

2022 Georgia General Assembly Legislative Days 16-18



Week Overview

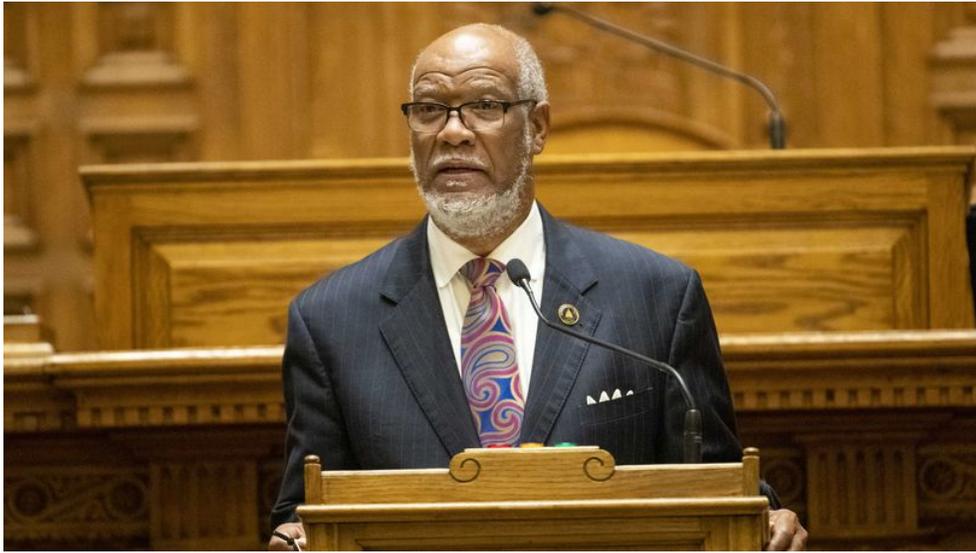
The Georgia General Assembly worked diligently throughout the week using up Legislative Days 16-18. Legislators gavelled in on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, and used Wednesday as a Committee Work Day. Cityhood bills continued moving through the legislative process, along with more contentious bills dealing with the redistricting of metro Atlanta counties Cobb and Gwinnett. Legislative leadership also spent time working on the budget through Appropriations subcommittees. The Legislature will gavel back in on Tuesday, February 22nd for Legislative Day 19, and that Thursday for Legislative Day 20. The Legislature will not be convening on Monday for Presidents Day, and will be using Wednesday and Friday as Committee Work Days.



Cityhood Bills

On Monday, the Georgia House of Representatives adopted a Senate substitute of HB 481, a bill allowing voters to vote via referendum on the creation of the City of East Cobb. The bill was sent to Governor Brian Kemp, and signed on Tuesday. The referendum to incorporate will be held on May 24th during the primary election. This marks the first successful cityhood bill of this session, with three other Cobb County cityhood bills currently being worked on by legislators for Lost Mountain, Mableton, and Vinings. The Lost Mountain cityhood bill has been passed by both the House and the Senate, and is waiting on the House to agree to minor changes made by the Senate. If the House agrees, the referendum for incorporation of Lost Mountain will also be voted on May 24th. The Vinings bill has passed the House, and has been put on the Senate Rules Calendar for next Tuesday, February 22nd for a floor debate and vote. The Mableton cityhood bill has passed out of committee in the House via a substitute, and now awaits a vote on the House floor.

While Cobb County cityhood bills are on the move, the Buckhead cityhood initiative has been shelved by both Senate and House leadership. Lt. Governor Duncan and Speaker Ralston have both announced they have no intentions on passing or advocating a Buckhead cityhood measure as of this session, and emphasized giving Mayor of Atlanta, Andre Dickens enough time to curb crime within the city.



House and Senate Retirements

Over the last two weeks, there have been several members of the General Assembly who have announced that they will not be seeking re-election in the 2022 election cycle. Some of the members that have announced they will not be seeking re-election are those in leadership and powerful chairmen. Below is a list of legislators that have announced that they are not seeking re-election and are not running for another office.

House of Representatives:

- Chairman Terry England (R) (Auburn)
- Chairman Randy Nix (R) (LaGrange)
- Chairman Don Hogan (R) (St. Simons Island)
- Dean Calvin Smyre (D) (Columbus)
- Chairman Jan Tankersley (R) (Brooklet)
- Rep. Matt Dollar (R) (Marietta)
- Rep. Zulma Lopez (D) (Atlanta)
- Rep. Mike Wilensky (D) (Dunwoody)
- Rep. Angelika Kausche (D) (Johns Creek)

Senate:

- Chairman Lindsey Tippins (R) (Marietta)
- Senator Sheila McNeill (R) (Brunswick)

Attached in the email is a spreadsheet listing all of the legislators who are either retiring or running for a higher office.

Bills on the Move

Use of Residential Dwellings

HB 1093 was heard in the House Judiciary Committee this week. The bill would take away the authority of local governments to dictate zoning within their respective areas. SB 494 is this same bill, but being run on the Senate side of the legislature. Both bills are still in committee and will be heard again in the coming weeks.

Prudent Layperson Standard

On Thursday, HB 1324 passed out of the House Committee on Insurance by substitute. This bill clarifies that the prudent layperson standard is not affected by a diagnosis given. This bill was passed out of the Committee unanimously with strong support from both Democratic and Republican legislators.

Gwinnett County Board of Education- Non-Partisan Election

One of the more contentious bills this legislative session has been SB 369 sponsored by Senator Clint Dixon which would change the way the Board of Education in Gwinnett County is elected. Those running for the school board would now be required to run non-partisan should this bill be signed into law. Normally a bill like this one would be passed as local legislation but Senator Dixon chose to use the general bill route which allows for the entire Senate and the entire House to vote on this legislation. SB 369 passed the Senate on 2/2 by a vote of 32 to 21. On 2/17, the House passed this bill by a vote of 95 to 61. This bill is now headed to the Governor's desk and awaits either his signature or a veto.

Parental Bill of Rights

During this legislative week, the Senate Education and Youth committee heard SB 449 sponsored by Governor's Floor Leader, Senator Clint Dixon. After the first hearing on this bill last week, Sen. Dixon and the Governor's office made a few changes. Those were presented to the committee on Monday, followed by questions from the committee and some public testimony. SB 449 passed out of the Senate Education Committee on a 6-5 vote. This bill is now in Senate Rules waiting to be placed on the Senate Calendar for floor debate. Next week on Wednesday, the House Education Committee will take up HB 1178

sponsored by Rep. Josh Bonner. This is the House version of the Parental Bill of Rights and is relatively the same language as the Senate version.

Colton's Law

On Thursday, the Senate unanimously passed SB 360 known as "Colton's Law," that would increase penalties against a person convicted of cruelty to a disabled minor in the first or second degree to a minimum of ten years.

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.