

2022 Georgia General Assembly Legislative Days 12-15



Week Overview

The Georgia General Assembly worked diligently throughout the week using up Legislative Days 12-15. Legislators gavelled in on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and used Wednesday as a Committee Work Day. Legislators continued debating and working on more contentious pieces of legislation including cityhood bills, abortion measures, critical race theory, parenting bill of rights, and redistricting. Monday also marked the final due date of the January 31st disclosures candidates are to report. These disclosure reports signal the initial strength of candidates, especially going into Legislative Session where many are legally restricted from fundraising. The Legislature will gavel back in on Monday, February 14th for Legislative Day 16, and use Tuesday and Thursday for Legislative Days 16 and 17. Wednesday, February 16th will be used as a Committee Work Day.



Fundraising- Campaign Disclosures

Monday marked the final due date of the January 31st disclosures candidates are to report. These disclosure reports signal the initial strength of candidates, especially going into Legislative Session where many are legally restricted from fundraising.

Governor Brian Kemp reported a strong fundraising total of \$7.4 million during the period totaling over \$12.7 million in his coffers. His Republican opponent, former U.S. Senator David Perdue lacked behind Governor Kemp with just raising \$1.1 million during the same period, with less than \$900 thousand in cash on hand. Additionally, Governor Kemp also raised \$2.3 million in his leadership committee, Georgians First, where he spent \$1.7 million. On the Democratic side, Stacey Abrams raised \$9.25 million entering the race just days before Perdue.

In the Lt. Governor's race, State Senator Burt Jones eclipsed Senate President Pro Tem Butch Miller with \$1.7 million to Miller's \$1.4 million during this period. Miller has raised more overall from contributors since starting his campaign, but Jones loaned his campaign \$2 million of his own money, boosting his cash on hand past Miller. Jones has \$3 million in cash, while Miller has \$2.6 million. On the Democratic side, former Attorney General candidate, Charlie Bailey raised roughly \$530,000 besting Rep. Erick Allen (\$192,000), Rep. Renitta Shannon (\$74,000), and Rep. Derrick Jackson (\$64,000)

In the Attorney General's race, Attorney General Chris Carr bested Senator Jen Jordan with \$825,000 to Jordan's \$655,000. Carr currently leads Jordan with roughly \$500,000 more in his coffers with \$1.5 million to \$1 million.

In the Secretary of State's race, incumbent Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger raised just \$322,000 and ended the period with \$212,000. Secretary of State Raffensperger who is also being primaried by U.S. Congressman Jody Hice raised the most during this period with more than \$1 million, but ended the period with \$648,000 in the bank. Former Alpharetta Mayor David Bell Isle who is also running in the Republican Primary,

raised \$212,000 with \$112,000 on hand. On the Democratic side, Rep. Bee Nguyen raised \$691,000 and ending with \$944,000 in the bank.

In the Insurance Commissioner's race, Commissioner John King, appointed by Governor Kemp, raised \$217,000, with \$316,000 banked. On the Democratic side, Rep. Matthew Wilson raised \$120,000 and had \$99,000 in cash. Janice Laws raised more than \$32,000 and had \$21,000 remaining.

In the State School Superintendent race, Incumbent Superintendent Richard Woods has not filed yet. His Republican challenger John Barge raised \$51,000 and had \$5,000 in cash. On the Democratic side, Cobb County Schoolboard Member Jaha Howard raised \$117,000 and Gwinnett County Schoolboard Member Everton Blair raised \$106,000.



Bills on the Move

Amended FY 22 Budget

On Friday, the House of Representatives debated the Amended FY 22 budget. This budget allows for any revisions to be made to the current year's fiscal budget. Each State Agency presented their amended budgets for FY 22 during budget week at the start of the legislative session. During the floor debate, Appropriations Chairman Terry England presented any changes made by the various State Agencies to the entire House. The minority party presented their minority report for the budget and a vote was taken. The AFY22 budget passed the House by a vote of 152-4 with 24 Representatives not voting.

CRT

On Monday, the Senate Education and Youth Committee had a hearing only on SB 377 which would ban divisive concepts from being taught in a k-12 classroom. The bill sponsor, Sen. Bo Hatchett, fielded many questions from Committee members. There was no public testimony heard on this bill but Chairman Chuck Payne promised that at the bill's next hearing, public comment would be heard. There has not been another hearing date set for this bill yet.

Parental Bill of Rights

On Wednesday during a committee work day, the Senate Education and Youth Committee heard SB 449 sponsored by Sen. Clint Dixon. This bill would create a Parental Bill of Rights so that parents would have access to their students' learning materials and would create a more open line of communication between the parents and the administration. While the plan for the day was to pass this bill out of committee, Chairman Chuck Payne chose to not have a vote so that the bill sponsor could correct a few language questions raised from the members of the Education and Youth Committee. This bill will come back before the committee once a substitute has been prepared and the committee will take a vote at that time.

Cityhoods

The creation of new cities has been a major topic for this year's legislative session. The City of East Cobb passed the Senate on Thursday by a vote of 31 yeas and 18 nays. There were seven (7) Senators that did not vote. Other cities up for creation include the City of Lost Mountain in Cobb County (HB 826), the City of Vinings in Cobb County (HB 840), and the City of Mableton in Cobb County (HB 839). Both HB 826 and HB 840 passed out of the Senate State and Local Operations committee on Friday. HB 839 passed out the House Governmental Affairs subcommittee on Cityhood on Thursday. The last new city to be created in Georgia was the City of South Fulton during the 2016 Legislative Session.

Redistricting/Maps

Over the last few weeks, the General Assembly has been working diligently to pass new maps for Counties and Boards of Education in the counties. Redistricting can be a very continuous process and that has been brought to light many times over the last week during the committee process. Maps for County districts and maps for Board of Education districts were required to be dropped as of Tuesday February 8th. This allows the Secretary of State to begin preparing new voting precincts for the May primary. Over the next few legislative days, the General Assembly will debate and vote on these new maps and begin preparing their constituents for any changes. Most maps will be voted on through the Local Consent Calendar in both the House and the Senate. However, maps presented as general bills will be debated on the floor.

Postpartum expansion

At the beginning of this session, Senator Dean Burke dropped legislation that would expand medicaid coverage for postpartum moms from six (6) months to one (1) year from the end of pregnancy. This bill passed out of the Senate on Monday by a vote of 52-0. On Thursday, the House assigned this bill to the House Health and Human Services committee.

Mental Health Parity in Insurance

Senator Kay Kirkpatrick worked diligently on creating legislation that would require insurance companies to complete annual reports for mental health parity in healthcare plans. This would cover all healthcare plans in the individual, small group, and large group markets. Not only would annual reporting be required, this bill also requires insurance companies to definitively list out any treatment limitations for mental health care. SB 342 passed the Senate on Monday by a vote of 48 to 3 and was assigned to the House Health and Human Services Committee on Thursday. This bill is a companion bill to Speaker Ralston's Mental Health Parity bill that helps better mental and behavioral health in Georgia.

Bills of interest 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. This bill is currently at the Senate Rules committee.

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.