<b>HB 959</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72186">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72186</a> (Au-50th)	Prohibits the sale of any flavored consumable vaping product.	House Ways & Means Committee

<b>HB 961</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72210">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72210</a> (Powell-33rd)	Requires healthcare plans to treat emergency ambulance transport as a covered service whenever the transport is requested by a first responder or a healthcare practitioner responsible for the patient's care. For out-of-network ambulance providers, it establishes minimum reimbursement standards: plans must pay the rate set by contract or by local government action (such as an ordinance or regulation) in the jurisdiction where the service originates, or, if no such rate exists, the lesser of 400 percent of the applicable Medicare ambulance rate or the provider's billed charges. Any payment made under the bill is deemed payment in full, aside from standard patient cost-sharing, and the bill prohibits balance billing by out-of-network ambulance providers. It further caps patient copayments, coinsurance, and deductibles for out-of-network ambulance services at in-network levels, ensuring patients are not charged more for emergency ambulance care because the provider is out of network.	House Insurance Committee
<b>HB 968</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72217">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72217</a> (Townsend-179th)	Provides that mitragynine and hydroxymitragynine (7-OH) are Schedule I controlled substances and repeals provisions relating to the regulation of kratom.	House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee. This bill will be heard in subcommittee on Wednesday Jan. 26.
<b>HB 981</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72241">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72241</a> (Powell-33rd)	Expands prescriptive authority for advanced practice registered nurses and physician assistants to include stimulants and increases prescription duration from five to 30 days. Removes age restrictions preventing these providers from prescribing controlled substances to minors. Thanks to the team at Gold Dome Partners for this summary!	House Public & Community Health Committee
<b>HB 995</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72262">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72262</a> (Barnes-86th)	This bill establishes the Vape-Free Schools Grant Program and requires the State Board of Education, by December 31, 2026, to create a grant program to help public high schools purchase, install, and maintain vaping detectors. In developing the program, the State Board must coordinate with the Dept. of Public Health, the	House Education Committee

		Dept. of Administrative Services, and other experts to approve vaping detectors and develop guidance on rehabilitative services for students. Before the 2027–2028 school year, local school systems must install vaping detectors and adopt a vaping awareness and prevention policy in their student codes of conduct, including prohibitions on vaping, graduated disciplinary responses, anonymous reporting, and investigation and response procedures. Detectors must provide real-time alerts in bathrooms, locker rooms, and other areas where students may attempt to vape.	
<b>HB 1006</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72301">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72301</a>	(Hugley-141st)	House Hopper
<b>HR 1007</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72149">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72149</a>	(Jones-25th)	House Special Rules Committee
<b>SB 366</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71823">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71823</a>	(Moore-53rd)	Senate Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee
<b>SB 367</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71840">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71840</a>	(Cowsert-46th)	Senate Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee
<b>SB 371</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71979">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71979</a>	(Strickland-42nd)	Senate Judiciary Committee

AD), and Certified Peer Specialist–Youth (CPS-Y). The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) will set the criteria for these grants. Funding for the program will depend on appropriations and the amount awarded to each recipient will be determined individually by DBHDD for hospitals or local addiction recovery centers. DBHDD will distribute the funds to grantees with adequate geographic diversity. The department is required to partner with an independent consultant to establish program policies and evaluate grant applications. The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of peer support programs in reducing criminal justice interactions, the cost-effectiveness of such programs, differences in program implementation, the impact on the behavioral health system, and the perceptions of peer support programs and their effectiveness by individuals, behavioral health care providers, and program staff.

**SB 379** <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72150> (McLaurin-14th)

(McLaurin-14th) Requires the state to develop a health insurance affordability program to reduce the cost of coverage for Georgians purchasing plans through the state-based marketplace, Georgia Access. It directs the Department of Insurance to design the program to include state premium subsidies for individuals earning up to 400% of the federal poverty level, additional cost-sharing reductions for those below 250% of the federal poverty level, and a state-funded, no-premium plan for individuals below 200% of the federal poverty level. The bill requires the department to convene a stakeholder working group to help design the program and to submit a plan and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly. It also requires a fiscal impact analysis and identification of sustainable funding sources, followed by rulemaking for program implementation. The bill mandates annual reporting beginning in 2028 on participation, enrollment impacts, and outcomes, as well as consumer education and outreach efforts. A comprehensive evaluation of the program is required in 2030, with a report due in 2031. The affordability program would take effect only if

Senate Health  
and Human  
Services  
Committee

enhanced federal premium tax credits are not reestablished after December 31, 2025.

**SB 380** <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72154> (Lucas-26th)

Authorizes the Department of Community Health to seek and use appropriations to obtain federal matching funds for Medicaid medical assistance payments and to fund the state's share of costs associated with expanding the Medicaid program under the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. It conditions this authorization on the availability of federal financial participation. The bill specifies that the appropriations authorization does not apply if the federal government provides less than 90% of the funding for the Medicaid expansion.

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

**SB 395** <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72198> (Kirkpatrick-32nd)

Reduces the reporting requirement for physicians participating in the Low THC Oil Registry to the Board of Physicians from semiannual to annual. Requires physicians to submit sufficient information annually for the Board to confirm that a valid doctor-patient relationship exists and that the Low THC oil is being recommended for the condition the physician is treating or that the patient is receiving hospice care.

Senate Health and Human Services Committee



## Maternal & Infant Care

Bill Number	Link to Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Status
<b>HB 925</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72074">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72074</a>	(Cannon-58th)	"Georgia Maternal Health Momnibus Act"- Establishes pilot programs to provide prenatal care and postpartum care through telemedicine and mobile health clinics for women residing in limited maternity care counties and maternity care deserts.	House Public & Community Health Committee



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

**No bills have been filed in this category yet.**



## K-12 Education

Bill Number	Link to Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Status
HB 907	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71990">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71990</a>	(Jones-47th)	Requires certain local school systems to either be a party to a collaborative operating agreement with a completion special school or provide certain education programs and services to students in grades nine through 12. The bill also requires local school systems to provide to completion special schools the contact information for students who stop attending or withdraw from the local school system.	House Education Committee
HB 908	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71991">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71991</a>	(Smith-41st)	Prohibits public schools, private schools, or home school program from requiring a child who has successfully completed all requirements for a high school diploma to take or attend classes for any additional courses in their final semester of high school.	House Education Committee
HB 912	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71999">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71999</a>	(Wilkerson-38th)	Provides matching grant funding from the State Board of Education to an eligible home reading program for students in kindergarten through fourth grade.	House Education Committee
HB 917	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72008">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72008</a>	(Jones-25th)	Provides generally for open enrollment processes for students to transfer between local school systems and between schools within local school systems and prohibits charging tuition for transfers between local school systems, with some exception. The bill also provides for appeals of denials of transfer requests and revises the calculations for equalization grants, among other provisions.	House Education Committee
HB 918	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72021">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72021</a>	(Hilton-48th)	Permits private school students, home study students, and nonresident public school students to enroll as part-time students in any public school in this state, subject only to enrolling school capacity and academic and grade level prerequisites.	House Education Committee

<b>HB 921</b> <a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72053">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72053</a> (Park-107th)	Requires the Georgia Department of Education to conduct an impact study within 90 days of any federal action that reduces the scope, workforce, or budget of the U.S. Department of Education by more than 20%. The study will assess the effects on public primary and secondary education in Georgia, including academic performance, program access, staffing resources, and school operations. A report on the findings must be provided to each local education agency and made publicly available on the department's website in a clear and accessible format.	House Education Committee
<b>HB 929</b> <a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72078">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72078</a> (Lupton-83rd)	Provides for a three-year pilot program for dietetics services for public elementary and secondary school students and patients at federally qualified health centers.	House Public & Community Health Committee
<b>HB 970</b> <a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72219">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72219</a> (Townsend-179th)	Amends the Quality Basic Education act to require that any mandated physical examinations prior to participation in extracurricular activities are to be completed by a qualified healthcare professional (including medical physicians, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant) and such physical examinations should be valid for 12 months. Also, such examinations should include a cardiovascular screening that follows procedures outlined by nationally recognized organizations that follow evidence-based recommendations (such as American College of Cardiology, American Heart Association, or other nationally recognized organizations). Any student with positive findings should be referred for further testing. Educational and evidence-based materials that provide information regarding sudden cardiac arrest should be provided to parents of students participating in activities that require physical examination, and such information should be provided as a part of completing participation forms and said examination.	House health committee
<b>HB 971</b> <a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72220">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72220</a> (Townsend-179th)	Amends the Quality Basic Education Act to allow home school students and/or private school students to enroll in a local school system's college and career academy course, regardless of the student's residency or associated regional education service agency.	House Education Committee

<b>HB 972</b> <a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72230">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72230</a> (Berry-56th)	Mandates each local board of education and public school governing body, beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, to develop and implement a policy of a written notice to the parent or legal guardian of each student in grades 4-8, indicating whether the student is reading proficiently at grade level. Such notice must be provided at least twice per year.	House Education Committee
<b>HB 989</b> <a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72256">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72256</a> (Wilkerson-38th)	Requires local boards of education to provide public comment periods at meetings, broadcast meetings and public comment, and record or broadcast public comment to the same extent as other public portions of meetings. It also limits boards from requiring more than 24 hours' advance notice for individuals wishing to speak during public comment.	House Education Committee
<b>HB 1009</b> <a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72304">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72304</a> (Hilton-48th)	Prohibits public school students in grades 9-12 from accessing personal electronic devices during the school day. Each year on January 1, each local school system shall revise policies surrounding personal device use as appropriate. Policies must include clear procedures for device storage for on-site and off-site events (including dual enrollment programs, work based learning, and apprenticeship programs). They must also establish clear communication policies between parents and the school in cases of emergency or parent needs. Exceptions exist for students with IEP or 504 Plans that explicitly mandate the use of a personal electronic device as necessary to fulfill requirements of programs or plans.	House Hopper
<b>SB 369</b> <a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71940">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71940</a> (Still-48th)	This bill revises the "Charter Schools Act of 1998" by allowing the conversion of existing charter schools into completion charter schools and requiring the State Board of Education to establish rules, regulations, policies, and procedures to govern the content of a charter school petition.	Senate Education & Youth Committee
<b>SB 381</b> <a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72153">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72153</a> (Kemp-38th)	Amends the Quality Basic Education Act to create a new state grant program targeted at students living in poverty. Students are defined as living in poverty if they are enrolled in SNAP, TANF, or foster care, or if they lack stable housing as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The State Board of Education is required to award grants to supplement services for these students, and at least 90% of grant	Senate Education and Youth Committee

		funds must be used for direct program expenditures.	
<b>SB 401</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72249">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72249</a> (Williams-25th)	Requires each local board of education to provide age-appropriate instruction on firearm safety in grades K-12. Such instruction can be incorporated into the health and physical education course. Implementation will begin in the 2028-2029 school year, and the State Board of Education shall adopt content standards for such firearm safety instruction. Each local board of education is authorized to establish a curriculum for instruction in firearm safety based on courses offered by the Department of Natural Resources and shall include the following topics: 1) safe storage of a firearm, 2) school safety relating to firearms, and 3) how to avoid injury if the student finds a firearm. Such instruction is not to include the use or presence of live ammunition, live fire, or live firearms. Instruction is to be viewpoint neutral and shall not espouse personal political beliefs relating to firearms.	Senate Education and Youth Committee
<b>SB 412</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72289">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72289</a> (Hickman-4th)	Increase from three to five the number of accumulated sick leave days teachers and other school personnel may take each school year for personal or professional reasons.	Senate Hopper



## Higher Education

Bill Number	Link to Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Status
<b>HB 962</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72211">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72211</a> (Martin-49th)		Allows beneficiaries of the Georgia Higher Education Savings Plan to contribute an amount that is determined reasonable by the board based on current and anticipated costs of education, and removes the \$235,000 maximum for beneficiaries to contribute. Also, contributions to a qualified tuition program established by a state or agency, is exempt from taxes pursuant to section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.	House Ways & Means Committee
<b>SB 400</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72232">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72232</a> (Burns-23rd)		Updates the regulation of nonpublic postsecondary education by defining distance	Senate Higher

education and expanding postsecondary activity to Education Committee include distance education provided to individuals in the state or delivered from within the state. It limits degree-granting authority to institutions that are accredited or actively pursuing accreditation by a U.S. Department of Education-recognized accreditor. The bill removes the requirement for Title 43-regulated institutions to participate in the Tuition Guaranty Trust Fund, allows institutions to use an irrevocable letter of credit in place of a surety bond, and authorizes denial of applications based on prior regulatory noncompliance or harm to students. It clarifies that formal hearing and appeal rights do not apply to denials of additional course offerings. To protect students in the event of closure or potential closure, the executive director may require submission or seizure of academic records and maintain permanent custody of those records. The bill also revises Tuition Guaranty Trust Fund provisions by exempting long-participating institutions from continued payments, limiting student reimbursement eligibility under specified conditions, and granting the fund an independent right to recover reimbursements from defaulting institutions.



## Environmental Safety

Bill Number	Link to Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Status
<b>SB 204</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/70476">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/70476</a>	(Jones II-22nd)	Prohibits counties and municipalities from regulating the storage of firearms. Lawful weapons carriers who have been aggrieved by a rule in violation of this preemption are provided with the right to bring an action for an injunction or a civil cause of action. A plaintiff in a civil case is provided with the ability to sue for either: A) actual damages or \$25,000, whichever is greater, and collect reasonable attorneys' fees and any other costs associated with the action, or B) liquidated damages of three times the expenses of litigation and reasonable attorneys' fees. There is a one-year statute of limitations for these actions. The	<b>PASSED SENATE.</b> <b>PASSED HOUSE.</b> Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

bill also allows prosecutors to accuse an individual, rather than indict that person through the grand jury process, unless the charge includes a serious violent felony, a sexual felony, the 'Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act' (RICO), criminal street gang activity, or a violation of local law involving firearm preemption (16-11-173).

**SB 374** <https://www.legis.ga.gov/> (Strickland-42nd legislation/72065)

Allows local governments to adopt ordinances that require fire sprinklers to be installed in residential buildings with two or more units. (Currently, code does not require such residential buildings to have fire sprinklers, but this bill would allow city or county governments to ordain these requirements.)



## **Shelter & Nutrition**

Bill Number	Link to Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Status
<b>HB 947</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/">https://www.legis.ga.gov/</a> <u>legislation/72145</u>	(Momtahan-17th)	Directs Georgia to seek federal approval to implement new restrictions and administrative changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and sets out requirements that would apply only if that approval is granted. It requires the state to apply to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for a waiver, report regularly to legislative committees on the status of that request, and delay implementation of any SNAP purchase restrictions until federal authorization is received. If approved, the bill requires updates to SNAP systems, retailer guidance, recipient notifications, and monitoring of impacts on purchasing patterns and public health, with multiple reports to the General Assembly. The bill mandates new EBT card design requirements, including the participant's name, photograph, and fraud-prevention information, while preserving use by legally authorized individuals. It conditions SNAP participation on verification of U.S. citizenship consistent with federal law, compliance with federal work requirements, and annual recertification beginning in 2027. The bill also expands state	House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee

		efforts to increase SNAP use at farmers markets and prohibits SNAP benefits from being used for made-to-order foods and beverages intended for immediate consumption within retail stores, requiring point-of-sale controls to enforce those restrictions.	
<b>HB 948</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72146">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72146</a>	(Camp-135th)	House Judiciary Committee
<b>HB 993</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72260">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72260</a>	(Barnes - 86th)	House Education Committee
<b>HB 996</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72263">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72263</a>	(Berry - 56th)	House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee
<b>HB 1007</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72302">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72302</a>	(Berry-56th)	House Hopper

		deduct the cost from the next rent payment, provided the repair cost does not exceed the rent amount. If the landlord fails to complete the repair within 60 days of notice, the tenant may, after providing 30 days written notice, terminate the lease.	
<b>HB 1013</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72320">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72320</a>	Designates lemon pepper wings as the official Georgia state chicken wing flavor.	House Hopper
<b>HB 1014</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72321">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72321</a>	Prohibits private and public primary and secondary schools from serving, selling (or allowing a third party to serve or sell) food or beverages that contain certain synthetic dyes, and prohibits the addition of specific ingredients in food and the selling any food under an invented name when it does not contain some ingredient suggested by such name or contains only an inconsiderable quantity.	House Hopper
<b>SB 365</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71791">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71791</a>	Amends Georgia law relating to agriculture and animals to establish new transparency, testing, and disclosure requirements for certain large-scale organic produce, meat, and poultry producers. It requires large-scale organic produce producers to conduct routine monthly testing for prohibited substances, maintain testing records, and notify state and federal authorities and halt sales if violations are detected. The bill imposes recordkeeping, source verification, and detailed disclosure requirements on large-scale grassfed meat producers, including disclosures about livestock management history, use of livestock markets, deviations from advertised production claims, and whether cattle were over five years old at slaughter. It adds specific labeling, testing, disposal, notification, and sales suspension requirements for beef produced from older cattle, including testing of specified risk materials for transmissible spongiform encephalopathies. The bill also requires large-scale pasture-raised poultry producers to conduct routine avian influenza testing, maintain records, notify authorities of positive cases, suspend sales, and implement biosecurity measures when necessary. It mandates separate tracking of different meat species, sourcing verification for direct-to-consumer sales, and authorizes civil penalties and suspension or revocation of marketing claims for noncompliance.	Senate Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee

<b>SB 413</b> <a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72291">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72291</a> (Jackson-41st)	Permits the termination of a residential rental or lease agreement if a tenant or legal occupant of a residence has experienced residential firearm violence or reasonably fears such violence will occur at the residence. The legislation defines "residential firearm violence" as an act committed against a tenant or legal occupant at, or in the immediate vicinity of, the residence that includes a felony committed with a firearm, a misdemeanor committed with a firearm, any action involving a firearm that creates a serious risk of injury, or any action involving a firearm that results in injury. To exercise this termination right, the tenant or legal occupant must provide the landlord with documentation, which may include: documentation from a victim services provider verifying that the tenant or legal occupant has experienced residential firearm violence; a record from a federal, state, or local law enforcement agency verifying the act of residential firearm violence; a record from a health care provider; or a sworn affidavit from a qualified third party.	House Hopper
<b>SB 414</b> <a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72290">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72290</a> (Jackson-41st)	Prohibits landlords from entering into a rental agreement with, or accepting payment from, a consumer unless the landlord has first clearly and conspicuously disclosed the total rental price for the residential property. It further prohibits landlords from charging or collecting hidden or improper fees, including fees that are excessive; charged for services not actually performed or received; related to services the landlord is already required to provide under federal, state, or local law or under the rental agreement; used to force a tenant to use a specific vendor or service provider chosen by the landlord; or charged without being clearly and explicitly authorized in the rental agreement.	House Hopper
<b>SB 415</b> <a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72292">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72292</a> (Dickerson-21st)	Prohibits any person from producing, selling, trading, distributing, or offering to produce, sell, trade, or distribute any lab-grown meat ("Lab-grown meat" means any food product that is produced, wholly or in part, by artificially growing the cell cultures of animal muscle or organ tissues) for human consumption.	Senate Hopper



## Miscellaneous

Bill Number	Link to Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Status
<b>HB 902</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71975">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/71975</a>	(Jones-25th)	Provides for transparency and accountability in insurance rates and rate regulation after the enactment of tort reform law and for the publication of certain information. The bill also extends the time for data collection and analysis related to tort reform law and provides for findings on savings from tort reform law.	House Insurance Committee
<b>HB 930</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72079">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72079</a>	(Lupton-83rd)	Provides a tax credit to offset the cost of groceries, transportation, and utilities: \$1,000 for single taxpayers, \$2,000 for married couples filing jointly, and an additional \$1,000 for each dependent. Also provides a tax credit of up to \$1,000 for tuition or fees related to participation in an approved workforce training program. Requires the State Workforce Development Board to publish a High-Demand Workforce Training List to identify training programs aligned with the state's most critical current and future workforce needs. Additionally, allows a tax credit of up to \$5,000 for attorneys practicing wills and estates law or landlord-tenant law in rural areas for each 12-month period of employment. This credit may be claimed for up to five years, provided the attorney continues to practice in a qualifying rural area. In addition, it amends existing low-income housing tax credit law to allow certain Georgia housing projects that do not receive a federal allocation to qualify for a state credit equal to the full amount of the federal credit they would have received under an expanded allocation formula. Finally, the bill imposes an additional 0.20 percent state excise tax on taxable sales of tangible personal property made or facilitated by marketplace facilitators, to be collected and administered in the same manner as existing sales and use taxes, with most provisions applying to taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2026.	House Ways & Means Committee

<b>HB 946</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72144">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72144</a>	(Clifton-131st)	Permits the trapping and killing of feral hogs without a hunting or trapping license, provided the hog is killed upon capture. Authorizes the use of drones to locate feral hogs. Changes the applicable penalty from imprisonment to confinement.	House Game, Fish & Parks Committee
<b>HB 1000</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72293">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72293</a>	(Gambill-15th)	Provides a one-time tax credit for individual qualified taxpayers who filed income tax returns for the 2024 and 2025 taxable years for an equal to the lesser amount of \$250 for a single taxpayer, \$375 for head of household, or \$500 for a couple filing together.	House Hopper
<b>HB 1001</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72294">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72294</a>	(Wade-9th)	Reduces the income tax rate from 5.19% to 4.99% beginning January 1, 2026.	House Hopper
<b>HR 1032</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72296">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72296</a>	(Jones-60th)	Creates the House Study Committee on Raising the Minimum Wage in Georgia.	House Hopper
<b>SB 375</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72067">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72067</a>	(Still-48th)	Requires certain agencies to consider the definition of hinduphobia provided for in this Act to apply to laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin. Hinduphobia is defined as "a set of antagonistic, destructive, and derogatory attitudes and behaviors towards Hinduism". The bill also authorizes fact finders in certain criminal cases to consider hinduphobia when determining whether a defendant intentionally selected any victim or group of victims or any property as the object of the offense.	Senate Judiciary Committee
<b>SB 392</b>	<a href="https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72187">https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72187</a>	(Albers-56th)	Requires the use of zero-base budgeting in the preparation of the Governor's budget and agency budget requests beginning with the January 2027 budget. It directs legislative budget offices, in coordination with the Office of Planning and Budget, to determine which agencies and programs will submit zero-base budgets each year, ensuring each agency does so at least once every ten years and no more than once every eight years. The bill establishes required components of zero-base budget submissions, including spending analyses, program purposes, performance measures, and alternative funding levels. It assigns the Governor and the Office of Planning and Budget responsibility for coordinating and formatting zero-base budgets. The bill expressly applies to the Board of Regents and requires the Department of Education to submit a zero-base budget in 2027,	Senate Appropriations Committee

encourages judicial branch participation, and authorizes legislative review of zero-base budget requests.

**SR 560** <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72168> (Moore-53rd)

Reaffirms the 35th parallel as Georgia's northern border and urges Congress, the federal Department of the Interior, and all other relevant federal, state, and local authorities to recognize and correct the boundary line dividing Georgia from Tennessee and North Carolina.



## Advocacy Ask

### The Ask:

Make sure you know who represents you at the Georgia General Assembly. Then start or build upon a relationship with your own state representative or senator by sending them a short note.

### The Why:

Advocating is made easier by nurturing respectful but clear communications with elected officials.

### The Message:

"Hi, My name is <name here> and I live in your district. Issues such as child health, child welfare, juvenile justice, childcare, and learning are important to me. I am reaching out to you today to simply say hello and let you know that I may be contacting you through the session and after to share my thoughts on legislation before you. I appreciate your dedication to public service and look forward to more opportunities to work together for the children in our district and in our state."

### The How:

[Click here to find your elected officials](#) and then call or email them with the message above.

## Upcoming Events

### January

#### Georgia Healthy Housing Day at the Capitol

Date: Wednesday, January 21st, 2026

Address: Capitol Sq SW, Atlanta, GA, 30334

Link: N/A

#### Together Georgia Day at the Capitol

Date: January 22nd, 2026

Address: Capitol Sq SW, Atlanta, GA, 30334 (South Wing)  
Link: N/A  
Organization: Together Georgia

### **CASA Awareness Day**

Date: Thursday, January 22nd, 2026  
Link: [CASA Awareness Day - Pledge Form](#)  
Organization: Court Appointed Special Advocates of Georgia

### **GBPI Annual Insights Conference**

Date: January 23rd, 2026 AT 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM  
Address: The Freight Depot, 66 MLK DR. DR. SE, Atlanta, GA, 30334  
Link: [Insights 2026 Tickets, Fri, Jan 23, 2026 at 8:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)  
Organization: Georgia Budget and Policy Institute

### **2026 Advocacy Training**

Date: Saturday, January 24th, 2026  
Time: 11:30 AM-4:00 pm  
Address: Neighborhood Church Atlanta or via Zoom  
Link: [2026 Advocacy Training - Georgia Equality](#)

### **Children's Advocacy Center of Georgia**

Date: January 26th, 2026  
Time: 2:00 PM

### **Strolling Thunder: Little Ones & Their Grownups Advocate at the GA Capitol**

Date: Thursday, January 29th, 2026  
Time: 8AM to 1PM  
Link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/strolling-thunder-little-ones-their-grownups-advocate-at-the-ga-capitol-tickets-1969969330297?aff=oddtdtcreator>  
Organization: GEEARS

### **PAGE Proposed State Education Budget Webinar**

Date: Thursday, Jan 29, 2026 5:00 PM  
Link: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)  
Organization: Professional Association of Georgia Educators

### **February**

#### **Georgia Child Care Association Day at the Capitol 2026**

Date: Wednesday, February 18th  
Time: 8:30 AM-12:00 PM  
Link: [2026 GCCA Day at the Capitol - Georgia Child Care Association](#)  
Address: 206 Washington Street, Atlanta, GA, 30334

#### **Georgia Housing Day at the Capitol**

Date: February 25th, 2026  
Time: 8:00 AM-2:00 PM

Link: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/rz9uj3y>

Address: 201 Washington St. SW, Atlanta, a, 30303

Organization: Georgia ACT



## Resources You May Find Helpful

- [Find Your Legislator](#)
- [House and Senate Leadership](#)
- [Georgia House of Representatives](#)
- [Georgia Senate](#)