

## 2022 Georgia General Assembly Legislative Days 9-11



### Week Overview

The Georgia General Assembly met from Tuesday February, 1st to Thursday, February 3rd for Legislative Days 9-11. Legislators took Friday off for a long weekend and will be re-convening for Legislative Day 12 on Monday, February 7th. Throughout the week, the legislature debated and worked on a series of bills and issues. With this year being a campaign year, many of the issues included constitutional carry of firearms, marijuana legalization, critical race theory and other lightning rod issues. Among the most contentious bills however were the hotly disputed redistricting and cityhood bills. Next week, Legislators will be using four of the five days as Legislative Days. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday will all be Legislative Days, and Wednesday will be a Committee Work Day.



### **Education Spotlight**

One of Governor Kemp's main goals for this legislative session is to pass a piece of legislation known as the "Parental Bill of Rights." There are a few different bill numbers for this topic but all have the same language. These bills are SB 449, HB 1158 and HB 1178. It is the goal of the Legislature to drop the bill in each chamber to increase the speed of moving this along.

This legislation aims to accomplish a few goals that include the following:

- The right of a parent to direct the upbringing and moral or religious training of their child.
- The right of a parent to review any instructional material being used in their child's classroom.
- The right of a parent to enroll their child in a public school, private school, home study program, or alternative to public education as applicable by law and enrollment requirements.
- The right of a parent to review their child's records.
- The right of a parent to access information relating to promotion and retention policies and high school graduation requirements.
- The right of a parent to provide written consent before their child is photographed or videographed.

The legislation also provides for policies and procedures for parents to be involved in consultation with their respective school's governing board. These policies would be related to how a parent can access the information in the rights listed above. These policies and procedures also gives parents the right to withdrawal their child from any portion of sex education with a written request from the parent. While this bill has only been assigned to committee thus far, we expect one or both of these bills to move soon and quickly.



### **Local Spotlight**

The Legislature debated and voted on hotly-contested legislation throughout the week, but redistricting and cityhood bills ended up being the most contentious within the chambers.

Following the redistricting process, there have been disputes within Metro Atlanta counties over new maps and changes within commissions. Most notably disputes arose between members of the Gwinnett County delegation regarding new map proposals of both their school board and county commission. While the Gwinnett County Legislative Delegation is now majority Democratic, the Republican members of the Delegation still hold tremendous power especially with redistricting. Democratic legislators were opposed to a new map that will likely add a Republican Commissioner to the County. Additionally, Democratic legislators were opposed to a bill that would make the Gwinnett County School Board position a non-partisan position.

Attention has also been focused on the cityhood movements of Buckhead and East Cobb. With Lt. Gov Duncan sending the Buckhead cityhood bill to a Democratic run committee, this diminishes the ability for the bill to move forward. Senator Brandon Beach, the bill's sponsor, stated that he is working on different vehicles to try and push the measure. While the Buckhead cityhood movement was stalled, the East Cobb cityhood movement passed the Georgia House of Representatives and was transferred over to the Georgia Senate where it has already passed the Senate Local Government Operations Committee. After its passage in the House the sponsor of the bill, Rep. Matt Dollar, announced his retirement. Three other Cityhood bills are also receiving traction including Lost Mountain, Vinings and Mableton.

## General Legislation

HB 867 (Rep. Mark Newton) – This bill is related to prescription drugs. This bill would require pharmacy benefit managers to reveal the true cost of prescription drugs to the insured person. This bill would also change the cost of the drugs to the insured based on the true net cost and true final cost of prescription drugs. This bill has been assigned to the House Special Committee on Access to Quality Healthcare.

SB 456 (Sen. Bruce Thompson) – This bill is related to abortion-inducing drugs. This bill defines when the drugs can be used and by whom the drugs can be prescribed. Additionally, this bill would prohibit the provision of the drugs in schools and on state grounds. This bill has not yet been assigned to a committee.

SB 452 (Sen. Sheila McNeill) - This bill would lay the groundwork for every 11th grader to receive a free, one-time college placement test administered during school hours. The act would not go into effect until after funding is allocated. This bill has been referred to the Senate Education & Youth Committee.

SB 377 (Sen. Bo Hatchett) - This bill prohibits local boards of education, the University System of Georgia, the Technical College System of Georgia and Georgia State Agencies from teaching “divisive concepts” relating to race, racism and skin color. The bill also creates a Complaint Resolution Process that would let parents communicate complaints going through the Principal, Superintendent and State Board of Education. If the complaint is not remedied, then the State Board of Education could withhold up to 10% of QBE funding to that school district. This bill not only applies to education, but also employee education. Contractors are also included within this bill. This bill has been referred to the Senate Education & Youth Committee.

SB 319 (Sen. Jason Anavitarte) - This bill would allow Georgians to carry a concealed handgun without first getting a concealed carry license. This bill allows a person who is otherwise legally able to possess and carry a firearm to do so without a carry permit from the state. This bill passed the Senate Judiciary Committee 6-3.

## **Legislation for AIA**

HB 302 (Rep. Martin Momtaham) - This bill would restrict local governments by removing the ability to determine a regulatory fee amount based on the number of square feet of a new construction project or the cost of all other construction projects. Under current law, the amount of the regulatory fee charged must approximate the cost of the regulatory activity performed by the local government. This bill would require that the proceeds of the regulatory fee be used to fund the regulatory activity but would not require the local government to establish a separate account for the funds. Additionally, current law provides a nonexclusive list of industries that may be subject to local government regulatory fees. This bill would remove from that list taxicab and limousine operators and boxing promoters. This bill passed the Georgia House of Representatives 91-65. The Senate read and referred to the Finance Committee. This bill was heard for debate only on Wednesday, January 26, 2022. The debate was centered around how regulatory fees are calculated.

HB 435 (Rep. Victor Anderson) - This bill will provide for the exemption of certain contracts procured competitively by the state or organizations relating to contract and bidding requirements for public works. This bill failed to pass the Georgia House of Representatives 80-86, but was reconsidered with an amendment and passed. The Senate read and referred to the Governmental Oversight Committee.

HB 469 (Rep. Ron Stephens) - This bill would revise procedures, conditions, and limitations relating to tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic structures. This bill was passed by House Ways and Means. This bill passed the Georgia House of Representatives. The Senate read and referred to the Finance Committee where it was passed.

HB 476 (Rep. Dale Washburn) - This bill would create the Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board, an independent state agency attached to the Secretary of State for administrative purposes only. This bill passed the House Regulated Industries Committee, and was also passed by House Rules. This bill passed the Georgia House of Representatives 163-2. It also passed the Senate Committee on Regulated Industries and Committees.

HB 586 (Rep. Sam Watson) - This bill would extend the sunset date for the exemption for projects of regional significance regarding sales and use tax. This bill passed out of

House Ways and Means and was passed by the House. The Senate read and referred to the Finance Committee where it was passed.

SB 45 (Sen. Bruce Thompson) - This bill would provide for individuals moving to the state to obtain a license by endorsement to practice certain professions in this state. This bill was passed by the Senate, and the House read and referred to the Committee on Regulated Industries.

SR 298 (Sen. Brandon Beach) - This bill would create the Senate Annexation Study Committee. This bill is currently in Senate Rules.