

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

## March 31, 2025

Okay team – We're in the last week of the 2025 Legislative Session. Wash your jersey, shine up your badge and remember to take your keys out of your pockets. It's game time! Let's huddle! I know it's been a LONG season and you're tired. Your poker face is tired; your smartphone has melted; your socks stand up by themselves; and you've eaten enough little bags of Georgia peanuts to explode a chipmunk. But we've got to keep going! Are we ahead on afterschool dollars? ([FY26](#)) YES! Are we ahead on college grants for foster youth ([SB 85](#)) and college completion ([HB 38](#))? YES! Are we feeling pretty good about childcare tax credits ([HB 136](#)), literacy ([HB 307](#)) and occupational licensure ([HB 579](#))? Yep! But we are still a few points back on school-based mental health and school social worker dollars ([FY26](#)), plus we really need to get that Community Health Worker bill ([HB 291](#)) and the Tenant Communication bill ([HB 399](#)) across the line. So here's the plan: First let's slam dunk the \$12.5 mil for afterschool, then hand off HB 291 and HB 399 to Senate Rules who will then pass both balls to the full Senate for a 56-0 vote. After that, we are going to try to avoid an offsides call while we score \$5 mil for school social workers and use our last Hail Mary for a developmentally appropriate school safety touchdown. Can we do it? YES! This is the Superbowl, World Cup, Masters, Hunger Games, March (and April) Madness and Olympic ping pong, all rolled up into three more legislative days! Don't let an amendment get in your way! Don't let a conference committee bamboozle you! Keep your acronyms straight, even if you have to write them up your arm, and most of all, do your best not to break any of [Robert's Rules](#)! Remember, Georgia's kids are counting on you to take one for their team! So let's go out there and WIN! WIN! WIN!

As my hero, Ted Lasso said, [BELIEVE](#)!

GOOOOOOAAAAALLLLLLLLL!

--Polly

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## Budget Information

### Fiscal Year 2026 Senate Version

**Total State Funds: \$37.7 billion (an increase of \$1.6 billion or 4.4% over the FY 2025 original budget)**

**Key:** No Highlight = Governor's Recommendation  
 Yellow Highlight = House change  
 Pink Highlight = Senate Change

#### Statewide

- **Increase funds** for the Teachers Retirement System to reflect an increase in the actuarially determined employer contribution from 20.78% to 21.91%.
- DBHDD, DCH, DHS, DPH - **Reduce funds** to reflect an adjustment in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) from 66.04% to 66.40%.

#### Judicial Council

##### ***Council of Accountability Court Judges***

- **\$158,750 Added** for personnel for one certification officer position.
- **\$0 Added** for personnel for one participant services statewide coordinator position. (Governor had asked for \$159,375)

##### ***Judicial Council***

- **\$0 Added** for Civil Legal Services for families of indigent patients. (Governor asked for \$209,500)
- **\$0 Added** for grants to legal self-help centers. (Governor asked for \$100,000)
- **\$400,000 Added** to annualize the juvenile court case management contract.

##### ***Prosecuting Attorneys' Council***

- **\$800,000 eliminated** to reflect ongoing maintenance cost of repeat offender gang case management system

#### Jump to Agency:

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

### ***Adult Addictive Disease Services***

- **\$1.3 Million Added** for alcohol use disorder peer support. (House Added \$1 Million)
- **\$50,000 Added** for Hope House

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

- **\$4.66 Million Added** for 200 additional slots for the New Options Waiver (NOW) and the Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. (Governor asked for 100 slots and the House increased to 150 and the Senate increased it further)
- **\$0 Added** for Citizen Advocacy to expand services. (House Added \$100,000 and Senate removed it)
- **\$2.33 Million Added** to annualize the cost of 100 New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) slots for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- **\$3.24 Million Added** to annualize the operations of the Macon Crisis Stabilization and Diagnostic Center for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- **\$26.71 Million Added** to annualize the provider rate increases recommended by the New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) provider rate study.

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

- **\$1.06 Million Added** to annualize the operations of a 30-bed jail-based competency restoration program pilot in Dodge County.
- **\$1.95 Million Added** to operationalize a new 17-bed forensic unit at the Central State Hospital Allen Building in Milledgeville.
- **\$1.19 Million Added** to operationalize a new 20-bed forensic unit at the Georgia Regional Hospital Skilled Nursing Facility in Atlanta.
- **\$1.62 Million Added** to operationalize a new 30-bed Project New Hope forensic step-down unit at the West Central Georgia Regional Hospital in Columbus.
- **\$0 Added** for a jail diversion pilot. (House added \$185,420, but the Senate removed it)
- **\$2.75 Million Reduced** for jail-based competency restoration in Cobb County Jail.

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

- **\$12.53 Million Added** to annualize the provider rate increases recommended by the Community Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services (CBHRS) provider rate study.
- **\$1.13 Million Transferred** from the DCH to the DBHDD for four licensure programs to match agency roles and responsibilities.
- **\$0 Added** to coordinate outreach to address homelessness in the Atlanta area. (House added \$300,000, but the Senate removed it)
- **\$0 Added** for homelessness community action teams. (House added \$750,000, but the Senate removed it)
- **\$1.7 Million Added** for the Georgia Housing Voucher program to support the requirements of the Department of Justice (DOJ) Settlement Agreement.

- **\$2.37 Million Added** for a partnership between a nonprofit and the North Fulton behavioral health crisis center (House added \$9.48 Million simply for a North Fulton behavioral health crisis center and the Senate changed it)
- **\$300,000 Added** for one-time funding for behavioral health and support services at a rehousing facility.
- **\$200,000 Reduced** for one-time funding for behavioral health services for Georgians experiencing homelessness in the Atlanta area.
- **\$4.03 Million Reduced** funds for state contracted psychiatric beds)

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

- **\$600,000 Added** for autism centers.

#### ***Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services***

- **\$1.41 Million Added** to annualize the operations of the new Gateway child and adolescent crisis stabilization unit in Savannah. (Governor added \$1.81 Million and the Senate reduced it)
- **\$0 Added** for psychiatric residential facility discharge planning. (House added \$166,667, but the Senate removed it)
- **\$9.29 Million Transferred** from the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to the Department of Education to consolidate and streamline funding for school based mental health support services

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

- *Budget Direction:* Change program name from Coordinated Planning to Community Services to consolidate statewide community services under one program.
- **Recognize \$64.01 Million transferred of funds** and positions to consolidate statewide community services, align program structure with agency responsibilities, and reduce administrative burden.
- **Recognize \$162.83 Million transfer of funds** and positions to consolidate statewide housing initiatives, align program structure with agency responsibilities, and reduce administrative burden.
- *Budget Direction:* Change program name from Special Housing Initiatives to Housing Initiatives to consolidate statewide housing initiatives under one program.
- **\$0 Added** to expand the Accountable Housing Initiative. (House added \$2 Million and the Senate eliminated it)
- **\$1Million Reduced** in the Accountable Housing Initiative - Special Project
- **\$0 Added** in one-time funds to the State Housing Trust Fund to improve homelessness programs and leverage additional federal grants. (House added \$4 Million and the Senate eliminated it)
- **\$0 Added** for special housing assistance programs to address increased demand. (House added \$500,000 and the Senate eliminated it)

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

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

- **\$47,869 Added** for three Katie Beckett Medicaid program caseworkers and operating expenses to address increased workload.

- **\$0 Added** for The Department of Community Health to conduct a multi-year comprehensive study of all Medicaid provider reimbursement rates (House added \$1 Million and the Senate eliminated it)
- **\$300,000 Added** to provide that the Department of Community Health shall submit 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. *The State of Florida applied for a similar State Plan Amendment, and it was approved within 60 days.*

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

- **\$37,500 Added** for the operating expenses of new licensing software to enhance efficiency in licensure review. (Governor added \$75,000 and the Senate reduced it.)

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

- **\$37,500 Added** for the operating expenses of new licensing software to enhance efficiency in licensure review. (Governor added \$75,000 and the Senate reduced it.)

#### **Health Care Access and Improvement**

- **\$750,000 eliminated** in one-time start-up funding for federally qualified health centers.
- **\$500,000 Added** in one-time grant funds for two federally qualified health centers.
- **\$196,102 Added** and recognize \$2,660,935 in existing funding for the Sickle Cell Foundation of Georgia in the Department of Public Health and \$26,291,016 in state funding for one-time genetic treatments funded in the Department of Community Health (House added \$561,500 in one-time funds for care and resource coordination and support for patients with sickle cell disease, and the Senate changed it.)
- **\$250,000 Added** in one-time funds for telecare and maternal health programs. (House added \$500,000 and Senate reduced it)
- **\$407,000 Added** in one-time funds to establish a regional vascular center.
- **\$3 Million Added** in one-time matching funds for behavioral and mental health services stabilization and augmentation. (House added \$3.5 Million and Senate reduced it)
- **\$0 Added** to the Georgia Rural Health Association (GRHA) to support the advancement of access to rural health care. (House added \$100,000 and Senate reduced it)
- **\$0 Added** in one-time funds to expand and sustain labor and delivery services in rural Georgia with necessary infrastructure in order to provide quality care. (House added \$5 Million and Senate reduced it, and said, "NO; Provide a comprehensive plan to support labor and delivery services in rural Georgia")

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

- **\$29.5 Million Added** for growth in Medicaid based on projected utilization. (Governor recommended a \$41.78 Million add)
- **\$36.56 Million Added** for new high-cost drugs.
- **\$7.15 Million Added** for skilled nursing centers to reflect 2023 cost reports.
- *Budget Direction:* Replace \$5,415,201 in state general funds with hospital provider fees.
- *Budget Direction:* Replace \$6,108,816 in state general funds with nursing home provider fees.

- **\$1.47 Million Added** for emergency medical services (EMS) transport reimbursement to begin upon patient pickup. (House added \$2.8 Million and Senate reduced it and said it starts at mile six.)
- **\$701,766 Added** for rate increases for neonatologists and maternal fetal medicine specialists.
- **\$0 Added** to increase reimbursement rate for CIS speech therapy code 92507. (House added \$758,431 and Senate reduced it)
- **\$857,016 Added** to provide an increase for emergency medical services (EMS) reimbursement rates. (House added \$864,838 and Senate reduced it)
- **\$2.88 Million Added** to provide an increase for applied behavior analysis reimbursement rates. (House added \$3.36 Million and Senate reduced it)
- **\$1.39 Million Added** to increase reimbursement rates for primary care codes 99213 and 99214 (Primary care established patient visits). (House added \$2.78 Million and Senate reduced it)
- **\$771,385 Added** to increase dental code reimbursement rates. (House added \$1.54 Million and Senate reduced it)
- **\$0 Added** to increase durable medical equipment reimbursement rates. (House added \$1.69 Million and Senate reduced it)

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

- **\$177.12 Million Added** for growth in Medicaid based on projected utilization. (Governor recommended a \$188.64 Million add)
- **\$1.68 Million Added** for emergency medical services (EMS) transport reimbursement to begin upon patient pickup. (House added \$3.19 Million and Senate reduced it)
- **\$1.21 Million Added** for rate increases for neonatologists and maternal fetal medicine specialists.
- **\$0 Added** to increase reimbursement rate for CIS speech therapy code 92507. (House added \$1.18 Million and Senate reduced it)
- **\$977,529 Added** to provide an increase for emergency medical services (EMS) reimbursement rates. (House added \$986,451 and Senate reduced it)
- **\$2.53 Million Added** to provide an increase for applied behavior analysis reimbursement rates. (House added \$2.95 Million and Senate reduced it)
- **\$2.35 Million Added** to increase reimbursement rates for primary care codes 99213 and 99214 (Primary care established patient visits). (House added \$4.7 Million and Senate reduced it)
- **\$803,526 Added** to increase dental code reimbursement rates. (House added \$1.61 Million and Senate reduced it)
- **\$0 Added** to increase durable medical equipment reimbursement rates. (House added \$71,790 and Senate reduced it)
- **\$21.23 Million Added** for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services requirement that the state provide 12 months of continuous eligibility for children under the age of 19 in Medicaid effective January 1, 2024.
- *Budget Direction:* Replace \$47,777,273 in state general funds with hospital provider fees.



### ***PeachCare for Kids®***

- **\$1.58 Million Added** for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services requirement that the state provide 12 months of continuous eligibility for children under the age of 19 in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) effective January 1, 2024.
- **\$1.78 Million Reduced** for growth in Medicaid based on projected utilization. (Governor had recommended a \$1.21 Million reduction.)
- **\$0 Added** to increase reimbursement rate for CIS speech therapy code 92507. (House added \$27,641 and Senate reduced it)
- **\$53,336 Added** to increase reimbursement rates for primary care codes 99213 and 99214 (Primary care established patient visits). (House added \$106,671 and Senate reduced it)
- **\$22,470 Added** to increase dental code reimbursement rates. (House added \$44,939 and Senate reduced it)
- **\$0 Added** to increase durable medical equipment reimbursement rates. (House added \$25,094 and Senate reduced it)

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

- *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, 2025, to maintain the financial stability of the plan.
- *Budget Direction:* Recognize an increase in formula funds (\$177,130,676) in DECAL, and Georgia Military College, to reflect an increase in the employer healthcare contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) rate for certified school employees and lead and assistant teachers to \$1,885, effective July 1, 2025.
- *Budget Direction:* Utilize existing funds for a \$3 per prescription dispensing fee for independent pharmacists until HB 196 (2025 Session) takes effect January 1, 2026.) (Governor had recommended "Reduce funds 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.")
- **\$5 Million Added** to reimburse a pharmacy for drugs dispensed to a covered person for self-administration in an amount equal to the national average drug acquisition cost (NADAC) on the day of claim administration and a professional dispensing fee. (House added \$1.2 Million and Senate increased it)

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

- **\$2.88 Million Added** for 150 new residency slots in primary care medicine. (Governor asked for 75 slots and House increased it)
- **\$319,654 Added** for four child and adolescent psychiatry fellowships and two gastroenterology fellowships.
- **\$1.17 Million Added** to fill and expand ACGME-accredited programs at the Medical College of Georgia based on the use of Medicaid Reimbursements for new residency slots pending approval of a State Plan Amendment similar to Florida's which took approximately 60 days for approval (\$966,903 State General Funds) and include funding for a maternal fetal medicine fellowship (\$150,000) (House added \$150,000 for year three of the maternal fetal medicine fellowship, and Senate increased it and gave more direction)

- **\$4.06 Million Added** based on the use of Medicaid Reimbursements for new residency slots pending approval of a State Plan Amendment similar to Florida's which took approximately 60 days for approval to support new and expanding residency programs with priority given to rural sites. (Total Funds: \$14,892,133 State and Federal)) (House added \$5 Million without mentioning the Florida idea)

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

- **\$500,000 one-time matching funds eliminated** to recognize private fundraising for scholarships for year-four students committed to practicing primary care for five years in rural Georgia.
- **\$565,204 Added** for the sixth year of the seven-year plan for Mercer School of Medicine's medical school campus in Columbus.

#### ***Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Physicians for Rural Areas***

- *Budget Direction:* Reflect a change in the program name to Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Healthcare Practitioner Loan Repayment.
- **\$250,000 Transferred** for the nursing faculty loan repayment program from the Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Undergraduate Medical Education program to the Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Physicians for Rural Areas program to include all loan repayment funds under the same program.

### **Dept. of Corrections**

#### ***Across the Agency***

- **Increase funds** for a 4% salary increase for correctional officer staff in state and private prisons, education, chaplain, food service, and maintenance positions to align with statewide averages to improve recruitment and retention.
- **Increase funds** for a six month in-grade promotion step for correctional officer and CSM correctional officer 1 and 2 and to address salary compression to improve career path and retention opportunities.

#### ***Detention Centers***

- **\$219,573 Added** for an 8% salary increase for behavioral health counselor positions to align with statewide averages to improve recruitment and retention. (Governor had asked for \$219,573, House increased to \$348,034 and the Senate returned to Governor's rec.)
- **\$1.57 Million Transferred** from State Prisons program to Detention Centers program for ongoing capital maintenance and repairs.
- **\$3.47 Million Added** to add correctional officer positions to improve staff to offender ratios and reflect increased retention. (House added \$4.42 Million and the Senate reduced it.)
- **\$946,660 Added** to annualize 12 correctional officer positions hired in FY2025.

#### ***Health***

- **\$2.2 Million Added** for the dental health contract to support increased population. (Governor had asked for \$2.2 Million, House increased to \$7 Million and the Senate returned to Governor's rec.)
- **\$8.08 Million Added** for the mental health contract to support increased population. (Governor asked for \$8.08 Million, House increased to \$22.21 Million and the Senate returned to Governor's rec.)
- **\$6.07 Million Added** for the pharmacy services contract to support increased population.



- **\$20.39 Million Added** for the physical health contract to support increased population. (Governor had asked for \$14.66 Million, House increased to \$20.39 Million and the Senate returned to Governor's rec.)
- **\$0 Added** for healthcare contract for McRae Women's Facility to account for additional full time physical health employees (House asked for \$998,022 added and Senate cut it.)

### **Private Prisons**

- **\$6.39 Million Added** to add 500 private prison beds at Coffee Correctional Institution and 258 private prison beds at Wheeler Correctional Institution. (Governor asked for 188 beds, House increased to 500 beds with per diem, and Senate kept at 500 beds but without per diem)

### **State Prisons**

- **\$39.64 Million Added** for additional correctional officer positions to improve staff to offender ratios. (Governor asked for \$20.19 Million addition for 330 positions).
- **\$2.84 Million Added** for a salary increase for behavioral health counselor positions to align with statewide averages to improve recruitment and retention. (Governor asked for \$1.78 Million for an 8% salary increase, House increased to \$3.71 Million and Senate adjusted.)
- **\$15 Million Added** to address critical capital maintenance and repairs.
- **\$15.59 Million Added** for additional facility maintenance personnel and regional support staff to address critical facility maintenance needs.
- **\$1.02 Million Added** for a "tiger team" to support existing GDC locking team to address repairs needed on facility locks, locking controls, and security electronics.
- **\$2.6 Million Added** for skilled craftsman "tiger teams" focused on HVAC, plumbing, electrical, and fabrication needs in facilities.
- **\$3.58 Million Added** for ongoing support of body cameras and tasers for increased facility security. (Governor asked for \$3.37 Million)
- **\$1.83 Million Added** to implement an off-site mail screening solution to inhibit contraband and ensure the safety of facility staff.
- **\$2.46 Million Added** for software licenses for additional officer tablets to improve documentation and information sharing on offender management.
- **\$176,326 Added** for the Residential Substance Abuse Treatment program contract.
- **\$760,421 Added** for Technical College System of Georgia vocational education contracts.
- **\$4.11 Million Added** to continue operating the digital forensics unit through a contract.
- **\$3.81 Million Added** for personal services for the Over Watch and Logistics (OWL) Unit and ongoing technology fees.
- **\$1.95 Million Added** for the annual operating costs of the Data Intelligence Advanced Integration system.

### **Transition Centers**

- **\$436,048 Added** for a salary increase for behavioral health counselor positions to align with statewide averages to improve recruitment and retention. (Governor asked for \$234,278 for an 8% salary increase, House increased to \$584,022 and Senate adjusted.)

- **\$1.35 Million Added** for the opening of 50 additional beds at Smith Transitional Center. (House asked for 100 beds and Senate halved that.)
- **\$718,679 Transferred** from State Prisons program to Transition Centers program for ongoing capital maintenance and repairs.

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

### ***Child Care Services***

- **\$1.54 Million Added** to annualize state match for Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) reimbursement to the 60th percentile of market rates for childcare providers.
- **\$3.93 Million Added** to provide 500 additional state-funded slots in the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program.

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

- **\$5.26 Million Added** for annual update of teacher training and experience.
- **\$1.21 Million Added** to reflect an increase in health insurance employer contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) rate for certified teachers at public Pre-K providers to \$1,885 effective July 1, 2025.
- **\$14.06 Million Added** for year two of a four-year phase in to reduce classroom size from 22 to 20 students to improve instructional quality.

## **Dept. of Education**

### ***Agricultural Education***

- **\$94,626 Added** to annualize the \$2,500 salary increase in FY 2025.
- **\$100,350 Added** in formula funds to reflect an increase in health insurance employer contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) rate for certified school employees to \$1,885 effective July 1, 2025.
- **\$100,000 added** for a Young Farmer position in Bibb County.
- **\$183,509 Added** for two education specialist positions at youth camps.
- **\$268,157 Added** for camp-affiliated staff. (House asked for \$215,710 and Senate adjusted it)

### ***Business and Finance Administration***

- **\$200,000 one-time funds removed** from upgrade the Capital Outlay Program Software (COPS) to integrate public Pre-K classrooms pursuant to SB 233 (2024 Session).

### ***Central Office***

- **\$0 Added** for [Plasma Games](#) (House asked for \$500,000 and Senate cut it.)

### ***Communities in Schools***

- **\$1 Million in one-time funds removed** from leveraging matching grant funds for program expansion.
- **\$250,000 Added** for affiliates

### ***Curriculum Development***

- **\$0 Added** for college preparatory exams based on increased utilization. (House asked for \$2.5 Million and Senate cut it.)

- Budget Direction: Recognize existing funds (\$475,000) for a supplementary secondary math pilot program.
- **\$177,000 Reduced** for one-time funding for Life Sciences industry.

#### ***Curriculum Development-Special Project***

- **\$0 Added** to sustain supplements for school literacy leads at all 1,343 K-3 schools. (Governor asked for \$339,799)

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

- **\$4.03 Million Reduced** to reflect a reduction in formula earnings based on enrollment and training and experience. (Governor had reduced by \$1.85 Million and the House increased the reduction)
- **\$330,000 Added** to reflect an increase in the health insurance employer contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) rate for certified school employees to \$1,885 effective July 1, 2025.

#### ***Information Technology Services***

- **\$1.59 Million Added** to sustain 400mbps of state-funded bandwidth for all systems through PeachNet. (Governor asked for \$3 Million and Senate reduced it.)

#### ***Literacy Coach Initiative***

- **\$18.48 Million Transferred and Added** for 116 RESA-based literacy coaches to improve literacy outcomes for students in grades K-5 as follows: Transfer funds from Governor's Office of Student Achievement (\$1,600,000) and Curriculum Development - Special Project (\$6,111,300) and increase funds (\$10,768,700).

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

- **\$5.78 Million Added** for Sparsity Grants based on enrollment data. (Governor asked for \$5.94 Million and Senate adjusted it.)
- **\$543,000 Added** for custodian supplement grants.
- **\$102,029 Reduced** for Residential Treatment Facilities based on attendance. (Governor reduced by \$43,186, then House increased the reduction to \$95,812 and Senate further reduced.)
- **\$2 Million Added** for character education programming.
- **\$3.03 Million Reduced and \$2 Million Transferred** to the Governor's Office of Student Achievement: Literacy Initiative Coordination for a free universal reading screener pursuant to HB 538 (2023 Session).
- Budget Direction: Utilize existing funds in Department of Education (\$1,500,000) and in Department of Public Health (\$200,000) for feminine hygiene grants (House asked for an addition of \$150,000 but Senate changed course.)
- **\$4 Million Added** for a 25% match for local education agencies (from historic reserve balances), charities, or local civic organizations to provide school supplies to educators pursuant to SB464 (2024 Session). (House had added \$7.5 Million for school supplies but the Senate changed course.)
- **\$250,000 Reduced** for one-time funding for mentorship programs

**Nutrition**

- **\$2.96 Million Reduced** to maintain current funding and hold harmless for formula reduction for school nutrition given the rising price of meals. (Governor sought a \$2.96 Million reduction, House restored the funds and Senate removed them again).
- **\$6.33 Million Recognized** in existing state funds to provide for the cost of breakfast and lunch for reduced-price paying students.

**Preschool Disability Services**

- **\$3.48 Million Added** based on formula earnings.
- **\$793,919 Added** to reflect an increase in health insurance employer contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) rate for certified school employees to \$1,885 effective July 1, 2025.

**Pupil Transportation**

- **\$10.23 Million Added** for pupil transportation formula grants to reflect updated bus counts and operating expenses.
- **\$0 Added** for required bus driver safety training. (House sought \$158,400 but Senate cut it.)

**Quality Basic Education Equalization**

- **\$113.59 Million Reduced** for Equalization grants. (Governor had reduced by \$112.93 Million and the House further reduced to \$113.14 Million and Senate further reduced)

**QBE Local Five Mill Share**

- **\$115.15 Million Reduced** to adjust funds for the Local Five Mill Share. Governor had reduced by \$115.88 Million, and the House adjusted and Senate adjusted.)

**Quality Basic Education Program**

- **\$302.31 Million Added** for enrollment growth and training and experience. (Governor had added \$305.9 Million and the House reduced to \$302.41 Million and Senate changed it)
- **\$630,103 Reduced** for differentiated pay for newly certified math and science teachers. (Governor reduced by \$605,051 then House lessened the reduction to \$298,026 but the Senate increased the cut.)
- **\$25.37 Million Added** for the State Commission Charter School supplement. (Governor had added \$34.12 Million and House reduced it to \$24.72 Million, but the Senate increased slightly)
- **\$1.83 Million Reduced** for the Completion Special Schools supplement.
- **\$1.35 Million Reduced** for the charter system grant. (Governor had added \$313,627, but the Senate reduced)
- **\$172.6 Million Added** to reflect an increase in health insurance employer contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) rate for certified school employees to \$1,885 effective July 1, 2025.
- **\$874,984 Added** to fully fund school psychologist ratio at 1:2,420 for all QBE student categories pursuant to HB 283 (2013 Session). (Governor asked for \$872,333 and House and Senate each adjusted the amount)

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

- **\$55,237 Added** to reflect an increase in health insurance employer contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) rate for certified school employees to \$1,885 effective July 1, 2025.

### **School Security Grants**

- **\$150,000 Added** for a school safety coordinator position.
- **\$0 Added** and budget direction to contract with the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) for the Statewide School and Student Safety Database and for local training and development of behavioral threat assessment management teams. (House added \$24.94 Million, but the Senate eliminated it.)
- **\$14.29 Million Transferred** from the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to the Department of Education (\$9,294,554) and increase funds (\$5,000,000) to consolidate and streamline funding for school based mental health support services.
- **Budget Direction:** The purpose of this appropriation is to provide grants to local school systems to support school security needs and contract with the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) for the Statewide School and Student Safety Database and local training and development of behavioral threat assessment management teams; and to provide for mental health support.

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

- **\$449,899 Added and Transferred funds of \$265,501** from the Charter Schools program to implement the provisions of HB 318 (2024 Session). (Governor had transferred the same and added \$120,850 but the House increased the add.)

### **State Schools**

- **\$358,045 Added** for training and experience. (Governor had asked for \$135,151)
- **\$250,000 Reduced** to reflect alignment of budget to expenditures and prior usage of funds for hearing officers in Central Office.

### **Student Support Services**

- **\$0 Added** to establish student mental health support grants. (House added \$19.58 Million and Senate directed the state to “Consolidate funds for school based mental health support in School Security Grants program”)
- **\$266,664 Added** to establish grants for social work services. (House added \$5 Million and Senate directed the state to “Add funds to establish grants for social work services at schools that do not employ a social worker and do not earn a social worker in the Quality Basic Education formula and recognize existing funds (\$37,892,043) in the Quality Basic Education program for social work services”)
- **\$12.5 Million Added** for out-of-school care for statewide and community grantees. (House added \$10 Million and Senate increased it.)
- **\$0 Added** for districts for targeted support to economically disadvantaged students. (House added \$28.03 Million and Senate eliminated and directed the state to “Utilize existing funds targeted to assist local education agencies to support economically disadvantaged students through federal Title I funds (\$686,138,349) and through the Quality Basic Education Equalization program (\$909,255,526)”)

- Budget Direction: The purpose of this appropriation is to provide for additional school-based social workers above what is earned in the Quality Basic Education formula and for grants to providers of out-of-school care.

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

- **\$0 Added** for 2 full-time and 2 part-time positions and operating costs to sustain Great Promise Partnership operations as a part of work-based learning programs for at-risk students at the Department of Education. (Governor added \$383,444 but the Senate removed and directed the state to “Utilize existing funds to facilitate the move from federal grant funding to state general funds to sustain the Great Promise Partnership”)
- **\$1.25 Million Added** to establish a high-demand equipment grant program for new and expanding career and technical education labs that support instruction for high-demand careers as identified by the State Workforce Board.
- **\$236,735 Added** to annualize the \$2,500 salary increase in FY 2025.
- **\$100,000 Added** for a government and public administration pathway.
- Budget Direction: Recognize existing funds (\$1,000,000) for construction industry certification.

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

- **\$75.88 Million Added and \$26.75 Million Recognized** in existing funds for an annual payment to eligible retired members by December 1 each year. (Total Funds: \$50,000,000) (House had added \$23.25 Million)

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

- **\$1.25 Million Eliminated** for a gang case management system.

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

- **\$10,000 Added** to annualize state participation for newly established regional crisis recovery network at the Southern Regional Education Board to support student mental health in response to significant public safety or natural disaster incidents impacting schools or school systems.

### ***Literacy Initiative Coordination***

- **\$1 Million Transferred** from the Governor's Office of Student Achievement – Special Project for personal services and operating expenses for the Georgia Council on Literacy, pursuant to SB 211 (2023 Session), and support the implementation of effective literacy methods, including digital curriculum for Pre-K through 5.
- **\$2 Million Transferred** from the Non-Quality Basic Education program for a free universal reading screener pursuant to HB 538 (2023 Session).
- **\$247,000 added** for a literacy coach coordinator position.
- **\$2.03 Million Added** to a research group for competency-based standards and evaluation for literacy coaches.

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

#### ***Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention***

- **\$75,000 Added** to expand services for at-risk girls. (House added \$150,000 and Senate reduced)



### **Child Support Services**

- **\$60,899 Added** to expand participation in the Child Support Lien Network to include real property and lump sum payment matching services.
- **\$191,428 Added** to support the attainment of child support for out of state non-custodial parents. The Senate added an **additional \$371,595** under “Sales and Services Not Itemized”

### **Child Welfare Services**

- **\$1.5 Million Added** in matching funds for the wraparound services pilot due to the denial of federal funds by the Administration for Children and Families. (Governor recommended a \$1.5 Million elimination, but the House said No and then the Senate increased funding.)
- **\$125,000 Added** to expand heavy equipment operator certification program for high-risk youth.
- **\$1.72 Million Added** for Court Appointed Special Advocates to replace federal funds deemed ineligible by the Administration for Children and Families.

### **Federal Eligibility Benefit Services**

- **\$5.76 Million Added** to annualize a \$3,000 additional salary enhancement for eligibility caseworkers.
- **\$2.06 Million Reduced** for labor and wage data verification services.
- **\$1 Million Reduced** overall.

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

- **\$21.89 Million Added** for utilization growth and increased costs of care. (House added \$19.29 Million and Senate increased it)
- **\$200,000 Added** for essential clothing and supplies for foster youth. (House added \$400,000 and Senate reduced it.)
- **\$250,000 Added** to place foster youth closer to their biological families and provide a report to the chairs of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees on success outcomes of the program by December 31, 2025 (House added \$500,000 and Senate reduced it)
- **\$3.07 Million and Title IV-E state match at \$701,902 Added** for a 1% provider rate increase for Child Caring Institutions, Child Placing Agencies, foster parents, and relative caregivers. (House added a 2% rate increase at \$6.14 Million and \$1.4 Million Title IV-E match, then the Senate halved it.)
- **\$0 Added** for community action teams to deter child welfare involvement. (House added \$371,500 and Senate cut it.)
- **\$0 Added** to support youth aging out of foster care, but Senate directed the state to “Await recommendations from the Senate Study Committee on additional services and resources for transition age youth in foster care pursuant to SR310 (2025 Session)” The house had originally added \$325,000)

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

- **\$2 Million Reduced** funds for out-of-school care.

### ***Residential Child Care Licensing***

- *Budget Direction:* Utilize existing funds (\$46,550) for one position to address new licensure and regulation responsibilities due to the creation of two new Child Caring Institution types in SB 377 (2024 Session) and HB 1201 (2024 Session).

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

- **\$120,110 Reduced** to reflect FY 2024 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

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

- **\$60 Million Reduced** for the state reinsurance program and the state healthcare exchange and **recognize exchange-generated user fees** (Governor reduced \$50 Million and the House reduced further at \$58.84 Million, and Senate reduced yet further.)

### **Georgia Bureau of Investigation**

- **\$1 Million Added** and recognize \$1,000,000 appropriated in Amended FY2025 budget for a gang case management system.
- **\$390,789 Added** to establish a Strategic Threat Assessment Group responsible for addressing threats to public officials, investigating homeland security matters, and partnering with critical infrastructure partners to provide support during major events occurring in the state.
- **\$294,420 Added** to replace federal funds with state funds for three human trafficking positions.
- **\$2.15 Million Added** for one-time costs for the Columbus Gang Task Force positions.
- **\$100,000 Added** for advanced DNA testing and genetic genealogy testing for the cold case unit. (House added \$200,000 and Senate halved it.)
- **\$545,930 Added** for 4 criminal intelligence analysts for Georgia Information Sharing Analysis Center (GISAC). (House added \$1.62 Million for 8 analysts and Senate halved it)

### **Criminal Justice Coordinating Council**

- **\$0 Added** to offset the loss of ARPA funds to continue operations at the Receiving Hope Center. (Governor added \$400,312 and Senate cut it and directed, "Utilize partner resources to offset the loss of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to continue operations at the Receiving Hope Center")
- **\$0 Added** for two advocate positions and ongoing maintenance of the End Human Trafficking Georgia 24/7 Hotline. (Governor added \$421,608 and Senate cut it, and directed, "Explore possibility of utilizing existing resources at the Georgia Information Sharing Analysis Center (GISAC))
- **\$0 Added** to offset the loss of Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds to provide core services for victims of crimes. (House had added \$8.13 Million but the Senate cut it and directed the state to "Maintain current funding in expectation of receipt of \$12,000,000 in additional federal funds")
- **\$0 Added** to implement the Georgia Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention program pursuant to HB 268 (2023 Session). (House added \$750,000 and Senate cut it.)

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

- **\$954,890 Added** for new and existing accountability courts to support population growth. (Governor asked for \$512,544, House added \$1.34 Million and Senate split the difference)

- **\$155,375 Added** for one training coordinator position and for the implementation of Juvenile Treatment Courts per HB 873 (2024 Session). (Governor had asked for \$17,259 to implement juvenile treatment courts and House expanded on that ask)
- **\$153,680 Added** for new and existing juvenile treatment courts.

### **Dept. of Juvenile Justice**

#### ***Across the Agency***

- **Added funds** to provide a 4% salary increase for all juvenile correctional officer staff to improve recruitment and retention.
- Budget Direction to use existing funds for a 4% salary increase for education, chaplain, food service, and maintenance positions to align with statewide averages to improve recruitment and retention. (The House had added new state dollars, but the Senate directed the state to use existing funds instead.)
- **Added funds** for an 8% salary increase for behavioral health counselor positions to align with statewide averages to improve recruitment and retention.

#### ***Community Service***

- Budget Direction: Utilize existing funds (\$175,791) for a 1% provider rate increase for Child Caring Institutions, Child Placing Agencies, foster parents and relative caregivers. The House had added \$351,582 for a 2% provider rate increase but the Senate eliminated the new state dollars and reduced the rate.
- **\$1.05 Million Reduced** to reflect an adjustment to align the program's budget with expenditures.

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

- **\$285,908 Reduced** to reflect an adjustment to align the program's budget with expenditures.

#### ***Secure Confinement (Youth Detention Centers – YDCs)***

- **\$401,330 Added** to increase rates and hours for full-time and contracted psychologist and psychiatrist positions.

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

- **\$798,670 Added** to increase rates and hours for full-time and contracted psychologist and psychiatrist positions.

### **Dept. of Law**

- **\$268,464 Added** for four positions to expand the Gang Prosecution Unit to the Savannah region. (Governor had asked for \$536,928 and Senate reduced it.)
- **\$748,143 Added** to annualize six positions to expand the Human Trafficking Unit to the Macon and Augusta regions.

### **GA Public Defender Council**

- **\$226,517 Added** for a Juvenile Conflict Division manager position. (Governor had asked for \$226,517 added. The House removed it, then the Senate restored it.)

## **Dept. of Public Health**

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

- **\$100,000 Transferred** to support lupus research, data collection, awareness, and education from the DCH to the DPH.
- **\$0 Added** for feminine hygiene products for low-income clients at community organizations. (House added \$50,000 and Senate removed it, with the budget direction to “Utilize existing funds in Department of Education (\$1,500,000) and in Department of Public Health (\$200,000) for feminine hygiene grants”)

### ***Emergency Preparedness/Trauma System Improvement***

- **\$0 Added** to the Office of Cardiac Care for grants to hospitals as cardiac complications are the leading cause of maternal mortality. (House added \$1.2 Million and Senate removed it.)
- **\$40,000 Added** mandating The Department of Public Health study the needs of regional emergency transportation and report the findings to the Office of Planning and Budget, the House Budget and Research Office, and the Senate Budget and Evaluation Office by September 1, 2025. (House added \$100,000 and Senate reduced it.)
- **\$3.07 Million Eliminated** from the Georgia Coordinating Council.

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

- **\$0 Added** for the cost of mailing Low THC Oil Patient registry cards pursuant to SB 495 (2024 Session). (Governor recommended \$437,000 and Senate removed it and said to use existing funds.)
- **\$2.98 Million Added** to expand the pilot to provide home visiting in at-risk and underserved rural communities during pregnancy and early childhood to improve birth outcomes, reduce preterm deliveries, and decrease infant and maternal mortality.
- **Budget Direction: \$778,239 Added** plus existing funds (\$97,701) for a cardiac obstetric program to increase access to maternal fetal medicine.
- **\$0 Added** to support quality improvement at birthing facilities and additional funding to increase the number of birthing facilities with verified maternal and neonatal levels of care. (House added \$700,000 and Senate removed it.)
- **\$550,895 Added** for the retention and recruitment of Babies Can't Wait Service Coordinators and Special Instructors. (House added \$1.1 Million and Senate halved it.)
- **\$0 Added** to increase reimbursement rate for CIS speech therapy code 92507. (House added \$50,476 and Senate cut it.)
- **\$1 Million Added** for 6 perinatal regional centers to provide for surveillance, training and monitoring of clinical care for high-risk infants and training residents in complex care.

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

- **Budget Direction:** Utilize existing funds (\$1,007,109) for newborn screening to include one additional disorder that has been approved by the Georgia Newborn Screening Advisory Committee.
- **\$421,886 Added** for a two-year pilot program to study the impact of Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy on the newborn screening panel. (House added \$843,772 and Senate reduced it.)

- **\$0 Added** for Reach Out and Read Georgia to provide children with books during well-visit appointments. (House added \$250,000 and Senate eliminated it.)

### ***Infectious Disease Control***

- **\$250,000 Added** to implement the recommendations from the state viral hepatitis plan.

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

#### ***Field Offices and Services***

- **\$1 Million Added** for protection of communities.

#### ***GA Public Safety Training Center***

- **\$253,202 Added** for additional training for jailers in accordance with SB 37 (2024 Session).
- **\$478,595 Added** for two training instructors and supplies for increased basic law enforcement training.

#### ***Office of Highway Safety***

- **\$522,437 Added** for driver's education and training in accordance with FY 2024 Joshua's Law Collections.

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

#### ***Across the System***

- **Increase funds** for the employer share of health benefits.
- In certain departments: **Increase funds** to reflect correction for FY 2025 employer share of health benefits.

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

- **\$1.83 Million Added** to reflect an increase in health insurance employer contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) rate for certified school employees from \$1,580 to \$1,885.
- **\$334,446 Added** for the public libraries' formula based on an increase in the state population. (House added \$372,012 and Senate adjusted it.)

#### ***Teaching***

- **\$169.53 Million Added** to reflect a 2.7% increase in enrollment (\$167,834,602) and a 0.5% increase in square footage (\$1,697,277).
- **\$17.75 Million Added** to reflect formula correction for FY 2025 cost-of-living adjustment.

#### ***Payments to Georgia Military College Preparatory School***

- **\$93,000 Added** to reflect an increase in health insurance employer contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) rate for certified school employees to \$1,885. (Governor added \$304,200 and Senate decreased it.)
- **\$378,420 Added** for enrollment, training, and experience. (Governor added \$254,726 and Senate increased it.)

## **Georgia Student Finance Commission**

### ***Dual Enrollment***

- **\$21.44 Million Added** to meet projected need. (Governor recommended \$21.44 Million, House decreased to \$17.44 Million and Senate restored the Governor's ask.)

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

- Budget Direction: Establish the Georgia Foster Care Scholarship pursuant to SB85 (2025 Session)
- Budget Direction: The purpose of this appropriation is to provide postsecondary education grants to eligible students who are current or former foster youth.

### ***HERO Scholarship***

- **\$50,000 Reduced** and budget direction to utilize surplus funds to meet the projected need.

### ***HOPE Grant***

- **\$17.22 Million Added** to meet projected need.

### ***HOPE Scholarships – Private Schools***

- **\$3.31 Million Added** to meet projected need.
- **\$0 Added** to increase the HOPE Scholarship Private award amount to match the Zell Private award amount in order to provide parity in HOPE Public and HOPE Private award policies. (House added \$10.15 Million and Senate cut it.)

### ***HOPE Scholarships – Public Schools***

- **\$29.06 Million Added** to meet projected need. (Governor had recommended \$60.06 Million added, House reduced to \$49.91 Million and Senate reduced further.)

### ***Promise Scholarships***

- **\$141.02 Million Added** to fully fund the Promise Scholarship Program as established pursuant to SB 233 (2024 Session). (Governor had recommended \$141.02 Million Added, House reduced to \$45.65 Million and Senate restored the Governor's ask.)

## **Technical College System of Georgia**

### ***Technical Education***

- **\$33.49 Added** to reflect a 10.6% increase in enrollment (\$33,486,954) and a 0.02% decrease in square footage ((\$13,581)).

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

- **\$15.81 Million Added** to reflect growth in aviation, commercial truck driving, and nursing program enrollment at targeted supplemental credit hour rates.
- **\$8.47 Million Transferred** from Technical Education program to recognize all state funds budgeted to fully fund supplemental earnings for high-cost programs.

## **Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission – Capital Projects Fund (a few highlights)**

- **\$75 Million Added** for capital projects statewide. (Governor asked for \$150 Million, House reduced to \$75 Million and Senate cut it altogether.)



**Dept. of Education**

- **\$146.01 Million Added** for Capital Outlay Program – Regular for local school construction, statewide. (Governor had asked for \$146.01 Million but the House directed the state to “Recognize funding in bond package” instead, but the Senate restored the Governor’s ask.)
- **\$14.9 Million Added** for Capital Outlay Project - Low Wealth for school construction, statewide. (Governor had asked for \$14.9 Million but the House directed the state to “Recognize funding in bond package” instead, but the Senate restored the Governor’s ask.)
- **\$17.6 Million Added** for Capital Outlay Project - Additional Low Wealth for local school construction, statewide (Governor had asked for \$17.6 Million but the House directed the state to “Recognize funding in bond package” instead, but the Senate restored the Governor’s ask.)
- **\$7.35 Million Added** for Purchase vocational and agriculture education equipment, statewide. (Governor had asked for \$7.35 Million but the House directed the state to “Recognize funding in bond package” instead, but the Senate restored the Governor’s ask.)
- **\$20 Million Added** for Purchase school buses, statewide. (Governor had asked for \$20 Million but the House directed the state to “Recognize funding in bond package” instead, but the Senate restored the Governor’s ask.)

**University System of Georgia Board of Regents**

- **\$4 Million Added** for Construction of the renovation of the Harry Downs Building for Nursing and Dental Hygiene, Clayton State University, Morrow, Clayton County.
- **\$9.7 Million Added** for Construction of the renovation of the Lakeview Nursing and Dental Hygiene building, Georgia Highlands College, Rome, Floyd County.

**Technical College System of Georgia**

- **\$13.44 Million Added** for System-wide equipment refresh, statewide.

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

- **\$10 Million Added** to address Regional State Hospitals' significant capital needs according to the 2023 Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission (GSFIC) campus survey partially funded in House Bill 915 (2024 Session), statewide.

**Dept. of Public Health**

- **\$1.17 Million Added** for improvements and renovations to district offices and public health laboratories, statewide.

**Dept. of Community Supervision**

- **\$6.8 Million Added** for design and construct a new facility for the Columbus Day Reporting Center and Field Office, Columbus, Muscogee County.

**Dept. of Corrections**

- **\$6.2 Million Added** for design and construction of a long term, acute care unit at Johnson State Prison, Wrightsville, Johnson County. (Governor had asked for \$6.2 Million but the House directed the state to “Recognize funding in bond package” instead, but the Senate restored the Governor’s ask.)

- **\$15.5 Million Added** for additional construction at McRae State Prison, McRae-Helena, Telfair County. (Governor had asked for \$15.5 Million but the House directed the state to “Recognize funding in bond package” instead, but the Senate restored the Governor’s ask.)

#### ***Dept. of Juvenile Justice***

- **\$3.5 Million Added** for additional construction funds for a 56-bed facility expansion, Columbus, Muscogee County. (Governor had asked for \$3.5 Million but the House directed the state to “Recognize funding in bond package” instead, but the Senate restored the Governor’s ask.)
- **\$3.63 Million Added** for Construction and additional design of an 80-bed facility expansion, Macon, Bibb County. (Governor had asked for \$82.7 Million but the House directed the state to “Recognize funding in bond package” instead, but the Senate restored funds for just the design.)
- **\$5 Million Added** for upgrades to safety and security systems at facilities, statewide. (Governor had asked for \$5 Million but the House directed the state to “Recognize funding in bond package” instead, but the Senate restored the Governor’s ask.)

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

- **\$8.3 Million Added** for various initiatives for certain public libraries across the state from renovations to additions to technology grants.

#### **GO Bonds New**

Senate said **“NO; Reflect funds in Capital Projects Fund program”** to the following House adds:

##### **Department of Education**

- [Bond # 1] Provide \$145,795,000 in 20-year bonds for the Capital Outlay Program - Regular for local school construction, statewide.
- [Bond # 2] Provide \$14,900,000 in 20-year bonds for the Capital Outlay Program - Low Wealth for local school construction, statewide.
- [Bond # 3] Provide \$17,595,000 in 20-year bonds for the Capital Outlay Program - Additional Low Wealth for local school construction, statewide.
- [Bond # 4] Provide \$8,260,000 in 5-year bonds to purchase career, technical, and agricultural education equipment, statewide.
- [Bond # 5] Provide \$20,000,000 in 10-year bonds to purchase school buses, statewide. -
- [Bond # 6] Provide \$2,000,000 in 10-year bonds to incentivize the purchase of alternative fuel school buses.

##### **Department of Corrections**

- [Bond # 7] Provide \$6,200,000 in 20-year bonds to design and construct a long term, acute care unit at Johnson State Prison, Wrightsville, Johnson County.
- [Bond # 8] Provide \$15,500,000 in 20-year bonds for additional construction at McRae State Prison, McRae-Helena, Telfair County.

##### **Department of Juvenile Justice**

- [Bond # 9] Provide \$3,500,000 in 20-year bonds for additional construction for a 56-bed facility expansion, Columbus, Muscogee County

- [Bond # 10] Provide \$82,695,000 in 20-year bonds to design and construct an 80-bed facility expansion, Macon, Bibb County.
- [Bond # 11] Provide \$5,000,000 in 5-year bonds for upgrades to safety and security systems at facilities, statewide.



## Justice, Public Safety, & School Discipline

**HB 123** (Werkheiser- 157th) In criminal cases involving a capital offense for which the death penalty is sought, the bill allows an accused person to file a pretrial notice of intent to raise a claim of intellectual disability. Such notice shall state that the accused has intellectual disability and must be filed by the defendant no later than 60 days before the pretrial hearing or at such time as the court orders.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill is calendared to be on the Senate Floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 627** (Persinger-119th) Expands crimes for which 13 through 16-year-olds may be tried as adults to include aggravated assault with a firearm (against anyone as opposed to just against a public safety officer).

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

**HB 804** (Holly-116th) Codifies the proclamation by the Office of the President of the United States that would grant a pardon and restore full political, civil, and other rights regarding the offense of simple possession of marijuana.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

**SB 29** (Williams-25th) Requires the collection of DNA samples of individuals arrested for the commission of a serious violent felony at the time such individuals are booked or otherwise processed by a detention facility. This includes children who are under the age of 17 who have allegedly committed a serious violent felony as described in O.C.G.A. 17-10-6.1. A detention facility is defined as "any place of confinement for juvenile or adult individuals accused of, convicted of, or adjudicated for violating a law of this state or an ordinance of a political subdivision of this state."

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

**SB 61** (Dolezal-27th) This bill expands the list of offenses for which youth aged 13 to 17 are automatically tried as adults, adding 23 crimes, including aggravated assault with a firearm, school-related terroristic threats, and various attempted or conspiracy charges for violent offenses like murder, rape, and armed robbery. While these cases will initially be treated in superior court, they may be transferred to juvenile court after indictment. Additionally, the bill mandates that students in grade 6 or higher must authorize the release of records for certain felony offenses, with noncompliance punishable by a fine or imprisonment. It also requires courts and child-serving agencies to notify local schools when a student is under electronic monitoring, intensive supervision, or home confinement, allowing schools to use the information for safety purposes. The bill defines and creates penalties for "terroristic threats" and "terroristic acts" against schools, with punishments ranging from a misdemeanor to felony charges with up to 40 years of imprisonment if a serious injury occurs. It also mandates annual site threat

assessments of school buildings and facilities, which must be included in school safety plans submitted to the Department of Education.

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

**SB 102** Adds definitions for "fighting related objects," "game cock," and "minor," which is defined as an individual under the age of 18 years old. The bill makes it illegal to own, possess, train, transport, or sell a game cock with the intent that such game cock being used in fighting with another fowl. The bill also makes it illegal to cause these gamecocks to fight one another and broadens the existing crime of promoting these fights to also include those who charge an admission fee for an exhibition. The crime is a felony offense with punishment of between one and five years on a first offense, a minimum fine of \$5,000, or both. On a second conviction, the penalty is between one and 10 years, a minimum fine of \$15,000, or both. Further, the bill allows the court to prohibit the offender from owning or possessing an animal within the species for which the conviction is based. It also makes it a crime for allowing a minor to be present at one of these fights. This is a high and aggravated misdemeanor on the first offense. After a violation, the game cock at issue is to be impounded. This also makes it a crime to knowingly possess, purchase, or sell fighting-related objects with the intent that they will be used to promote, facilitate, train for, or participate in one of these fights. This is a high and aggravated misdemeanor. The bill amends O.C.G.A. 4-8-27(f) (Certificates of Registration/Responsible Dog Ownership) to include the felony of game cock fighting. This subsection lists crimes for when a "certificate of registration for a vicious dog" cannot be issued.

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

**SB 147** (Rhett-33rd) Allows state correctional institutions to provide for the release of certain criminal history, vocational, and educational information for inmates upon release. The bill provides for the issuance of an identification card, and a Program and Treatment Completion Certificate.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. The bill awaits agreement from the Senate to changes made by the House.

**SB 160** (Kirkpatrick-32nd) Requires an intelligent speed assistance device to be installed on vehicles belonging to individuals who have a second or subsequent conviction of a violation in regards to reckless driving outlined in O.C.G.A. 40-6-390.1. The maximum speed limit for the device will be no greater than 20 percent above the posted speed limit, and costs related to installation are incurred by the offender. The bill revises Code relating to DUI Alcohol or Drug Use Risk Reduction Programs by allowing the completion credit of any DUI Alcohol or Drug Use Risk Reduction Program to be acceptable in applying for a limited driving permit and requiring written consent to obtain and transfer electronic records in relation to the program. No fees may be charged in the electronic transfer of assessment component results. Additionally, online or remote courses that provide in-person instruction are prohibited. Certified DUI Alcohol or Drug Use Risk Reduction Programs are authorized to charge an assessment component fee of \$100, an intervention component fee of \$275, and a course enrollment fee that includes a materials fee of up to \$25, a state administration fee of \$30, and an additional assessment fee of \$10. Further Code is amended to change driver improvement clinic fees from \$95 to \$125.

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

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

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

**SR 429** (Burns - 23rd) Creates the Senate Addressing Felony Disenfranchisement in Georgia's Constitution Study Committee.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Rules Committee. The bill moves rests in Senate Rules Committee



## Child Welfare & Protection

**HB 36** (Leverett-123rd) Revises Georgia guardianship law by adding physician assistants, nurses, therapists, and counselors to the types of approved professionals authorized to participate in appointments of guardians or conservators, as well as those who evaluate the state of a ward or proposed ward. Additionally, definitions for "gross settlement" are provided with respect to applicable financial arrangements. An adult is not presumed to need a guardianship solely due to one or more developmental disabilities. The proposed ward's legal counsel may challenge the sufficiency and weight of the evaluation results and conclusions, as well as the qualifications, experience, or abilities of the evaluator. Any emergency conservator appointed under this provision has only the powers and duties explicitly stated in the letters of emergency conservatorship.

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

**HB 136** (Newton-127th) Expands tax credits to qualified organizations for expenses relating to wrap around services for justice involved youth and expands the wraparound services that are qualified expenditures. The bill also provides for such tax credits to be used by certain insurance companies against insurance premium tax liability. Allows taxpayers a credit for qualified child and dependent care expenses of up to 50%. Creates a tax credit for each child under the age of six of an amount equal to \$250. Establishes a tax credit for child care payments for childcare facility employees of \$500 each per child made per year or \$1,000 per child in the first taxable year in which the taxpayer provided eligible child care payments for employees.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. The bill awaits agreement from the House on changes made by the Senate.

**HB 171** (Thomas-21st) Prohibits the ownership or operation of a computer-based program or application of computer-generated obscene material depicting a child or obscene description of conduct to a child and provides penalties and probation for such obscenities. If a person who commits the offense is under 18, he or she shall be guilty of a misdemeanor upon conviction if the child depicted would realistically appear to be at least 14 years of age to an average observer. Additionally, within the court's discretion, the defendant violation of such offense was not for the intent to harass, intimidate, or embarrass any person or for any commercial purposes. Otherwise, any adult who commits the offense, upon conviction, is guilty of a felony and will be subject to imprisonment for one to fifteen years.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill rests in Senate Rules Committee.

**HB 253** (Clark-100th) "Ethan's Law": Prohibits any judge to order family reunification treatments or services when hearing the issue of custody for a child custody and visitation. Moreover, no judge shall order a family reunification or unification that result or require the following: court ordered restrictions on contact between a child and parent or legal guardian, overnight stays for a child in an out-of-state facility, hotel, motel, or camp, or the use of private youth transporters or private transportation agents engaged in the use of force, the threat of force, physical obstruction, or coercion against a child, or the attendance of, or participation in, educational or experimental workshops.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Children & Families Committee. The bill is calendared to be on the Senate Floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

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

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

**HB 433** (Ballinger-23rd) Allows the Department of Human Services to access GCIC (GA Crime Information Center) data for the purposes of employee oversight in certain circumstances.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Public Safety Committee.



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

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

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

STATUS: House Judiciary Committee

**HR 611** (Dempsey-13th) Creates the House Study Committee on Abandoned Child Placement Following Hospital Discharge, which will study the abandonment of children after psychiatric hospitalization and other types of out-of-home care. The committee will be comprised of five members of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the House.

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

**HR 816** (Hilton-48th) Creates the House Study Committee on an At-Risk Populations Abuse Registry.

STATUS: House Human Relations & Aging Committee

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

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

**SB 9** (Albers-56th) Defines terms related to artificial intelligence (AI) and establishes the offenses of fraudulent election interference and solicitation of fraudulent election interference by using AI-generated media in campaign advertisements. The bill introduces the terms "materially deceptive media" and "AI generated media," and criminalizes the publication of this type of media within 90 days of an election with intent to deceive voters and influence the outcome of an election. The State Election Board is authorized to investigate complaints regarding fraudulent election interference within 90 days of an election and will publicly release the findings of completed investigations. The attorney general is granted concurrent jurisdiction with local district attorneys to criminally prosecute violations regarding fraudulent election interference upon recommendation from the State Election Board. The bill clarifies that the use of AI-generated content in campaign advertisements is not unlawful as long as the proper disclosures are displayed.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. The bill awaits agreement from the Senate to changes made by the House.

**SB 27** (Albers-56th) "Georgia Anti-Doxing Act" - Provides definitions for "close relation," "mental anguish," "personally identifiable information," "post," "significant economic injury," "social media platform," and "stalking." The bill creates the crime of doxing, which is committed by a person they, with reckless disregard, post personally identifiable information of another knowing that a third party could read the post and then cause actual fear of stalking, serious injury, or death or suffer a significant economic injury or mental anguish due to the post. The crime of aggravated doxing is also created, which has the same elements as doxing, although it requires that the act intentionally cause harm to the individual. Doxing is a misdemeanor on a first offense, although a second or subsequent offense is a felony offense with punishment of between one and two years, a fine of \$5,000, or both. Aggravated doxing is a felony offense with punishment of between two and five years, a fine of \$5,000, or both, although a second or subsequent offense is punished by imprisonment of between five and 10 years, a fine of \$10,000, or both. A person who commits the crime of aggravated doxing, when the offense results in serious bodily injury or death, will be punished as a party to the crime. The bill also includes a venue provision that determines where a defendant will be tried.

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

**SB 42** (Hatchett-50th) Repeals 16-6-13(b), which currently is a criminal penalty of between 10 and 30 years of imprisonment and a maximum fine of \$100,000 when anyone violates the crimes of keeping a place of prostitution, pimping, or pandering, when the offense involves someone under the age of 18 years old. This is to correct for a rule of lenity issue with the crime of human trafficking.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. The bill awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**SB 85** (Brass-6th) Creates the 'Georgia Foster Care Scholarship Act.' The act provides grants to eligible students who are current or former foster care children. The total award amount per semester is not to exceed the costs of the eligible student's tuition, room, board, meal plan, and books associated with matriculation at an eligible postsecondary institution, minus any amount covered by federal or other state grants or scholarships. The maximum award per year will not exceed \$30,000. Eligible students will remain eligible for such awards until one of the following events occurs: the student earns a bachelor's degree, a maximum amount of hours has been attempted, or the student has received the scholarship for 10 years. The act is subject to appropriations.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. The bill awaits agreement from the Senate to changes made by the House.

**SB 98** (Cowser-46th) Changes various references in the Juvenile Code to reflect "county conservators" rather than "county guardians," and adds references to "county conservators" to various other sections of the Code. After July 1, 2025, in matters related to a conservatorship when an individual designated as a county guardian is serving as a county conservator, the designation of that individual will be county conservator.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

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

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

**SB 110** (Anavitarte-31st) Defines the term "blatant disregard" within the Juvenile Code as a real, significant, and imminent risk of harm that is so obvious to a legal custodian that a reasonable person would not expose a child to that imminent risk of harm without exercising certain precautionary measures. It also defines the term "independent activity" to be one that is not under the direct supervision of a legal custodian or parent and includes playing outdoors, walking to school, running errands, and traveling to local commercial or recreational facilities. The bill modifies the definition of "neglect" to be when someone fails to provide necessary parental care rather than proper parental care. It also narrows the requirements of when a parent must provide certain supervision necessary for the health and safety of a child to require the parent to avoid creating a real, significant, and imminent risk of harm to the child as a result of blatant disregard for the parent's responsibilities. This further narrows what constitutes abandonment of a child under the definition of "neglect" to exclude when a parent or guardian permits a child to engage in independent activities that reasonably avoid substantial risk of harm. The bill also modifies O.C.G.A. 16-5-60 to amend the crime of when a person causes bodily harm to or endangers the bodily safety of another through conscious disregard of another's safety to explicitly not include when a parent or legal custodian permits a child to engage in one or more independent activities unless doing so constitutes neglect.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. The bill awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**SB 245** (Hodges-3rd) Permits grandparents who have been granted visitation rights to their grandchild following the death, incapacitation, or incarceration of the parent of the child to petition the court for revocation or amendment of the visitation rights, as long as the petition has not been filed more than once during any two-year period.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. The bill awaits agreement from the Senate to changes made by the House.

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

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

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

STATUS: PASSED SENATE.

**SR 393** (Jones II-22nd) Creates the Senate Study Committee on Improving Family Caregiver Services.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Rules Committee. The bill moves rests in Senate Rules Committee



## Health & Behavioral Health

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**HB 87** (Clark-100th) Requires health insurance benefits to cover medically necessary orthotic devices and prosthetic devices for affected persons during a three-year period. Additionally, healthcare insurance beneficiaries are to be provided with at least two distinct healthcare professionals under their coverage for each issuance and renewal of their coverage. Allows health insurers to deny coverage for the replacement or repair of an orthotic or prosthetic device if the damage or loss is due to misuse, malicious damage, gross neglect, loss, or theft.

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

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

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

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Finance Committee. The bill is calendared to be on the Senate Floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

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

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

**HB 196** (Kelley-16th) Amends the State Health Benefits Plan by establishing a transparent reimbursement structure for drugs dispensed for self-administration. The bill mandates that insurers reimburse pharmacies based on a transparent, index-based pricing system, such as a discounted percentage of the average wholesale acquisition cost on the day of claim administration as determined by the state health plan on current competitive market rates, plus a professional dispensing fee that is not less than \$10.50 for chain pharmacies and \$11.50 for independent pharmacies. The legislation prohibits insurers from dispensing fees to beneficiaries through cost-sharing measures like deductibles. Additionally, it prevents insurers from circumventing these reimbursement requirements through discount programs or alternative pricing methods. Violations of these provisions would allow affected pharmacies or beneficiaries to seek legal remedies.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. The bill awaits agreement from the House on changes made by the Senate.

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Insurance & Labor Committee. The bill rests to Senate Rules Committee.

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

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

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

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

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Higher Education Committee. The bill is calendared to be on the Senate Floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

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

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

**HB 422** (McCollum-30th) Sets rules for offering high deductible health plans (HDHPs) and health savings accounts (HSAs) to certain state employees. It defines a "covered employee" as someone identified in parts of Code Section 45-18-1, and it uses the federal definition of an HDHP from Section 223 of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. By January 1, 2028, the board must make sure that at least two HDHPs are available through the state's employee health insurance program. These plans must be offered by different insurance companies, and each company must have a partner that manages HSAs. These options are only required if they do not increase costs. By January 1, 2026, employees enrolled in an HDHP must be able to make pretax payroll contributions to an HSA linked to their insurance plan. The State Accounting Office or the head of any state agency employing these workers is allowed to handle these payroll deductions to fund the employees' HSAs.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Insurance & Labor Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

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

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

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

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

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Health & Human Services Committee.

**HB 577** (Gaines-120th) "Georgia Nicotine Vapor Products Directory Act (HB 577)" - Establishes a state-managed directory of authorized nicotine vapor products, requiring all products sold in Georgia to be listed for compliance with federal and state laws. The bill grants the Commissioner of Revenue authority to certify products, enforce compliance checks, and penalize violations through fines, license revocations, and product seizures. Manufacturers must submit FDA approval documentation, and non-listed products will be banned and removed from the market. Dealers and distributors are subject to unannounced inspections, and violations incur escalating penalties. The bill mandates annual reporting on compliance and enforcement efforts and will only take effect if funding is specifically appropriated.

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

**HB 584** (Petrea-166th) Reassigns licensing and oversight of drug abuse treatment and education programs, narcotic treatment programs, community living arrangements, and adult residential mental health programs from the Department of Community Health (DCH) to the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD). Community service boards will be the governing bodies. Rules and regulations created and implemented by December 31, 2025 will remain in effect until revoked. All issued and provisional licenses provided by DCH on December 31, 2025 will be valid until they are revoked, renewed, surrendered, or terminated. The reassignment will be effective January 1, 2026.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.



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

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

**HB 677** (Dempsey-13th) Establishes protocols for the placement of children who remain in hospitals or psychiatric residential treatment facilities after being medically cleared for discharge because their parent, guardian, or legal custodian fails to resume custody within 48 hours. The bill requires the formation of a task force, including a care coordinator, a licensed psychiatrist, and representatives from the Department of Human Services, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the child's health insurer, and Medicaid care management organizations—to ensure the child is placed in an appropriate environment without delay.

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

**HB 827** (McQueen-61st) Requires an entity to obtain explicit consent from an individual before collecting, processing, or sharing their menstrual data and prohibits the use of such data for unrelated purposes. Mandates the implementation of industry-standard security measures, including data encryption during storage and transmission, regular security audits, and vulnerability assessments. Grants individuals the right to request access to their menstrual data from any entity in possession of it and requires the entity to provide the data within 30 days of the request.

STATUS: House Technology & Infrastructure Innovation Committee. The bill was introduced too late to crossover but remain viable for consideration next year.

**HB 830** (Beckles-96th) Establishes the State Oversight Board within the office of Commissioner of Insurance.

STATUS: House Insurance Committee. The bill was introduced too late to crossover but remain viable for consideration next year.

**HB 872** (Cooper-45th) Provides the right to any means of contraception for females.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

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

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HR 73** (Hawkins-27th) Creates a House Study Committee on Cancer Care Access.

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

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

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**HR 368** (Sainz-180th) Creates the House Study Committee on Intoxicating Cannabinoids in Consumable Hemp Products. Five members of the Georgia House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the House will serve on the study committee. The committee will stand abolished on December 31, 2025.

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

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

STATUS: House Health Committee.

**HR 512** (Hagan-156th) Creates a House Study Committee on the Addiction Epidemic and Solutions for Recovery. This resolution is amended to include a certified peer specialist on the committee.

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

**HR 592** (Newton-127th) Creates the House Study Committee on Non-Compete Clauses in Physician Contracts.

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

**HR 685** (Sainz-180th) Creates the House Study Committee on Mental Health Workforce Development.

STATUS: House Health Committee

**HR 753** (Donatucci-105th) Creates the House Study Committee on Improving Access to Internal Medicine in Rural Areas.

STATUS: House Rural Development Committee

**HR 847** (Taylor-173rd) Creates the House Study Committee on Evaluating Funding for Public Health. STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

**SB 5** (Kirkpatrick-32nd) Requires health insurers to implement a program that reduces prior authorization requirements for providers based on quality metrics. Section 2 of the bill requires that all health benefit policies administered by the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) in Georgia provide coverage for healthcare services related to Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections (PANDAS) and Pediatric Acute Onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome (PANS). Coverage must align with nationally recognized clinical practice guidelines and apply to diagnosis, treatment, management, and monitoring of these conditions. The bill prohibits special deductibles, coinsurance, or copayments beyond those generally applicable to other covered healthcare services. Section 3 of the bill requires insurance providers to provide coverage for annual prostate cancer screenings for men with a high risk for prostate cancer. Section 4 allows for Medicare policies to be issued and renewed for individuals under 65 years of age eligible due to disability or end stage renal disease.

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

**SB 30** (Watson-1st) Limits the prescription and administration of puberty-blocking medications or therapies for the purpose of altering the appearance of or affirming a minor's perception of their sex if it is inconsistent with their biological sex. Such medication may be used if a minor has been diagnosed with gender dysphoria by two behavioral health professionals including one psychiatrist or psychologist; authorized parents or legal guardians have given written informed consent; and the minor undergoes quarterly psychological counseling throughout treatment. The licensed prescribing physician must be board certified in pediatrics and either pediatric endocrinology or adolescent medicine. The physician must assess the patient's medical history, mental health, and any underlying conditions as well as submit treatment progress reports to the Georgia Composite Medical Board annually. Minors being treated with puberty-blocking medication before July 1, 2025 may continue treatment without such requirements. A legal guardian or parent with the authority to consent to such treatment may bring civil action against an institution that provided treatment if it is within two years and violates the aforementioned provisions. The bill also provides definitions for "hormone therapy," "puberty-blocking medication," "sex," and "sex reassignment surgery."

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

**SB 39** (Tillery-19th) Prohibits the coverage of gender-affirming care for individuals covered under the State Health Benefit Plan. The bill provides exception to individuals receiving treatment for gender dysphoria, disorder of sex development, and partial androgen insensitivity syndrome.

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

**SB 72** (Brass-6th) Allows for a terminally ill patient's right to try investigational drugs, biological products, and devices to expand their access to individualized treatments.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**SB 79** (Goodman-8th) Amends O.C.G.A. 16-13-31 (Manufacture, Delivery, Distribution, Possession, or Sale of Non-Controlled Substances) to strike the references that cite to fentanyl (in Schedule II) and fentanyl analogue structural class. If a person sells, manufactures, delivers, brings into the state, or has possession of at least four grams of fentanyl, a fentanyl analog structural class, or any mixture containing these substances, then they are guilty of trafficking in fentanyl. The penalty for at least four grams but less than eight grams is a mandatory minimum of eight years and a fine of \$75,000. The penalty for at least eight grams but less than 14 grams is a mandatory minimum of 15 years and a fine of \$150,000. The penalty for at least 14 grams but less than 28 grams is a mandatory minimum of 25 years and a fine of \$250,000. The penalty for 28 grams or more is a mandatory minimum of 35 years and a fine of \$750,000. The bill also revises the penalties that can be imposed once the individual meets the requirements for a judge, and the judge agrees to depart from the mandatory minimums. New sentencing ranges are also added to the Code. Further, the bill responds to a court case and ensures that mandatory minimums cannot be suspended, stayed, probated, deferred, or otherwise withheld by the court.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

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

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Health Committee.

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

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

**SB 131** (Hodges-3rd) Requires the Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce to create the Georgia Health Care Professionals Data System, which will collect non identifying data on licensed healthcare professionals. The data will include age, gender, proficiency in English and other languages, location of practice, license type, birth details, and location of residence.

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

**SB 140** (Dolezal-27th) Authorizes a doctor of optometry to dispense and sell pharmaceuticals that are related to the treatment of diseases and conditions of the eye, except those that are controlled substances.

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

**SB 162** (Hufstetler-52nd) Requires the Georgia Composite Medical Board to implement a data management software system to automate the credentialing process of physicians, advanced practice registered nurses, licensed physician assistants, and anesthesiologist assistants by no later than January 1, 2026. The bill was amended by the House to add language from HB 717, which requires the Georgia Composite Medical Board to establish rules and regulations for the administration of psychedelic-assisted treatment and therapy in clinics. This will apply to any physician, anesthesia assistant, or certified registered nurse anesthetist administering psychedelic-assisted treatment and therapy in a clinic. Administration of psychedelic-assisted treatment and therapy in a clinic shall only be performed by a physician licensed in this state with advanced airway management training, a certified registered nurse anesthetist licensed in this state under the direction and responsibility of a duly licensed physician, or an anesthesia assistant licensed in this state under the direct supervision of a duly licensed physician.

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

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

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

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

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

**SB 233** (Jones II-22nd) Increases the number of members of the Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission from 24 to 30. The six members added must be: a certified addiction recovery specialist with lived experience; an intellectual and developmental disabilities provider; an individual that has lost an immediate family member to a drug overdose; a leader of an intellectual and developmental disabilities advocacy organization; an executive director of an addiction and recovery nonprofit; and someone with or a parent of someone with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The bill also replaces the Involuntary Commitment and Workforce and System Development subcommittees of the commission with Addictive Diseases and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Lastly, the commission's abolishment date is extended from June 30, 2025 to December 31, 2026.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**SB 254** (Cowser-46th) Includes gummies and consumable base oils within the definition of "food products" and allows those products to be sold or distributed as consumable hemp products within the state. The bill also allows licensed retail dealers in distilled spirits to obtain a retail consumable hemp establishment license and to sell consumable hemp products to consumers.

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

**SB 360** (Harrell-40th) Establishes and implements the Public Option Buy-In Program for eligible persons that reside in the state for a cost equal to the amount that the state pays per capita to care management organizations for Medicaid.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

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

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Rules Committee. The bill moves rests in Senate Rules Committee

**SR 342** (Strickland-42nd) Creates the Senate Study Committee on Certified Peer Specialist & Addiction Recovery Programs.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**SR 344** (Orrock-36th) Creates the Senate Study Committee on a Single-payer Healthcare Program.

STATUS: Senate Health & Human Services Committee

**SR 427** (Kirkpatrick-32nd) Creates the Senate Study Committee on Intoxicating Cannabinoids in Consumable Hemp Products.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Rules Committee. The bill moves rests in Senate Rules Committee



## Maternal & Infant Care

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Insurance & Labor Committee. The bill is calendared to be on the Senate Floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 327** (Leverett-123rd) Bill revising various sections of the Georgia Code. Of note to this audience are revisions clarifying various aspects of law regarding in vitro fertilization or other similar method of assisted reproduction. Some example of law affected include Termination of Parental Rights, legitimation, paternity, inheritance, vital records, physician liability, etc.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill is calendared to be on the Senate Floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

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

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

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

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

STATUS: DID NOT CROSSOVER.

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

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

**HB 795** (Cannon-58th) Establishes a 24/7 Infant Wellness Resource Hotline to assist individuals seeking help for infants experiencing health issues or illness. Hotline staff promptly assess calls, identifying emergencies that require immediate warm handoffs to 9-1-1 or referrals to local programs and services. Staff are required to complete emergency response training to ensure effective support.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee. The bill was introduced late and did not cross over.

**HR 593** (Newton-127th) Creates the House Study Committee on Maternal, Prenatal, and Pediatric Care Access and Funding.

STATUS: House Public & Community Health Committee

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

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



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

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**HR 711** (Erwin-32nd) Creates the House Study Committee on Student Attendance in PreK-12 Education.

STATUS: House Education Committee

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

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





## K-12 Education

### HB 37

(Leverett-123rd) Requires each school system to provide a notice of whether Social Security taxes will be withheld from the employee's pay; the employee is eligible to be included in a plan with coverage for the benefits of Title II of the Social Security Act; and if the employee is eligible to be included in one or more plans. This applies to new, current, and nearly new employees of local school systems. Requires each local school system to notify each employee at or near end of an employee's separation whether social security taxes were withheld from his or her pay during any part of his or her employment.

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

### HB 81

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

### HB 105

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Education and Youth Committee. The bill rests in Senate Rules Committee.

### HB 127

(Cox-28th) Increases the number of accumulated sick leave days teachers and other school personnel may take each school year for personal or professional reasons from three days to five days. Prohibits public schools, local education agencies, and public postsecondary institutions from promoting, supporting, or maintaining any programs or activities that advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Any postsecondary institution that violates this shall be subject to the withholding of state funding or state administered federal funding which includes scholarships, loans, and grants.

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

### HB 192

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

### HB 200

(Bazemore-69th) Establishes a three-year pilot immersive writing program for public school students for 2nd to 5th grade to improve literacy skills. Provides playground construction requirements for new elementary school being constructed after July 1, 2027, which must include components of a communication board, one learning American Sign Language (ASL) alphabet panel or one learning Braille alphabet panel. States that school systems of public elementary and secondary schools shall allow access to patriotic societies like the Boy Scouts of America if requested by such an entity. If access is denied, a written explanation must be provided to the requesting entity.

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

**HB 217** (Hong-103rd) Extends the Dual Achievement Program (which is a dual enrollment pilot program with the Technical System of Georgia) for five more years. Students who are part of the pilot program will receive a high school diploma and at least two technical certificates of credit. Updates the nepotism clause in school board elections to reference the most recent FTE count instead of the 2009 count. Allows the Georgia Savings Authority to work with the Department of Revenue to verify the income of applicants to the Georgia Promise Scholarship voucher program.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. The bill awaits agreement from the House on changes made by the Senate.

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Finance Committee.

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

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

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee.

**HB 268**

(Persinger-119th) Georgia House Bill 268 (LC 49 2396S) is a wide-ranging school safety and student well-being measure that establishes new emergency systems, record-sharing protocols, support personnel, and criminal penalties to enhance protections for Georgia's public schools. By July 1, 2026, all public schools must implement a mobile panic alert system ("Alyssa's Alert") integrated with 9-1-1 and first responders and obtain up-to-date school mapping data (e.g. floor plans, utility shutoffs, access points) to assist emergency personnel, with the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) setting standards and verifying accuracy annually. These records are exempt from public disclosure, and schools and agencies are protected from liability unless gross negligence is involved. The bill creates a grant program (subject to state appropriations) to help school districts hire "qualified student advocacy specialists"—mental health professionals who coordinate services and interventions for at-risk students—with the number of specialists funded based on district size. The State Board of Education must adopt rules for the program by December 31, 2025, including eligibility criteria and compliance requirements, and define the specialists' qualifications in consultation with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD). The bill also mandates that DJJ, DFCS, and DBHDD revise memorandums of understanding with school boards by October 1, 2025, to govern the sharing of student records, and ensures that education and medical records for children in state custody are transferred to new schools during enrollment, with consent where required. A defined set of "critical records"—such as academic transcripts, attendance, discipline histories (including suspensions, expulsions, and criminal/disruptive acts), juvenile felony adjudications, IEPs, and psychological evaluations—must be updated, complete (covering at least the past year), and sent to a new school within five school days of a request. Students may be provisionally enrolled for ten days while records are awaited, and if not received, schools must conduct a "case management consultation" with staff, the student, and the parent to assess needs and ensure continuity of services. The State Board must issue rules to guide these procedures, and DOE and DBHDD will provide technical assistance. The legislation also updates Georgia's "Parents' Bill of Rights" to affirm that parents have access to their child's education records and instructional materials, the ability to object to content or opt their child out of sex ed (with prior notice), and the right to prompt transfer of records when switching schools. Every school safety plan must be updated by January 1, 2027, to include a behavioral threat assessment and management process—a multidisciplinary strategy for identifying and mitigating threats—which must be submitted to DBHDD and supported by GEMA/HS training. GEMA/HS is also tasked (subject to funding) with establishing a statewide emergency alert network and a secure incident reporting system that tracks verified threats, accessible only to designated personnel, with privacy protections and criteria for inclusion or removal. The DOE must promote evidence-based training programs for school staff in suicide awareness and youth violence prevention, with a minimum of one hour annually per topic, and develop model suicide response policies in collaboration with the state Suicide Prevention Program. Schools are encouraged to support student-led violence prevention clubs that focus on peer education and inclusion. By July 1, 2026, all districts must implement or contract for a 24/7 anonymous reporting program (e.g. an app or tip line) for school-related threats, with prompt routing of reports to school-based threat teams and emergency responders. Systems must support coordinated responses, public awareness, and comply with legal standards, and schools with an existing comparable system in place by July 1, 2025, are exempt. Local school boards must also update their agreements with law enforcement by October 1, 2025, to clarify how student information is shared and handled under FERPA, and to delineate what constitutes educational versus law enforcement records. The bill includes safeguards for students with extended unexcused absences: if a child has 30 or more and has not formally withdrawn or enrolled elsewhere, the case must be referred to DFCS for assessment, and the regional RESA student affairs officer must investigate and ensure record transfer. Each RESA must appoint a student affairs officer to mediate disputes over enrollment or records, with unresolved issues escalated to the DOE's Chief Privacy Officer or Attorney General. HB 268 also establishes new criminal offenses specific to school threats. It defines a "terroristic threat of a school" as when a person threatens to commit violence, release hazardous materials, or damage school property in a way that causes fear, disruption, or evacuation. A basic terroristic threat is a misdemeanor, but it becomes a felony if it includes a threat of death (punishable by 1 to 5 years in prison and up to a \$1,000 fine), and escalates to a felony punishable by 5 to 40 years and up to a \$250,000 fine if the threat results

in serious injury. A “terroristic act upon a school” involves the actual commission of a violent or dangerous act—such as using a weapon or releasing a hazardous substance—on school property or a bus, with intent to terrorize or force an evacuation; this carries a felony penalty of 1 to 10 years and up to a \$5,000 fine, increasing to 5 to 40 years and \$250,000 if serious injury occurs. These crimes are added to the list of “designated felony acts” in Georgia’s juvenile code, meaning juveniles who commit them can face serious legal consequences in juvenile or even superior court. The bill also refines the misdemeanor offense of “disrupting or interfering with the operation of a public school, school bus, or bus stop,” and requires schools to adopt a progressive discipline process before referring a student to law enforcement for such disruptions.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill is calendared to be on the Senate Floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. The bill awaits agreement from the House on changes made by the Senate.

**HB 328** (Carpenter-4th) Increases the annual aggregate limit for tax credits available for donations to student scholarship organizations from \$140 million to \$200 million per year. Allows for the State Revenue Commissioner to approve, deny, or prorate additional requested aggregate amounts of tax credits that have not been reached by a qualified scholarship organization.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Assigned to Senate Finance Committee.

**HB 340** (Hilton-48th) Distraction-Free Education Act - Forbids public school students in kindergarten through 8th grade from using personal electronic devices during the school day unless otherwise protected by Individual Education Plan or medical plan.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**HB 371** (Corbett-174th) Increases the State Board of Education's maximum authorization of capital outlay funding of QBE from \$300 million to \$347 million annually starting in fiscal year 2027. Requires that for each new elementary school constructed on or after July 1, 2027, which includes a playground, such playground shall meet certain standards such as a sensory-diverse environment, enables all students to benefit from state mandated recess time and is accessible via a sidewalk or pathway from the school.

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

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

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

**HB 796** (Lupton-83rd) Revises the QBE program formula weights based on recommendations of the 2015 Education Reform Commission.

STATUS: House Education Committee. The bill was introduced late and did not cross over.

**HB 829** (Beckles-96th) Requires the Department of Education to publish guidance relating to best practices for secure browsing and parental controls and requires the Attorney General publish an annual report documenting its enforcement actions relating to online safety.

STATUS: House Education Committee. The bill was introduced too late to crossover but remain viable for consideration next year.

**HB 873** (Townsend-179th) Allows the Department of Education to employ retired teachers who receive benefits from the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia.

STATUS: House Retirement Committee

**HR 711** (Erwin-32nd) Creates the House Study Committee on Student Attendance in PreK-12 Education.

STATUS: House Education Committee

**SB 1** (Dolezal-27th) "Riley Gaines Act"- Establishes regulations requiring that interscholastic sports competitions be categorized based on the student-athlete's sex assigned at birth. Sports are designated as male, female, or coed, depending on the student-athletes actively participating in interscholastic competitions. Provides guidelines and restrictions for reasonable accommodations for student-athletes, including access to single-occupancy restrooms, changing areas, or sleeping quarters as needed. Extends the right to appeal decisions made by the public or private school's governing body and shall be given in writing within 35 days after receipt of the appeal. The bill states that judgements on a student's ability to play will not be based on "visual inspection of such student's external sex organs." Additionally, the bill applies to local school systems, public schools, and participating private schools, as well as postsecondary schools. There is a two-year statute of limitations for all civil actions. The term "gender" is replaced with "sex" throughout the Code.

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

**SB 4** (Dolezal-27th) Eliminates the word "micromanage" in state statute, provides for public complaints with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission by residents 18 or older who allege ethics code violations by members of local boards of education. The bill also eliminates required school board training beyond the 15 hours when first elected and for those on the high-risk audit list and prescribes required and prohibited training programs topics and provides for a sanction for school board trainers who do not comply. Training cannot encourage lobbying of the legislature and cannot include statements, recommendations, or suggestions "that are for or against current, pending, past, or future legislation affecting public schools or local school systems."

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Education Committee.

**SB 17** (Anavitarte-31st) Requires local school systems to implement a mobile panic alert system capable of connecting disparate emergency services technologies to ensure real-time coordination between multiple state and local first responder agencies in the event of a school security incident. The bill authorizes the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency to adopt rules and regulations for the requirements for school mapping data.

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

**SB 44** (Watson-11th) Revises the definition of the "qualified local school system" by reducing the minimum required or equivalent millage rate from 14 mills to 10 mills. This bill provides for a 25% reduction of equalization grant awards for local school systems whose millage rate or equivalent millage rate does not meet the minimum requirement. A report created by the Department of Education will be sent to certain members of the General Assembly, the House Budget and Research Office, Senate Budget and Evaluation Office, and Office of Planning and Budget each year by September 1. The report will show systems that received an equalization grant the previous fiscal year, the total amount of equalization earned over the past 10 years and list any systems with a millage rate less than 10%.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**SB 63** (Dixon-45th) Requires that local school systems allow home study students to take the PSAT/NMSQT, SAT, PreACT, ACT or Advanced Placement exams offered by the school system to resident students. The local school system may require home school students to pay for such an exam if the school is requiring all students to pay a fee to take the exam.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. The bill awaits agreement from the Senate to changes made by the House.

**SB 82** (Dixon-45th) Requires the Office of Charter School Compliance to prepare guidelines for local boards of education for the evaluation of charter school petitions and revises reporting. Local boards of education must provide a written statement of denial to the charter petitioner, the state board, and the office within 10 days of denial by the local board. Local school boards of education which deny charter schools which are later approved by the Charter Schools Commission could face the loss of the current charter system contract or strategic waivers school system contract. The bill also provides for the State Board of Education, in collaboration with the State Charter Schools Commission, to establish a program for the purposes of promoting and supporting the approval of new local charter school petitions by local boards of education, and to provide \$250,000 incentive grants to local boards of education that approve new local charter school petitions.

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

**SB 93** (Kemp-38th) Provides for the Professional Standards Commission to adopt rules to require that the content standards align with the science of reading for core curricula for state-approved educator preparation programs.

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

**SB 123** (Kennedy-18th) Updates and revises provisions of the state's compulsory school attendance laws. The bill provides that no student will be expelled by a public school due solely to absenteeism. Beginning in 2026, and every other year after, the Department of Education will submit a county-by-county report of compliance by local school systems with provisions related to the student attendance and school climate committee to the chairpersons of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Education and Youth Committee. If a school system has a chronic absenteeism rate of 10% or higher, the system must create an attendance review team. If one or more schools has a school chronic absenteeism rate of 15% or higher, the system will establish an attendance review team for each such school.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. The bill awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**SB 124** (Still-48th) Mandates that the School Superintendent and the Department of Education take all necessary steps to implement federal agency guidance. Additionally, students with a parent on active military duty in the state qualify for a Promise Scholarship until they return to public school, graduate, turn 20, or, for special education students, turn 21. Mandates that within 15 calendar days of receiving a guidance document from a federal agency which the State School Superintendent or the State Board of Education deems relevant and applicable to the duties, responsibilities, or business of the Department of Education, the Department of Education shall publish such guidance document on a dedicated web page.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Education Committee.



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

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Education Committee.

**SB 148** (Hatchett-50th) Directs the Department of Education to establish a pilot program for outdoor learning spaces beginning in the 2025-2026 school year. Private, nonprofit, and local school system funding may be utilized for design and construction costs. The bill eliminates the requirement for the involvement of a licensed physician for the use of automated external defibrillators for k-12 schools. It also increases the number of personal days school personnel may utilize accumulated sick leave for from three days to five days.

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

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

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Education Committee.

**SB 179** (Dixon-45th) Requires schools to transfer academic and disciplinary records of transferring students within 10 days by a school superintendent or school principal and mandates written reports to school officials and parents regarding law enforcement encounters with students. Parents would have access to student records within five days. It requires parents to disclose felony charges of a student to the school. Parents who do not disclose felonies or disciplinary issues may be charged. The bill introduces evidence-based suicide awareness, prevention training, and youth violence prevention programs, along with student violence prevention clubs and an anonymous statewide reporting system for potential threats. It also establishes criminal penalties for making terroristic threats or committing violent acts on school property, including felony charges for serious offenses. The legislation provides guidelines for the surrender and return of firearms in relation to school threats and outlines responsibilities for state agencies in implementing these provisions.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Assigned to House Education Committee.

**SB 236** (Wicks-34th) Allows military students to enroll in a public school when the parent receives their military orders regardless of whether the student's parent or guardian has entered into a lease, purchased a residence, or otherwise secured housing within such attendance zone.

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

**SB 252** (Halpern-39th) Allows municipalities with a population 300,000 or higher to lease out, grant easements over, or convey property to an independent school system within its boundaries. Property conveyed will be replaced with other property(s) that the governing authority deems to be of equivalent or greater value.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**SR 217** (Kennedy-18th) Creates a Senate Study Committee on Combating Chronic Absenteeism in Schools.

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

**SR 237** (Hickman-4th) A resolution urging the Professional Standards Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Education, Department of Early Care and Learning, Office of Student Achievement, University System of Georgia, Technical College System of Georgia, and Georgia Student Finance Commission, to develop data-driven, evidence-based recommendations to strengthen the state's K-12 education workforce and the teacher and school leader pipeline. These recommendations should address strategies to attract individuals into early childhood and K-12 teaching professions through innovative programs; collect and analyze data on the success of teaching graduates; and build partnerships with postsecondary institutions and other stakeholders to improve teacher preparation programs. Additionally, the recommendations must evaluate the adequacy of funding for student teacher compensation and consider reinstating HOPE access to support the teacher workforce. They should also include ways to increase public awareness of the teaching profession's benefits—such as the Teacher Retirement System—to recruit a diverse and talented pool and improve teacher and school leader retention through expanded mentorship and professional development. The final recommendations, including any legislative, policy, or budget proposals, must be submitted to the Governor and the Senate by December 1, 2025, following a timeline set by the Office of Planning and Budget.

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

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

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

**SR 476** (Halpern-39th) Creates Senate Study Committee on Local School System Flexibility Options.

STATUS: Senate Rules Committee

**SR 489** (Dixon-45th) Creates Senate Study Committee on Inclusive Educational Settings for Students with Disabilities.

STATUS: Senate Rules Committee



## Higher Education

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

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

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

**HB 150** (Fleming-114th) Requires the university system to produce twice per calendar year (January 31 and July 31) reports related to funding from the People's Republic of China or any entity or official of the People's Republic of China or the Chinese Communist Party.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Higher Education Committee. The bill is calendared to be on the Senate Floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 867** (Barnes-86th) Establishes a pilot financial aid program that provides grants to eligible students enrolled in an approved school of barbering, school of cosmetology, school of esthetics, school of hair design, or school of nail care with a lifetime maximum amount of \$10,000 with a commission cap of no more than \$50,000 in grants per year.

STATUS: House Higher Education Committee

**HR 752** (Barnes-86th) Creates a Joint Study Committee on Cosmetology and Barbering Education.

STATUS: House Regulated industries Committee

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

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. The bill awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**SB 154** (Hatchett-50th) Amends multiple Code sections by adding the words "or its successor" across Georgia Code after references to the U.S. Department of Education. The bill updates dated language by replacing a reference to student aid reports with Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. Awaits agreement by the Senate to changes made by the House.

**SB 180** (Dixon-45th) Allows apprenticeship sponsors to perform specific tasks related to conducting an apprenticeship program.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**SB 193** (Brass-6th) Authorizes the Technical College System of Georgia to establish the adult workforce high school diploma program, which has a sunset date of July 1, 2031.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. The bill awaits agreement from the Senate to changes made by the House.

**SR 432** (Harrell-40th) Creates the Senate Higher Education in Prison Study Committee.

STATUS: Senate Rules Committee

**SR 474** (Orrock-36th) Creates the Senate Study Committee on Higher Education Affordability.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Rules Committee. The bill moves rests in Senate Rules Committee



## Environmental Safety

**HB 79** (Newton-127th) Provides a tax credit for firearm safe handling instructional courses and firearm secure storage devices of up to \$300. This tax credit must be pre-approved and can only be applied once in a taxpayer's lifetime. The aggregate limit of tax credits is capped at \$10 million per year. Creates sales tax exemptions for the purchases of firearms, ammunition, gun safes, and related accessories will be for four days beginning on the second Friday of October of each year.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Finance Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommitted to Senate Rules Committee.

**HB 651** (Powell-33rd) Provides policy for automated traffic enforcement safety devices in school zones. The bill redefines "school zone" to match areas designated by state or local authorities and strengthens signage requirements by mandating larger, more visible warning signs that include radar speed displays and flashing yellow lights when cameras are active. The bill standardizes the enforcement threshold, requiring that tickets from automated devices be issued only when a driver exceeds the speed limit by more than 10 mph, eliminating previous exceptions. It introduces a new requirement that local agencies obtain a permit from the Georgia Department of Transportation before operating a speed camera, with added justification required for multi-lane highways. Citations must be mailed within specific timeframes, include details of the violation, photographic evidence, a peace officer's certification, and instructions for paying or contesting the ticket. A second notice must be sent if the fine is unpaid, and failure to respond results in liability by default. The bill removes the penalty of suspending vehicle registration for unpaid fines and prohibits additional processing fees beyond the \$75 and \$125 penalties for first and subsequent offenses. It requires all fine revenue to be split evenly between local public safety purposes and school safety initiatives, with quarterly public reporting. Prosecutors are explicitly authorized to enforce these civil penalties in court, ensuring cases may be adjudicated through standard judicial channels. If passed, these provisions would standardize, regulate, and clarify school zone speed camera enforcement across Georgia.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommitted to Senate Rules Committee.

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

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

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

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. The bill awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**SB 204** (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 the right to bring an action for an injunction or a civil cause of action. A plaintiff in a civil case is provided the ability to collect reasonable attorneys' fees and any other costs associated with the action. There is a one-year statute of limitations for these actions. The bill also allows prosecutors to accuse an individual, rather than indict that person through the grand jury process, when that individual has a prior conviction or upon a second offense. This does not apply to those charged with serious violent felonies, sexual felonies, RICO cases, and criminal gang cases.

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



## Shelter & Nutrition

**HB 14** (Carpenter-4th) Creates the Georgia Music Office. Prohibits any direct or third-party business with "foreign adversaries" such as the Republic of China within the state.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Economic Development & Tourism Committee. The bill rests in Senate Rules Committee.

**HB 233** (Townsend-179th) Designates Brunswick stew as the official Georgia state stew. Designates the fourth Friday in November each year as "National Sugarcane Syrup Day in Georgia." Designates cornbread as the official Georgia state bread. Prohibits companies owned or operated by a foreign country of concern or adversary from directly submitting a proposal for a state agency contract for goods or services related to an office environment, whether independently or through a third-party seller.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Economic Development & Tourism Committee. The bill rests in Senate Rules Committee.

**HB 399** (Oliver-84th) Requires any landlord that is not a resident of this state that owns or operates 25 or more single-family or duplex residential rental properties in GA to shall a licensed broker (that may or may not reside within this state) and at least one person to be located within this state, who shall be responsible for receiving, coordinating, managing, and responding to communications from tenants of such landlord related to maintenance and other issues related to such properties. Allows tenants, at the request of a code enforcement officer, to provide the name, license number, and contact information of the property manager if there is probable cause to believe a violation or violations of property management has occurred.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Economic Development & Tourism Committee. The bill is calendared to be on the Senate Floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**HB 779** (Neal-79th) Requires landlords and managers of apartment buildings or complexes to provide local police and fire department with after hours maintenance telephone numbers and afterhours management telephone numbers. Landlords or managers out of compliance will be fined \$2,000 per violation.

STATUS: House Governmental Affairs Committee. The bill was introduced late and did not cross over.

**HB 797** (Petrea-166th) Creates the Interagency Council on Homelessness for Chatham-Savannah.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE.

**HB 828** (Park-107th) Creates a maximum tax credit of \$1,200 for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients who experience a reduction or loss of benefits due to federal policy changes.

STATUS: House Ways & Means Committee. The bill was introduced too late to crossover but remain viable for consideration next year.

**HB 864** (Sanchez-42nd) Requires any corporation owning any interest in a single-family dwelling to submit a report (under penalty of perjury) to the state auditor which shall include the total number of single-family dwellings in which the corporation has an interest, a list identifying each single-family dwelling by certain criteria including the purchase price of each single-family dwelling, the most recent assessed value of each single-family dwelling and the ownership interest in each single-family dwelling.

STATUS: House Governmental Affairs Committee. The bill was introduced too late to crossover but remain viable for consideration next year.

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

STATUS: House Special Rules Committee

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

STATUS: House Special Rules Committee

**HR 656** (Olaleye-59th) Creates the House Study Committee on Expanding Home Ownership Opportunities for Georgians.

STATUS: House Rural Development Committee

**HR 712** (Park-107th) Creates the House Study Committee on Protecting Working Families.

STATUS: House Special Rules Committee

**SB 170** (Jackson-41st) Once a bill which would have established the Georgia Interagency Council for Homelessness, it has been completely gutted and replaced. The current bill establishes a grant program to acquire and install backup generators in certain rural hospitals. The Department of Community Health will work with the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency to set the criteria for these grants. Funding for the program will depend on appropriations from the General Assembly, and the amount awarded to each recipient will be determined individually. The bill also adds "affected rural hospital," which means an acute care hospital located in a rural county that contains fewer than 100 beds

and is located in any region of the state in which the governor declared a state of emergency after July 1, 2024.

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



## Miscellaneous

### HB 34

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

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

### HB 111

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

### HB 123

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

### HB 147

(Thomas-21st) Requires the Georgia Technology Authority (GTA) to conduct and publish an annual inventory of artificial intelligence (AI) usage by state agencies, ensure public disclosure of ongoing assessments of AI systems, and maintain records of these disclosures. Additionally, GTA oversees the development, procurement, implementation, utilization, and data management of AI within state agencies. The bill also designates the Attorney General as an elected representative that may approve the issuance of one or more private activity bonds to finance or refinance a state charter school facility after a public hearing within 60 days of a written request.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Science & Technology Committee. The bill moves to Senate Rules Committee.

### HB 161

(Crowe-118th) Revises the statute that allows the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) to subpoena computers or electronic devices to include investigations of Title 16, Chapter 9, Article 8 (Identity Fraud) and O.C.G.A. 16-9-93 (Computer Crimes), 16-10-28 (Transmitting a False Public Alarm), 16-11-37 (Terroristic Threats and Acts), 16-11-39.1 (Harassing Communications), and 16-11-221 (Domestic Terrorism - Penalties). The bill allows a court to find someone in contempt if they fail to obey these subpoenas and restricts the subpoena from becoming public during the investigation or prosecution beyond the extent necessary for the issuance and compliance of the subpoena. This also removes the specific references to Code sections when the GBI can provide information in furtherance of a federal, local, or state criminal investigation so that it applies to all criminal investigations. The bill also adds a definition of assassination for purposes of the crime of domestic terrorism. Assassination is defined as the intentional killing of an elected public official by an individual who is acting to prevent the performance of their official duties.



STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

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

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

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

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

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

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. Recommended Do Pass by the Senate State Institutions & Property Committee. The bill is calendared to be on the Senate Floor for a vote TODAY (MONDAY).

**[HB 551](#)** (Ridley-6th) Requires new residents of Georgia to register their vehicles within 30 days. Each day of non-compliance is a separate offense, punishable by a \$100 fine. Vehicles must have a valid license plate or temporary operating permit (TOP). The bill outlines the process for issuing TOPs, which are valid for 45 days and designed by the Department of Revenue. Dealers who violate TOP provisions face suspension and fines. The bill also revises rules for dealership plates and recordkeeping. The bill was amended to include car boot bill language which requires booters to get a license by ordinance or governing authority to place boots on cars.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. The bill awaits agreement from the House on changes made by the Senate.

**[HB 579](#)** (Reeves-99th) Amends Title 43, related to professions and business, to make broad changes to the duties and responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary of State's Professional Licensing Division and the division's director. Section 1-1 grants the Professional Licensing Division the ability to allow applicants to take necessary examinations before starting an application, when appropriate. The bill requires the division director to maintain a roster of names and addresses for individuals that have received a cease-and-desist letter from a professional licensing board for practicing a profession without a license. An exception is provided for persons that fail to renew a license in a 45-day period. Section 1-2 adds the ability to grant applications for license issuance, renewal, or reinstatement to the duties of the secretary of state's Professional Licensing Division director. Section 1-3 of the bill grants the director of Professional Licensing Division the ability to approve applications for licensing, renewal, or reinstatement on behalf of professional licensing boards. The director will only approve applications if the applicant satisfies all requirements for licensure. If the director is unable to make a determination or an application is deficient, the director will forward the application to the relevant licensing board. The licensing board must approve or deny the application in a timely manner. A licensing board may still approve or deny a license before any review or determination has been made by the division director. The division may utilize other methods of confirming required educational achievements in addition to receiving or requesting an applicant's official transcript. Section 1-4 codifies the division director's ability to set expiration, renewal, and penalty dates with approval from the related professional licensing boards. The division director is also instructed to set renewal dates over a two-year period in a manner that, within reason, evenly distributes renewal dates. A license shall remain renewable for up to 45 days after the expiration of a licensing, provided that the license holder meets all requirements of the license and has paid all fees due. Section 1-5 allows the governor to remove a licensing board member for cause without a hearing. Section 1-6 limits licensing boards to promulgating rules and regulations that solely protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Sections 2-1 strikes provisions establishing separate standards committees for the Composite Board Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists and eliminates a requirement for multiple board members to review and approve an application. Section 3-1 sets the bills effective date as July 1, 2026.

STATUS: PASSED HOUSE. PASSED SENATE. Awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

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

STATUS: House Budget & Fiscal Affairs Oversight Committee

**[HR 659](#)** (Lumsden-12th) Establishes the House Study Committee on Insurance Market Reform. The committee will consist of eight members of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the House as well as three non-legislative members with expertise or qualifications as determined by the speaker.

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

**[HR 757](#)** (Clark-100th) Creates the House Study Committee on Civil Rights Protections.

STATUS: House Special Rules Committee

**[HR 815](#)** (Jones-25th) Establishes the House Study Committee on Exploring the Potential for Humanoids and Robotics in Georgia Workforce Development. The committee will consist of five members of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the House.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the House Technology & Infrastructure Innovation Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

**[SB 21](#)** (Tillery-19th) Waives sovereign and governmental immunities for local governments and their officials and employees for a violation of the prohibition on sanctuary policies.

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

**[SB 36](#)** (Setzler-37th) "Georgia Religious Freedom Restoration Act" - Permits state and local governments to substantially burden a person's exercise of religion only if the entity demonstrates that the application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and it is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling governmental interest. A person who has been burdened in violation of law may assert the violation in a judicial proceeding and obtain appropriate relief, including a reasonable attorney fee in particular circumstances. Nothing in this bill will be construed to affect the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

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

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

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Recommended Do Pass by the House Budget & Fiscal Affairs Oversight Committee. The bill moves to House Rules Committee.

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

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. The bill awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**SB 68**

(Kennedy-18th) Revises civil practice, motor vehicle, and tort laws. It limits arguments regarding noneconomic damages, alters discovery timelines, and modifies dismissal rules. The recovery of attorney's fees is restricted, and the admissibility of seat belt evidence has been updated. Additionally, the bill establishes a new framework for claims related to negligent security, limiting property owners' liability in specific circumstances. It also changes how medical expense damages are calculated and allows for bifurcated trials. Section 1 of the bill amends O.C.G.A. 9-10-184, stating that if counsel is entitled to make the opening and concluding arguments, they may not argue the worth or monetary value of noneconomic damages during the concluding argument unless they have claimed this during the opening argument. Counsel is not permitted to discuss the worth or monetary value of non-economic damages in the concluding argument if it differs from what was argued in the opening argument. However, this section does not prohibit counsel from asking potential jurors during voir dire if they could return a verdict that does not award damages or one that exceeds an unspecified amount, as long as such questions are supported by evidence. Section 2 amends Code Section 9-11-12, indicating that the court must decide on a motion to dismiss within 90 days after the conclusion of the briefings on that motion. If the court fails to rule on the motion to dismiss within this 90-day period, a party may file a motion to terminate or modify, but this remedy does not prevent other available remedies for the court's failure to rule timely, including, but not limited to, a writ of mandamus. Section 3 amends Code Section 9-11-41, allowing for filing a written notice of dismissal at any time before the 60th day after the opposing party serves an answer. Section 6 amends Code Section 51-3-51, stipulating that a property owner or occupier is liable for negligent security if the plaintiff can prove, by clear and convincing evidence, that prior occurrences of similar wrongful conduct by a third person led to an injury. This is contingent upon the owner or occupier knowing or having reason to know that the third person was or would be on the premises and having actual knowledge of such prior wrongful conduct. Section 8 amends Code Section 51-12-15, stating that if the plaintiff is the legal guardian of a minor who has been injured by an alleged sexual offense and is likely to suffer severe psychological or emotional distress from testifying more than once in a bifurcated proceeding, or if the amount in controversy is less than \$150,000, the provisions apply.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. The bill awaits transmission to the governor for his consideration.

**SB 69**

(Kennedy-18th) "Georgia Courts Access and Consumer Protection Act" - Regulates third party litigation financing in Georgia. This legislation requires litigation financiers to register with the Department of Banking and Finance and to disclose pertinent information. It also includes specific restrictions, such as a prohibition on foreign affiliations. The bill outlines contract requirements, disclosure obligations, and cancellation provisions to protect consumers. It also allows for the discovery of litigation financing agreements and establishes penalties for law violations.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. PASSED HOUSE. Senate amended and now awaits the House's agreement to the Senate Amendment to the House Sub.

**SB 74**

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

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

**SB 111** (Albers-56th) Defines several terms and establishes regulations regarding the protection of consumer personal data in the state. Known as the 'Georgia Consumer Privacy Protection Act,' the bill gives consumers the right to invoke various privacy rights, including confirming the processing of their personal information, deleting personal information, and opting out of certain processing activities. The bill applies to businesses operating within the state that generate over \$25 million in revenue and meet certain criteria related to the processing of personal information. Criteria includes controlling or processing personal information of at least 25,000 consumers and deriving more than 50 percent of gross revenue from the sale of personal information or controlling or processing personal information of at least 175,000 consumers in a calendar year. "Controllers" of personal data are entities that determine the purpose and means of processing personal information. Controllers are required to establish a process for consumers to appeal decisions related to their privacy rights. Controllers must limit the collection and processing of personal information, implement data security practices, provide clear privacy notices, and are prohibited from processing sensitive data without consent from the consumer. Controllers must respond to consumer requests within specified timeframes and provide information free of charge, with certain exceptions. "Processors" of personal data are entities that process personal information on behalf of a controller. The bill outlines the obligations of processors, the handling of de-identified data, and various exemptions for lawful processing, such as cooperating with law enforcement. It specifies that contracts limiting consumer privacy rights are void and unenforceable. The bill does not conflict with specific health record management requirements or federal law mandates. It provides the attorney general with investigatory authority and establishes an affirmative defense for controllers and processors with compliant privacy policies based on the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) or comparable privacy framework.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. TABLED by the House Technology & Infrastructure Innovation Committee.

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

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

**SB 212** (Still-48th) Prevents the disclosure of confidential voter registration record information to unauthorized persons and prohibits the disclosure of public student directory information for political use. The bill amends O.C.G.A. 21-5-16 to prevent students from being solicited to organize political events on school property when such event is otherwise prohibited by law or by policy of the local school system or school.

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

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

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

**[SB 255](#)** (Cowser-46th) Establishes a process for granting investigatory powers to General Assembly committees. Section 1 amends 28-1-17, allowing: (a) The Senate or the House of Representatives to authorize committees to exercise investigatory powers per Code Section 45-15-19 through rules or resolutions. They may also approve joint committees to exercise powers outlined in Code Section 45-15-9. (b) Authorized committees can administer oaths, compel testimony, require witness attendance, demand document production, and take depositions. They may also issue subpoenas for witnesses and documents, which can be served statewide as allowed by Code Section 24-13-24. (c) If someone refuses to comply with a subpoena, the committee can seek assistance from the superior court in the relevant jurisdiction. The court can compel attendance and impose contempt of court penalties for noncompliance. (d) Confidentiality of materials and information during investigations is protected by law. If a subpoena application seeks confidentiality, the court will act to preserve it. The chairperson may either abandon the request or proceed based on the court's determination regarding privacy. (e) This section and related provisions do not limit any authority, privilege, or power of the General Assembly or its committees. Additionally, it does not affect investigations or subpoenas issued by committees before this amendment effective date.

STATUS: PASSED SENATE. Recommended Do Pass by the House Rules Committee. The bill rests in House Rules Committee.

**[SB 343](#)** (Hatchett-50th) Prohibits providers of social media platforms from permitting a minor aged 14 years or younger to be an account holder.

STATUS: Senate Children & Families Committee

**[SR 386](#)** (Moore-53rd) Creates the Senate State Fair Tax Study Committee.

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

**[SR 431](#)** (Harrell-40th) Creates the Senate Impact of Social Media and Artificial Intelligence on Children and Platform Privacy Protection Study Committee.

STATUS: Senate Rules Committee

**[SR 444](#)** (Halpern-39th) Creates the Senate Civil Rights Protections Study Committee.

STATUS: Recommended Do Pass by the Senate Rules Committee. The bill moves rests in Senate Rules Committee



## Advocacy Asks

[Ask #1: Out-of-School Time Funding](#)

[Ask #2: School Social Workers](#)

[Ask #3: Community Health Workers](#)

### **Ask #1: Out-of-School Time Funding**

#### **The Ask:**

Call and thank Lt. Governor Burt Jones, Senate Appropriations Chair Blake Tillery and members of the Georgia Senate for voting to include including \$12.5 million in grant funding for out-of-school time programs in the FY 2026 State Budget.

#### **What to Say:**

Dear Senator, Thank you for supporting \$12.5 million in grant funding for out-of-school time in the FY 2026 state budget. This investment ensures thousands of Georgia's children have access to safe, enriching opportunities outside of the classroom. I appreciate your support of Georgia's children and families.

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

[Lt. Gov. Burt Jones](#), (404) 656-5030

[Sen. John Albers](#) (404) 463-8055  
[Sen. Jason Anavitarte](#) (404) 656-0085  
[Sen. Lee Anderson](#) (404) 656-5114  
[Sen. Tonya Anderson](#) (404) 463-2598  
[Sen. Brandon Beach](#) (404) 463-1378  
[Sen. Timothy Bearden](#) (404) 463-5257  
[Sen. Matt Brass](#) (404) 656-0057  
[Sen. Max Burns](#) (404) 463-1376  
[Sen. Bill Cowser](#) (404) 463-1366  
[Sen. Gail Davenport](#) (404) 463-5260  
[Sen. Clint Dixon](#) (404) 656-6446  
[Sen. Greg Dolezal](#) (404) 656-0040  
[Sen. Drew Echols](#) (404) 656-7454  
[Sen. Frank Ginn](#) (404) 656-4700  
[Sen. Steve Gooch](#) (404) 656-9221  
[Sen. Russ Goodman](#) (404) 463-1318  
[Sen. Sonya Halpern](#) (404) 656-9644  
[Sen. Marty Harbin](#) (404) 656-0078  
[Sen. Ed Harbison](#) (404) 656-0074

[Sen. Sally Harrell](#) (404) 463-2260  
[Sen. Bo Hatchett](#) (404) 651-7745  
[Sen. Billy Hickman](#) (404) 463-1371  
[Sen. Mike Hodges](#) (404) 463-1309  
[Sen. Chuck Hufstetler](#) (404) 656-0034  
[Sen. Kim Jackson](#) (404) 656-6882  
[Sen. Donzella James](#) (404) 463-1379  
[Sen. Emanuel Jones](#) (404) 656-0502  
[Sen. Harold Jones](#) (404) 656-0036  
[Sen. John Kennedy](#) (404) 656-6578  
[Sen. Kay Kirkpatrick](#) (404) 656-3932  
[Sen. David Lucas](#) (404) 656-0150  
[Sen. Derek Mallow](#) (404) 656-7586  
[Sen. Josh McLaurin](#) (404) 463-4228  
[Sen. Nan Orrock](#) (404) 463-8054  
[Sen. Chuck Payne](#) (404) 463-5402  
[Sen. Sheikh Rahman](#) (404) 463-5261  
[Sen. Michael Rhett](#) (404) 656-0054  
[Sen. Randy Robertson](#) (404) 656-0045  
[Sen. Ed Setzler](#) (404) 656-0256



[Sen. Freddie Powell Sims](#) (404) 463-5259  
[Sen. Shawn Still](#) (404) 656-7127  
[Sen. Brian Strickland](#) (404) 463-6598  
[Sen. Carden Summers](#) (404) 463-5258  
[Sen. Blake Tillery](#) (404) 656-5038

[Sen. Larry Walker](#) (404) 656-0095  
[Sen. Ben Watson](#) (404) 656-7880  
[Sen. Sam Watson](#) (404) 656-0065  
[Sen. Kenya Wicks](#) (404) 657-2099  
[Sen. Rick Williams](#) (404) 656-0082

## **Ask #2: School Social Workers**

### **The Ask:**

Ask members of the House of Representatives to ensure that the \$5 Million House addition for School Social Worker grants is restored in the FY 2026 Budget.

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

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

### **The Why:**

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

### **What to Say:**

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

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

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

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

Call members of the House of Representatives:

<a href="#">Rep. Solomon Adesanya</a>	404.656.0220	<a href="#">Rep. Mandi Ballinger</a>	404.656.7153
<a href="#">Rep. Segun Adeyina</a>	404.656.6372	<a href="#">Rep. Imani Barnes</a>	404.656.0202
<a href="#">Rep. Kimberly Alexander</a>	404.656.7859	<a href="#">Rep. Carter Barrett</a>	404.656.0152
<a href="#">Rep. Victor Anderson</a>	404.656.0325	<a href="#">Rep. Matt Barton</a>	404.656.3947
<a href="#">Rep. Michelle Au</a>	404.656.0314	<a href="#">Rep. Debra Bazemore</a>	404.656.0202
<a href="#">Rep. Sylvia Wayfer Baker</a>	404.656.7859	<a href="#">Rep. Arlene Beckles</a>	404.656.0109
<a href="#">Rep. Bethany Ballard</a>	404.656.0325	<a href="#">Rep. Eric Bell</a>	404.656.0126

<a href="#">Rep. Karen Bennett</a>	404.656.0202	<a href="#">Rep. Ginny Ehrhart</a>	404.656.5025
<a href="#">Rep. Bryce Berry</a>	404.656.0220	<a href="#">Rep. Chris Erwin</a>	404.656.7850
<a href="#">Rep. Shaw Blackmon</a>	404.656.5103	<a href="#">Rep. Stacey Evans</a>	404.656.0116
<a href="#">Rep. Josh Bonner</a>	404.463-7853	<a href="#">Rep. Tim Fleming</a>	404.656.0188
<a href="#">Rep. Debbie Buckner</a>	404.656.0116	<a href="#">Rep. Robert Flournoy, Jr.</a>	404.656.7859
<a href="#">Rep. James Burchett</a>	404.656.5025	<a href="#">Rep. Jaclyn Ford</a>	404.656.0325
<a href="#">Rep. Rhonda Burnough</a>	404.656.0116	<a href="#">Rep. Lehman Franklin</a>	404.656.0178
<a href="#">Rep. Jon Burns</a>	404.656.5020	<a href="#">Rep. Spencer Frye</a>	404.656.0265
<a href="#">Rep. Charlice Byrd</a>	404.656.0213	<a href="#">Rep. Houston Gaines</a>	404.656.5025
<a href="#">Rep. Mike Cameron</a>	404.656.0188	<a href="#">Rep. Matthew Gambill</a>	404.656.17737
<a href="#">Rep. Beth Camp</a>	404.656.7855	<a href="#">Rep. Carl Gilliard</a>	404.656.7859
<a href="#">Rep. Joe Campbell</a>	404.656.0254	<a href="#">Rep. Lydia Glaize</a>	404.656.0116
<a href="#">Rep. Lisa Campbell</a>	404.656.0202	<a href="#">Rep. Gerald Greene</a>	404.656.9210
<a href="#">Rep. Park Cannon</a>	404.656.0287	<a href="#">Rep. Floyd Griffin</a>	404.656.7859
<a href="#">Rep. Chas Cannon</a>	404.656.0178	<a href="#">Rep. Joseph Gullett</a>	404.463.2248
<a href="#">Rep. Kasey Carpenter</a>	404.656.7857	<a href="#">Rep. Stan Gunter</a>	404.656.5125
<a href="#">Rep. John Carson</a>	404.656.7855	<a href="#">Rep. Leesa Hagan</a>	404.656.0177
<a href="#">Rep. Doreen Carter</a>	404.656.0220	<a href="#">Rep. Matt Hatchett</a>	404.463.2245
<a href="#">Rep. Johnny Chastain</a>	404.656.0325	<a href="#">Rep. Lee Hawkins</a>	404.656.7855
<a href="#">Rep. Mike Cheokas</a>	404.463.7853	<a href="#">Rep. Lynn Heffner</a>	404.656.0116
<a href="#">Rep. David Clark</a>	404.656.0188	<a href="#">Rep. Sharon Henderson</a>	404.656.7859
<a href="#">Rep. Jasmine Clark</a>	404.656.0287	<a href="#">Rep. Tangie Herring</a>	404.656.0202
<a href="#">Rep. Rob Clifton</a>	404.657.1803	<a href="#">Rep. Scott Hilton</a>	404.656.0188
<a href="#">Rep. Sharon Cooper</a>	404.656.5069	<a href="#">Rep. Bill Hitchens</a>	404.656.5126
<a href="#">Rep. John Corbett</a>	404.656.5105	<a href="#">Rep. Scott Holcomb</a>	404.656.6372
<a href="#">Rep. Brent Cox</a>	404.656.0152	<a href="#">Rep. Betsy Holland</a>	404.656.0116
<a href="#">Rep. Omari Crawford</a>	404.656.0314	<a href="#">Rep. El-Mahdi Holly</a>	404.656.0287
<a href="#">Rep. Clint Crowe</a>	404.656.0325	<a href="#">Rep. Soo Hong</a>	404.651.7737
<a href="#">Rep. Terry Cummings</a>	404.656.0202	<a href="#">Rep. Mitchell Horner</a>	404.656.0325
<a href="#">Rep. Viola Davis</a>	404.656.0109	<a href="#">Rep. Justin Howard</a>	404.656.0177
<a href="#">Rep. Robert Dawson</a>	404.656.7859	<a href="#">Rep. Karlton Howard</a>	404.656.6372
<a href="#">Rep. Buddy DeLoach</a>	404.656.7857	<a href="#">Rep. David Huddleston</a>	404.656.0325
<a href="#">Rep. Katie Dempsey</a>	404.463-2248	<a href="#">Rep. Carolyn Hugley</a>	404.656.0109
<a href="#">Rep. Robert Dickey</a>	404.656.5099	<a href="#">Rep. Shelly Hutchinson</a>	404.656.0287
<a href="#">Rep. Sandy Donatucci</a>	404.656.0177	<a href="#">Rep. Mack Jackson</a>	404.656.7153
<a href="#">Rep. Demetrius Douglas</a>	404.656.7859	<a href="#">Rep. Edna Jackson</a>	404.656.0265
<a href="#">Rep. Saira Draper</a>	404.656.0265	<a href="#">Rep. Derrick Jackson</a>	404.656.7859
<a href="#">Rep. Karla Drenner</a>	404.656.0202	<a href="#">Rep. Rick Jasperse</a>	404.656.7153
<a href="#">Rep. Matt Dubnik</a>	404.463.2246	<a href="#">Rep. David Jenkins</a>	404.656.0188
<a href="#">Rep. Emory Dunahoo, Jr.</a>	404.656.7857	<a href="#">Rep. Todd Jones</a>	404.656.9210
<a href="#">Rep. Chuck Efstration</a>	404.656.5052	<a href="#">Rep. Jan Jones</a>	404.656.5072

[Rep. Sheila Jones](#) 404.656.0308  
[Rep. Anissa Jones](#) 404.656.0314  
[Rep. Noelle Kahaian](#) 404.656.0177  
[Rep. Trey Kelley](#) 404.656.0188  
[Rep. Dar'shun Kendrick](#) 404.656.0126  
[Rep. John LaHood](#) 404.656.5105  
[Rep. Rob Leverett](#) 404.656.5132  
[Rep. Regina Lewis-Ward](#) 404.656.0287  
[Rep. Marvin Lim](#) 404.656.0314  
[Rep. Eddie Lumsden](#) 404.656.7850  
[Rep. Karen Lupton](#) 404.656.0314  
[Rep. Chuck Martin](#) 404.656.5146  
[Rep. Reynaldo "Rey" Martinez](#) 404.656.0254  
[Rep. Karen Mathiak](#) 404.656.0213  
[Rep. Danny Mathis](#) 404.656.0152  
[Rep. Dewey McClain](#) 404.656.0220  
[Rep. Derrick McCollum](#) 404.656.0152  
[Rep. Lauren McDonald III](#) 404.651.7737  
[Rep. Mekyah McQueen](#) 404.656.0109  
[Rep. Steven Meeks](#) 404.463.2246  
[Rep. Tanya F. Miller](#) 404.656.0298  
[Rep. Billy Mitchell](#) 404.656.0287  
[Rep. Martin Momtahan](#) 404.656.0178  
[Rep. Angela Moore](#) 404.656.0126  
[Rep. L.C. Myles, Jr.](#) 404.656.0265  
[Rep. Yasmin Neal](#) 404.656.6372  
[Rep. Kimberly New](#) 404.656.0102  
[Rep. Mark Newton](#) 404.656.7853  
[Rep. Gabe Okoye](#) 404.656.0220  
[Rep. Phil Olaleye](#) 404.656.0220  
[Rep. Mary Margaret Oliver](#) 404.656.0265  
[Rep. Angie O'Steen](#) 404.656.0254  
[Rep. Esther Panitch](#) 404.656.0287  
[Rep. Miriam Paris](#) 404.656.0109  
[Rep. Sam Park](#) 404.656.5059  
[Rep. Butch Parrish](#) 404.656.5141  
[Rep. Don Parsons](#) 404.656.5143  
[Rep. Holt Persinger](#) 404.656.0213  
[Rep. Jesse Petrea](#) 404.656.5115  
[Rep. Alan Powell](#) 404.463.3793  
[Rep. Brian Prince](#) 404.656.0298

[Rep. Tremaine Teddy Reese](#) 404.656.0109  
[Rep. Matt Reeves](#) 404.656.0152  
[Rep. Trey Rhodes](#) 404.656.5099  
[Rep. Carmen Rice](#) 404.656.0188  
[Rep. Gary Richardson](#) 404.656.0254  
[Rep. Jason Ridley](#) 404.656.3947  
[Rep. Jordan Ridley](#) 404.656.0254  
[Rep. Shea Roberts](#) 404.656.0298  
[Rep. Ruwa Romman](#) 404.656.0220  
[Rep. Steven Sainz](#) 404.657.1803  
[Rep. David Sampson](#) 404.656.0109  
[Rep. Gabriel Sanchez](#) 404.656.0126  
[Rep. Mary Ann Santos](#) 404.656.0202  
[Rep. Kim Schofield](#) 404.656.0298  
[Rep. Mitchell Scoggins](#) 404.656.0254  
[Rep. Sandra Scott](#) 404.656.0314  
[Rep. Devan Seabaugh](#) 404.656.0152  
[Rep. Dexter Sharper](#) 404.656.0126  
[Rep. Deborah Silcox](#) 404.657.1803  
[Rep. Lynn Smith](#) 404.656.7149  
[Rep. Vance Smith](#) 404.656.0254  
[Rep. Tyler Paul Smith](#) 404.463.7853  
[Rep. Michael Smith](#) 404.656.0265  
[Rep. Ron Stephens](#) 404.656.5115  
[Rep. Patty Marie Stinson](#) 404.656.0213  
[Rep. Steve Tarvin](#) 404.463.3793  
[Rep. Darlene Taylor](#) 404.463.2246  
[Rep. Rhonda Taylor](#) 404.656.0265  
[Rep. Brad Thomas](#) 404.656.0152  
[Rep. Rick Townsend](#) 404.656.0178  
[Rep. Long Tran](#) 404.656.7859  
[Rep. Will Wade](#) 404.651.7737  
[Rep. Dale Washburn](#) 404.656.0152  
[Rep. Bill Werkheiser](#) 404.656.5132  
[Rep. Anne Allen Westbrook](#) 404.656.0116  
[Rep. Marcus Wiedower](#) 404.656.7857  
[Rep. David Wilkerson](#) 404.656.0314  
[Rep. Al Williams](#) 404.656.6372  
[Rep. Mary Frances Williams](#) 404.656.0287  
[Rep. Noel Williams, Jr.](#) 404.656.5146

[Rep. Bruce Williamson](#) 404.656.5025  
[Rep. Inga Willis](#) 404.656.6372

[Rep. Bill Yearta](#) 404.656.0254

### **Ask #3: House Bill 291 - Community Health Workers**

#### **The Ask:**

Call members of the Senate Rules Committee to put House Bill 291 on the Senate floor for a vote as soon as possible. This bill creates a certification process for Community Health Workers.

#### **What the Bill Does:**

House Bill 291 creates a certification process for community health workers (CHWs) in Georgia, ensuring they are recognized, trained, and equipped to serve communities effectively. The bill:

- Establishes the Georgia Community Health Worker Certification Committee to oversee standards, training, and certification.
- Defines the role of certified CHWs as frontline public health workers who provide education, outreach, and advocacy for individuals in their communities.
- Ensures that CHWs receive appropriate training and certification to improve healthcare access and outcomes.

#### **The Why:**

1. CHWs bridge the gap between children and families and healthcare providers by connecting them to vital health services and supports, including prenatal supports, nutrition programs, and early childhood development resources.
2. A formal certification process standardizes training and qualifications, ensuring CHWs are well-equipped to serve their communities.
3. Strengthening CHW certification helps expand access to healthcare, particularly in underserved areas.

#### **What to Say:**

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_,

Please put House Bill 291 on the Senate floor for a vote as soon as possible. This bill establishes a certification process for community health workers in Georgia. CHWs are trusted members of their communities and play a critical role in connecting people with healthcare and support services. This bill ensures proper training and certification, leading to improved health outcomes across the state and also helping ensure that patients are able to have success with things like maintaining doctor's appointments, getting help in effective and timely ways and ensuring children have a medical home and important well child care. Thank you for all you do daily for Georgia's children and families, and for your thoughtful consideration of H.B. 291.

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

Call members of the Senate Rules Committee:

[Sen. Matt Brass](#), Chair, 404-656-0057  
[Sen. Ben Watson](#), Vice Chair, 404-656-7880  
[Sen. Bill Cowsert](#), Secretary, 404-463-1366  
[Sen. John Albers](#), 404-463-8055  
[Sen. Jason Anavitarte](#), 404-656-0085  
[Sen. Lee Anderson](#), 404-656-5114  
[Sen. Brandon Beach](#), 404-463-1378  
[Sen. Clint Dixon](#), 404-656-6446  
[Sen. Greg Dolezal](#), 404-656-0040  
[Sen. Frank Ginn](#), 404-656-4700  
[Sen. Steve Gooch](#), 404-656-9221  
[Sen. Ed Harbison](#), 404-656-0074

[Sen. Chuck Hufstetler](#), 404-656-0034  
[Sen. Kim Jackson](#), 404-656-6882  
[Sen. Harold Jones, II](#), 404-656-0036  
[Sen. John F. Kennedy](#), 404-656-6578  
[Sen. Michael “Doc” Rhett](#), 404-656-0054  
[Sen. Randy Robertson](#), 404-656-0045  
[Sen. Larry Walker, III](#), 404-656-0095  
[Sen. Rick Williams](#), 404-656-0082



## Upcoming Events

### April 2025

**Friday, April 4th**

**Sine Die (Last Day of Legislative Session)**

Tuesday, April 8

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



## Resources You May Find Helpful

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