

January 17, 2024

As we plunge into a new year, a new legislative session, and new lows on the thermometer, I've been busy warming my hands over cozy joint appropriations hearings, chewing on a few hot tamale kind of bills, and taking some don't-lick-the-flagpole (i.e., think before you act) words of wisdom from my fellow compadres in the halls. What have you been up to? I imagine you dedicated readers have been all aquiver, eager to see what crazy hijinks lawmakers, lobbyists and laptop-luggers (like myself) are going to get up to this year. While I can't totally predict the ardent objectives of all 236 lawmakers, a Lt. governor, or governor, I can say that this year, without a national football championship to get in the way, things have started off with a bang. Why, one minute I was finding a 4-year-old chocolate reindeer in the toe of my stocking, and the next thing you know, I am back in the metal detector line wondering why I didn't stick with pre-med. We've seen the Wild Hog get et and the [State of the State](#) get stated, and the [Legislative Days](#) get legislated. Words like "[Sports Betting](#)", "[Medicaid Expansion](#)", [Georgia's Pre-K](#), [Out-of-School Time](#), and [Georgia Apex](#) (school based mental health) are all floating around the capitol like the happy smell of grilled peanut butter sandwiches. Bills are a'droppin', admins are a'hoppin' and, - until March 28 (sine die) - ain't nobody a'stoppin'! So get your speed-reading glasses on and see what the governor has proposed in his budget recommendations and how this first hunk of bills looks. See you next week! (on Monday!)

-Polly

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Jump to Section:

[Budget Information](#)

[Justice, Public Safety, and School Discipline](#)

[Child Welfare and Protection](#)

[Health & Behavioral Health](#)

[Maternal & Infant Care](#)

[Early Childhood Education & Out-of-School Time](#)

[K-12 Education](#)

[Higher Education](#)

[Environmental Safety](#)

[Shelter & Nutrition](#)

[Miscellaneous](#)

[Advocacy Ask](#)

Helpful Resources:

[Find Your Legislator](#)



Budget Information

Jump to:

[Fiscal Year 2025 – Governor’s Recommendations](#)

Amended Fiscal Year 2024 – Governor’s Recommendations

Total: \$36,087,802,875

Judicial Council

- **\$125,000 Added** for an economic impact study on access to justice initiatives.
- **\$419,000 Added** for Civil Legal Services for families of indigent patients.

Juvenile Courts

- **\$12,500 Added** for grants to counties for the Atlantic Judicial Circuit
- **\$12,500 Added** for grants to counties for the Coweta Judicial Circuit
- **\$218,000 Added** for the Juvenile Court Judges' salary supplement pursuant to the General Appropriations for FY 2023 (HB 911).

Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

- \$59.54 Million in total from 1. agency-wide transfers (\$7,610,761), 2. existing funds (\$461,188), and 3. added funds to address Regional State Hospitals' urgent and significant capital needs.

Dept. of Community Affairs

- \$2.125 Million in total state dollars from 1. existing funds (\$800,000), 2. transferred funds from State Community Development Programs (\$400,000), and 3. additional funds to the State Housing Trust Fund to leverage federal grant funds for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (Total State and Federal Funds = \$2,924,806).
- **\$250 Million Added** to the Georgia Fund to support water and wastewater infrastructure development through low-interest loans to local communities.
- **\$23.9 Million Added** for the Rural Workforce Housing Program. (Also will use existing funds (\$26,078,821) for a total of \$50,000,000)

Dept. of Community Health

Medicaid - Aged Blind and Disabled

- **\$120.96 Million Added** for growth in Medicaid based on projected utilization.
- **\$92.92 Million Added** for skilled nursing centers to reflect 2021 cost reports.
- Replace \$2,237,205 in state general funds with hospital provider fees.
- Replace \$2,981,404 in state general funds with nursing home provider fees.

Medicaid - Low Income

- **\$152.99 Million Reduced** for Medicaid based on projected utilization.
- Replace \$20,134,839 in state general funds with hospital provider fees.

PeachCare for Kids

- \$4.03 Million Transferred from Health Care Access and Improvement (\$459,000) and increase funds (\$3,569,736) for growth in Medicaid based on projected utilization.

GA Board of Healthcare Workforce

- \$100,000 of existing funds used for statewide healthcare specialty assessments to evaluate gaps in healthcare services.

Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Physicians for Rural Areas

- **\$850,000 Reduced** to align budget with expenditures until authorizing legislation is passed to establish a loan repayment program for mental health professionals.

GA Commission on Family Violence

- **\$40,250 Added** to update the Georgia State Plan for Ending Family Violence.

Dept. of Corrections

- \$6.13 Million total from Transfer funds from Offender Management program (\$3,551,094) and **Added funds (\$2,574,744)** for a recruitment advertising campaign and work culture review.
- **\$65.29 Million Added** for physical health and pharmacy service contracts.

State Prisons

- **\$172,200 Added** for Technical College System of Georgia vocational education contracts.
- **\$5.6 Million Added** for safety, security, and technology initiatives.
- **\$250,000 Added** for radio communications at facilities, statewide.
- **\$600,000 Added** for offender call monitoring at facilities, statewide.

Transition Centers

- **\$4.67 Million Added** for six months of operational cost for the Metro Re-Entry Phase IV to add 400 transition center beds.

Dept. of Early Care and Learning

- **\$100,000 Added** for startup grants of up to \$10,000 per provider to establish additional Summer Food Service Program meal sites in areas with high rates of child food insecurity.

Pre-K Program

- **\$1.39 Million Added** to reflect the correct employer contribution rate for State Health Benefit Plan.
- **\$6.14 Million Added** to expand the Summer Transition Program with income eligibility requirements.

Dept. of Economic Development

- **\$25.29 Million Added** for the GA World Congress Authority for public safety and infrastructure costs related to the 2026 FIFA World Cup and 2025 College Football Playoff National Championship.

Dept. of Education

Nutrition

- **\$6.33 Million Reduced** for the cost of breakfast and lunch for reduce-paying students through the 2023-2024 school year given the availability of existing funds.

QBE Local Five Mill Share

- \$1.88 Million Adjusted for the Local Five Mill Share for eight new State Commission Charter Schools.

Quality Basic Education Program

- **\$102.54 Million Added** for a midterm adjustment based on enrollment growth.

- **\$4.16 Million Added** for a midterm adjustment to the State Commission Charter School supplement for training and experience.
- **\$28.51 Million in formula funds Added** for the State Commission Charter School supplement.
- **\$8.98 Million Added** to reflect growth in the Special Needs Scholarship.
- **\$6.3 Million in formula funds Added** for the Completion Special Schools supplement pursuant to HB 87 (2023 Session).
- **\$277,812 Added** in formula funds for a midterm adjustment to the charter system grant.
- **\$14.85 Million Restored** in Quality Basic Education (QBE) formula funds for Mountain Education Charter High School and Coastal Plains High School due to establishment as a completion special school.
- **\$8.64 Million Reduced** to provide a salary supplement of \$1,000 to all custodian custodians given the availability of existing funds.
- **\$49,500 Reduced** to provide a military counselor to Chattahoochee County given the availability of existing funds.

Technology/Career Education

- **\$711,000 Reduced** to align budget with expenditures.

Testing

- **\$292,000 Added** to administer statewide standardized testing in accordance with federal assessment requirements.

Employees' Retirement System of Georgia

- **\$500 Million Added** to strategically invest in increasing the funded ratio in order to improve long-term financial viability of the pension system and support state retirees.

Governor's Office of Student Achievement

- **\$135,000 Added** to upgrade GA AWARDS dashboards and improve accessibility of literacy data.
- **\$250,000 Reduced** to align budget with expenditures.

Office of the Child Advocate

- **\$99,780 Added** to improve the legal representation of foster children.

Dept. of Human Services

Child Welfare Services

- **\$3.17 Million Added** for technology upgrades and improvements to the SHINES child welfare case management system.
- **\$214,146 Added** for the full cost of two community action team pilot programs funded by HB 911 (2022 Session).

Departmental Administration

- **\$1.73 Million Added** to integrate Pathways and Georgia Access into the Georgia Gateway integrated eligibility system.
- **\$2.64 Million Reduced** for rent to reflect savings from office space consolidation.
- **\$1.5 Million Transferred** from Elder Abuse Investigations and Prevention (\$590,000) and increase funds (\$910,530) for Medicaid Redetermination notice mailings.

Federal Eligibility Benefit Services

- **\$2.06 Million Added** for labor and wage data verification services.

Residential Child Care Licensing

- **\$360,000 Added** for technology upgrades and improvements to the TRAILS electronic records management system to enhance efficiency.

- **\$82,102 Added** to establish an application and inspection process for Qualified Residential Treatment Programs.

Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund Commission

- **\$2.72 Million Added** for the full cost of the Gwinnett Commercial Sexual Exploitation Recovery Center funded by HB 19 (2023 Session).

Office of the Commissioner of Insurance

- **\$134 Million Added** for the state reinsurance program.
- **\$16.39 Million Added** for implementation of the State-based Exchange for healthcare insurance (Georgia Access).

Georgia Bureau of Investigation

- **\$174,178 Added** for the start-up cost for two criminal intelligence analyst positions to support the Criminal Street Gang Database.

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

- \$1.25 Million Transferred from Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to the Georgia Public Safety Training Center for School Resource Officer and De-escalation training.
- **\$4.82 Million Reduced** to align budget with expenditures.

Council of Accountability Court Judges

- **\$613,124 Added** for Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) training and MRT trauma training.

Family Violence

- **\$1.26 Million Reduce** funds to align budget with expenditures.

Dept. of Juvenile Justice

Community Service

- **\$124,000 Added** for replacement ballistic vests.

Secure Confinement (Youth Detention Centers – YDCs)

- **\$104,000 Added** to implement music studios at the Eastman, Macon, Augusta, and Muscogee Secure Commitment (YDCs).
- **\$75,000 Added** for mobile tablets for a new pilot electronic grievance system in one Department of Juvenile Justice Secure Commitment (YDC) and one Secure Detention (RYDC) facility.
- **\$266,257 Added** for the integration of an electronic medical record system within the current juvenile tracking system.
- **\$395,384 Added** for body cameras.

Secure Confinement (Residential Youth Detention Centers – RYDCs)

- **\$75,000 Added** for mobile tablets for a new pilot electronic grievance system in one Department of Juvenile Justice Secure Commitment (YDC) and one Secure Detention (RYDC) facility.
- **\$408,743 Added** for the integration of an electronic medical record system within the current juvenile tracking system.
- **\$1.14 Million Added** for body cameras.

Dept. of Public Health

Epidemiology

- \$637,940 in total Transferred from ***Infant and Child Essential Health Treatment Services (\$560,389)*** plus **Added funds (\$77,551)** for the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program to monitor the prescribing and dispensing of controlled substances.

Vital Records

- \$215,892 Transferred from ***Infant and Child Essential Health Treatment Services*** for enhancements to death certificate processing for the Georgia Vital Events Registration System

Dept. of Public Safety

Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council

- **\$161,750 Added** for the Georgia POST Resiliency Program previously funded through the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Law Enforcement Training Grant.
- **\$35,000 Added** for system maintenance support and onboarding for an online gang and human trafficking training system.

Georgia Public Safety Training Center

- \$1.25 Million Transfer funds from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to the Georgia Public Safety Training Center for School Resource Officer and De-escalation training.

Office of Highway Safety: Georgia Driver's Education Commission

- **\$1.426 Million Reduce** funds for driver's education and training in accordance with FY 2023 Joshua's Law Collections.

University System of Georgia Board of Regents

- \$66 Million Restored FY 2024 formula funds for Teaching.

Secretary of State

Professional Licensing Boards

- **\$145,600 Added** for temporary labor to address a backlog of licensure applications.

Georgia Student Finance Commission

College Completion Grants

- **\$2 Million Reduced** for College Completion Grants.

Dual Enrollment

- **\$12.33 Million Added** to meet projected enrollment.

Service Cancelable Loans

- **\$3.2 Million Reduced** for public law enforcement officer loan repayments.

Technical College System of Georgia

Quick Start

- **\$10.25 Million Added** for construction to complete Rivian training center.
- **\$4.75 Million Added** to meet existing training obligations.

Technical Education

- **\$19.5 Million Added** for renovation and startup equipment costs for specialized technical programs to support growing workforce needs in the electric mobility industry across the state.
- **\$1.1 Million Reduced** to align budget with expenditures.

Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission – Capital Projects Fund

Board of Regents

- **\$178 Million Added** for the design, construction, and equipment of the dental school at Georgia Southern University, Savannah, Chatham County.

- **\$81.23 Million Added** for major rehabilitation and repair projects statewide (\$80,000,000) and for demolition projects at Valdosta State University and University of West Georgia (\$1,229,000)
- **\$50 Million Added** for the design and construction of the Medical School at the University of Georgia to match institutional funds, Athens, Clarke County.
- **\$15.9 Million Added** for supplemental major rehabilitation and repair projects for the University System of Georgia B-Units.

Technical College System of Georgia

- **\$5.5 Million Added** for the design and construction of a commercial driver's license pad at Augusta Technical College, Augusta, Richmond County.
- **\$3 Million Added** to establish one new college and career academy.

Dept. of Corrections

- **\$450.86 Million additional funds** Added for construction of the new state prison, Davisboro, Washington County.
- **\$135.34 Million Added** for facility maintenance and repairs, statewide.
- **\$4.6 Million Added** to purchase the Augusta Transition Center, Augusta, Richmond County.
- **\$1.73 Million Added** to replace food and farm equipment, statewide.

Dept. of Juvenile Justice

- **\$2.31 Million Added** for additional facility maintenance and repairs, statewide.

Fiscal Year 2025 – Governor's Recommendations

Total: \$36,087,802,875

Statewide

- **Increase funds to provide for a 4% cost-of-living-adjustment for state employees not to exceed \$3,000.**
- **Reduce funds** to reflect an adjustment in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) from 65.89% to 66.04%. (DBHDD, DCH/Medicaid LIM, DCH/Peachcare, DCH/GBHCW-GME, DHS/Adoption Services,)
- **Reduce funds** to reflect an adjustment in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) from 65.89% to 60.04% (DCH/Medicaid ABD, DPH/Infant and Child Essential Health Treatment Services)
- **Reduce funds** to reflect an adjustment in the enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (eFMAP) from 76.12% to 76.23%. (DHS/Dept. Admin, DHS/Out of Home Care,)

Judicial Council

- **\$926,606 Added** to annualize one Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) statewide coordinator position for the Council of Accountability Court Judges.
- **\$83,807 Added** for personnel for one project coordinator position.
- **\$419,000 Added** for Civil Legal Services for families of indigent patients.

Juvenile Courts

- **\$25,000 Added** for grants to counties for the Atlantic Judicial Circuit
- **\$25,000 Added** for grants to counties for the Coweta Judicial Circuit
- **\$218,000 Added** for the Juvenile Court Judges' salary supplement pursuant to the General Appropriations for FY 2023 (HB 911).

State Accounting Office

Budget Direction: Change program name from Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission to State Ethics Commission pursuant to HB 572 (2023 Session).

Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Adult Developmental Disability Services

- **\$9.38 Million Added** to annualize the cost of 500 New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) slots for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- **\$2.35 Million Added** for 100 additional slots for the New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- **\$79.9 Million Recognized** in agency-wide transfers (\$4,947,743) and increase funds (\$74,953,932) to implement the New Option Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) provider rate study. (Total Funds: \$316,462,570)

Adult Forensic Services

- **\$3.22 Million Added** to staff and operate a forensic step-down unit to address the statewide waitlist.

Adult Mental Health Services

- **\$9.48 Million Added** for a behavioral health crisis center in DBHDD's Region 1.
- **\$11.42 Million Reduced** to reflect decreased demand for core adult mental health services.
- **\$3.79 Million Added** to annualize the operations of a behavioral health crisis center in Fulton County.
- **\$1.59 Million Added** to annualize the operations of a behavioral health crisis center for the Community Service Board of Middle Georgia in Dublin.
- **\$1.22 Million Added** to annualize the operations of a behavioral health crisis center for Serenity Behavioral Health Systems in Augusta.
- **\$825,000 Eliminated** (they were one-time funds) to coordinate outreach to address homelessness in the Atlanta area.
- **\$22.43 Added** to match rate implementation of the Community Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services (CBHRS) provider rate study for uninsured Georgian.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

- **\$600,000 Eliminated** (they were one-time funds) for Georgia psychiatric residential treatment facilities receiving less than \$500 per patient day while under current cost report reimbursement methodology.

Sexual Offender Risk Review Board

- **\$212,943 Added** for two new evaluator positions to address the growth of the existing caseload backlog.

Dept. of Community Affairs

- **\$3.8 Million Added** plus existing funds (\$800,000) and transferred funds from State Community Development Programs (\$400,000) for the State Housing Trust Fund to improve homelessness services and pursue new federal grant opportunities. (Total Funds: \$4,597,416)
- Use Existing Funds (\$6 Million) for the Rural Workforce Housing Program.

Dept. of Community Health

Departmental Administration

- **\$1.53 Million Added** for 20 positions to monitor, evaluate, and improve Care Management Organization oversight.
- **\$1.37 Million Reduced** for savings resulting from the implementation of the Medicaid Enterprise System Transformation Program.

Health Care Access and Improvement

- **\$4 Million Eliminated** (they were one-time funds) for grants up to \$1,000,000 for hospitals with graduate medical education programs.

Medicaid - Aged Blind and Disabled

- **\$68.44 Million Added** for growth in Medicaid based on projected utilization.
- **\$137.72 Million Restored** to reflect the termination of temporary Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) increase provided by the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) Extension through December 31, 2023.
- **\$118.18 Million Added** for skilled nursing centers to reflect 2022 cost reports\
- Replace \$2,541,738 in state general funds with hospital provider fees.
- Replace \$201,221 in state general funds with nursing home provider fees.
- **\$4.23 Million Added** to implement the Community Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services (CBHRS) provider rate study. (Total Funds: \$49,736,449)

Medicaid - Low Income

- **\$104.16 Million Reduced** for Medicaid based on projected utilization.
- **\$135.04 Million Restored** to reflect the termination of temporary Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) increase provided by the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) Extension through December 31, 2023.
- Replace \$22,875,637 in state general funds with hospital provider fees.

PeachCare for Kids

- **\$2.33 Million Added** for growth in Medicaid based on projected utilization.
- **\$624,566 Restored** to reflect the termination of temporary Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) increase provided by the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) extension through December 31, 2023.

State Health Benefits Plan

- *Budget Direction:* Recognize an increase in formula funds (\$244,147,056) in the Department of Education, Department of Early Care and Learning, and Georgia Military College, to reflect an increase in the employer healthcare contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) rate for certified school employees and lead and assistant teachers to \$1,760, effective July 1, 2024.
- *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 January 1, 2027.

GA Board of Healthcare Workforce

- \$100,000 of existing funds used for statewide healthcare specialty assessments to evaluate gaps in healthcare services.

Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Graduate Medical Education

- **\$1.49 Million Added** for 79 new residency slots in primary care medicine.

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

- **\$850,055 Added** for the fifth year of the seven-year plan for Mercer School of Medicine's medical school campus in Columbus.

Dept. of Community Supervision

- **\$1.73 Million Added** for 25 community supervision aide positions.(Field Services)
- **\$527,905 Added** for 7 community coordinator positions.(Governor's Office of Transition Support and Reentry)

Dept. of Corrections

- **\$3.42 Million Added** across the agency for operational costs at facilities statewide.
- **\$6.13 Million** total from Transfer funds from Offender Management program (\$3,551,094) and Added funds (\$2,574,744) for a recruitment advertising campaign and work culture review.
- **\$1.23 Million Added** to provide additional meals on weekends
- **\$71.97 Million Added** for physical health and pharmacy service contracts.

Private Prisons

- **\$6.96 Million Added** to provide 200 temporary additional beds at Coffee and Wheeler facilities to allow for maintenance and repairs at state prisons.

State Prisons

- **\$172,200 Added** for Technical College System of Georgia vocational education contracts.
- **\$1 Million Added** for offender call monitoring at facilities, statewide.
- **\$331,000 Added** for radio communications at facilities, statewide.
- **\$17.54 Million Added** for capital maintenance and repairs.
- **\$1.82 Million Reduced** for closing HR recruitment centers in favor of increased advertising.
- **\$2.93 Million Reduced** for replacing Basic Correctional Officer Training paper books with Chromebooks.

Transition Centers

- **\$10 Million Added** for six months of operational cost for the Metro Re-Entry Phase IV to add 400 transition center beds.

Dept. of Defense

- **\$123,930 Reduced** to reflect lower graduation rates.

Dept. of Early Care and Learning

Child Care Services

- **\$4.63 Million Added** to raise Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) reimbursement to the 50th percentile of market rates for childcare providers in accordance with federal regulation.

Pre-K Program

- **\$1.26 Million Added** in formula funds for teacher training and experience.
- **\$2.41 Million Added** in formula funds to reflect an increase in health insurance employer contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) rate for certified teachers at public Pre-K providers to \$1,760 effective July 1, 2024.
- **\$23.56 Million Added** to adjust the state base salary schedule to increase salaries for certified Pre-K teachers and assistant teachers by \$2,500.
- **\$10.97 Million Added** for year one of a four-year phase in to reduce classroom size from 22 to 20 students to improve instructional quality.
- **\$6.14 Million Added** to expand the Summer Transition Program with income eligibility requirements.

Dept. of Education

Agency-wide

- **\$373.84 Million Added** to adjust the state base salary schedule to increase salaries for certified teachers and certified employees by \$2,500 effective September 1, 2024.
- **\$244.15 Million Added** in formula funds to reflect an increase in health insurance employer contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) rate for certified school employees to \$1,760 effective July 1, 2024

Central Office

- **\$50,000 Removed** (it was one-time funding) for study and host meetings with House and Senate committees and stakeholders concerning Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) formula funding.

Charter Schools

- **\$1.7 Million Reduced** to align with budget expenditures.

Curriculum Development

- **\$6.3 Million Added** to support evidence-based reading instruction grants to fund two Literacy Coaches per Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) and provide \$2,000 supplements to Literacy Support Coordinators and Leads at school districts.

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

- **\$8.5 Million Transferred** from the Quality Basic Education program to provide salary supplements of \$1,000 to all custodians and adjust amount to reflect current count.
- **\$1.52 Million Added** for Dyslexia Screening pursuant to SB 48 (2019 Session).
- **\$518,446 Reduced** in formula funds for Residential Treatment Facilities based on attendance.
- **\$255,709 Added** in formula funds for Sparsity Grants based on enrollment data.

Nutrition

- **\$6.33 Million Reduced** to align budget with expenditures.
- **\$2 Million Added** in formula funds for school nutrition.
- **\$1.35 Million Added** in formula funds to recognize a 4.1% increase to the salary earnings in the nutrition formula.

Preschool Disability Services

- **\$7.12 Million Added** based on formula earnings.

Pupil Transportation

- **\$204.79 Million Added** for pupil transportation to provide additional state support for school districts statewide by reflecting updated bus count and 40% of operational costs.
- **\$5.01 Million Added** in formula funds to recognize a 4.1% increase to the salary earnings in the pupil transportation formula.

Quality Basic Education Equalization

- **\$266.97 Million Added** in formula funds for Equalization grants.

QBE Local Five Mill Share

- **\$185.1 Million Reduced** for the Local Five Mill Share

Quality Basic Education Program

- **\$49.5 Million Added** for the State Commission Charter School supplement.
- **\$1.73 Million Reduced** in formula funds for differentiated pay for newly certified math and science teachers.
- **\$6.35 Million Added** in formula funds for the Completion Special Schools supplement pursuant to HB 87 (2023 Session).
- **\$301,659 Added** in formula funds for the charter system grant.
- **\$8.64 Million Transferred** to the Non-Quality Basic Education Formula Grants

Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs)

- **\$361,568 Added** for a 4.1% salary increase for certified staff.

School Nurse

- **\$569,505 Reduced** in formula funds for school nurses.
- **\$1.54 Million Added** for a 4.1% salary increase for school nurses.

School Security Grants

- **\$104 Million Added** to establish school security grants

State Schools

- **\$263,962 Added** in formula funds for training and experience.
- *Budget Direction:* Utilize existing funds (\$2,000,000) for major repairs and renovations.

Technology/Career Education

- **\$711,000 Reduced** to align budget with expenditures.

Testing

- **\$5.02 Million Added** to provide a universal reading screener for all K-3 students pursuant to HB 538 (2023 Session).

Governor's Office of Student Achievement

- **\$82,000 Reduced** to reflect current state agreements for erasure analysis.
- **\$250,000 Reduced** to align budget with expenditures.

Dept. of Human Services

Child Welfare Services

- **\$214,146 Added** for the full cost of two community action team pilot programs funded by HB 911 (2022 Session).
- **\$1.42 Million Transferred** funds from Elder Abuse Investigations and Prevention (\$590,000) and increase funds (\$828,935) for technology upgrades and improvements to the SHINES child welfare case management system to enhance efficiency.
- **\$4.66 Million Added** to provide a \$3,000 additional salary enhancement for child protection and placement services caseworkers.

Federal Eligibility Benefit Services

- **\$2.06 Million Added** for labor and wage data verification services.
- **\$630,057 Added** for 23 county customer service staff to provide staff in every customer service center.

Out-of-School Care Services

- **\$1 Million Eliminated** for one-time funding to bridge the education gap.

Residential Child Care Licensing

- **\$134,618 Added** to establish an application and inspection process for Qualified Residential Treatment Programs.

Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund Commission

- **\$4.75 Million Added** for the full cost of the Gwinnett Commercial Sexual Exploitation Recovery Center funded by HB 19 (2023 Session).

Office of the Commissioner of Insurance

- **\$20 Million Added** for the state reinsurance program.

Georgia Bureau of Investigation

- **\$1.33 Million Added** for six death investigation specialists, one forensic photographer, one quality manager, one business support analyst supervisor, and one business support analyst in the Medical Examiner's Office to address increased workload.
- **\$221,874 Added** to add two criminal intelligence analyst positions to support the Criminal Street Gang Database.
- **\$4.87 Million Added** for nine special agents, two digital forensic investigators, two criminal intelligence analyst, and one office manager and associated cost for the GBI Gang Task Force in Columbus to combat crime.

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

- **\$4.73 Million Reduced** to align budget with expenditures.
- **\$1.25 Million Transferred** from Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to the Georgia Public Safety Training Center for School Resource Officer and De-escalation training.

Council of Accountability Court Judges

- **\$964,892 Added** for existing accountability courts to support population growth.
- **\$246,697 Added** to add one DUI court and one Mental Health court.

Family Violence

- **\$1 Million Reduced** to align budget with expenditures.

Dept. of Juvenile Justice

- **\$4.34 Million Added** to provide an additional \$3,000 targeted salary enhancement for selected POST certified law enforcement officers.
- **\$595,655 Added** to adjust the state base salary schedule to increase salaries for certified teachers and certified employees by \$2,500 effective September 1, 2024.
- **\$3.61 Million Reduced** to reflect regular operating and contract efficiencies.

Secure Confinement (Youth Detention Centers – YDCs)

- **\$3,000 Added** for mobile tablets for a new pilot electronic grievance system in one Department of Juvenile Justice Secure Commitment (YDC) and one Secure Detention (RYDC) facility.
- **\$600,000 Added** for the creation of new mobile labs at three Secure Commitment (YDC) facilities through the Technical College System of Georgia.
- **\$148,282 Added** for new body cameras.
- **\$4.8 Million Added** for capital maintenance and repairs.

Secure Confinement (Residential Youth Detention Centers – RYDCs)

- **\$427,346 Added** for body cameras.
- **\$3,000 Added** for mobile tablets for a new pilot electronic grievance system in one Department of Juvenile Justice Secure Commitment (YDC) and one Secure Detention (RYDC) facility.
- **\$9.81 Million Added** for capital maintenance and repairs.

Dept. of Law

- **\$807,312 Added** to expand the Gang Prosecution Unit to Columbus, Macon, and Savannah regions.

Dept. of Public Health

Epidemiology

- **\$765,528 Added** for the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program to monitor the prescribing and dispensing of controlled substances.

Infant and Child Essential Health Treatment Services

- **\$314,097 Added** plus existing funds (\$685,903) 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. (Total Funds: \$1,000,000)

- *Budget Direction:* Utilize existing funds (\$118,939) for one epidemiologist position for surveillance and data analysis for the Low THC Oil Registry Program

Infant and Child Health Promotion

- **\$978,639 Added** for newborn screening to include two additional disorders that have been approved by the Georgia Newborn Screening Advisory Committee.

Infectious Disease Control

- **\$150,611 Added** for one congenital syphilis and HIV case manager position to link cases identified during pregnancy and delivery to testing and treatment resources.

Inspections and Environmental Hazard Control

- **\$235,074 Eliminated** (they were one-time funds) for lead inspection start-up costs and testing machines.

Dept. of Public Safety

Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council

- **\$647,000 Added** for the Georgia POST Resiliency Program previously funded through the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Law Enforcement Training Grant.
- **\$20,000 Added** for system maintenance support and onboarding for an online gang and human trafficking training system.

Georgia Public Safety Training Center

- \$1.25 Million Transferred from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to the Georgia Public Safety Training Center for School Resource Officer and De-escalation training.

University System of Georgia Board of Regents

Public Libraries

- **\$177,605 Added** for the public libraries' formula based on an increase in the state population.

Teaching

- **\$2.92 Million Added** to reflect a 0.8% decrease in enrollment with an increase in higher cost program areas (\$2,256,373) and 0.2% increase in square footage (\$658,999).
- **\$66 Million Restored** FY 2024 formula funds for Teaching.

Payments to Georgia Military College Preparatory School

- **\$148,613 Added** for enrollment, training, and experience.

Secretary of State

Investigations

- **\$405,434 Added** for four criminal investigators due to increased volume of elections and licensing board investigations.

Georgia Student Finance Commission

College Completion Grants

- \$2 Million Reduced for College Completion Grants.

Dual Enrollment

- \$15.09 Million Added to meet projected enrollment.

HOPE Grant

- \$20.73 Million Reduced to reflect expected program expenditure.

HOPE High School Equivalency Exam

- \$845,510 Reduced to reflect expected program expenditure.

HOPE Scholarships – Private Schools

- \$16.44 Million Reduced to reflect expected program expenditures at a HOPE Private Award rate at \$2,496 and a HOPE Zell Private Award rate at \$2,985.

HOPE Scholarships – Public Schools

- \$9.11 Million Reduced to reflect expected program expenditures at a 100% factor rate.

Low Interest Loans

- *Budget Direction:* Reduce funds and eliminate program to reflect cessation of further loan originations.

Service Cancelable Loans

- *Budget Direction:* Recognize existing funds (\$3,200,000) to provide up to \$20,000 maximum loan repayments across five years of service to support recruitment and retention of public law enforcement officers.

Technical College System of Georgia

Quick Start

- \$46 Million Reduced (they were one-time funds) for construction to complete Rivian training center.
- \$4.75 Million Added to meet existing training obligations.

Technical Education

- \$9.43 Million Added to reflect a 3.0% increase in enrollment (\$8,988,608) and 0.7% increase in square footage (\$444,954).
- \$1.1 Million Reduced to align budget with expenditures.
- *Budget Direction:* In conjunction with the Office of Planning and Budget and House and Senate budget offices, the Technical College System of Georgia shall conduct a review of the current formula rates and program expense for the Technical Education program to ensure that the funding formula reflects costs to provide instruction and determine whether additional clusters are needed to better reflect needs of high-cost programs.

Workforce Development

- \$322,000 Added for two new positions to provide regionally based consultation and technical assistance to healthcare partners across the state.

Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission – Capital Projects Fund

Dept. of Education

- **\$25.47 Million Added** for Low Wealth for local school construction.
- **\$22.2 Million Added** for Additional Low Wealth for local school construction.
- **\$182.08 Million Added** for Regular for local school construction.
- **\$6.91 Million Added** for Regular Advance for local school construction.
- **\$10.96 Million Added** for Purchase vocational and agriculture education equipment.
- **\$7.08 Million Added** for Major repairs and renovations for state schools.
- **\$20 Million Added** for Purchase school buses.

Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

- **\$8.75 Million Added** Hospital Campus Urgent and Significant Needs Prioritized According to the GSFIC Campus Survey

GA Bureau of Investigation

- **\$40.1 Million Added** for construction of Medical Examiner Annex Addition, Decatur, DeKalb County.

Dept. of Juvenile Justice

- **\$1.8 Million Added** for additional design fees for a 56-bed facility expansion, Macon, Bibb County.
- **\$1.8 Million Added** for additional design fees for a 48-bed facility expansion, Milledgeville, Baldwin County.
- **\$52 Million Added** for construction of 48-bed facility expansion, Milledgeville, Baldwin County.
- **\$2.3 Million Added** for major repair and renovation.
- **\$3.8 Million Added** for Land acquisition and design for new 56-bed facility, Gwinnett County.

Georgia Environmental Finance Authority:

- **\$15 Million Added** for the state match for the federal Clean Water and Drinking Water Revolving Loan Programs.



Justice, Public Safety, & School Discipline

HB 873 (Gunter-8th) Creates juvenile treatment court (JTC) divisions as a part of the Council of Accountability Court Judges (CACJ) to provide alternative adjudication to the traditional judicial system. The bill states that "The juvenile treatment court division shall combine judicial supervision, treatment of juvenile treatment court division participants, drug testing, and mental health treatment." The CACJ will provide standards, practices, technical assistance, and funding opportunities for the JTCs.

STATUS: House Juvenile Justice Committee

HB 882 (Bruce-61st) Prohibits the release or posting of a booking photograph unless and until the individual depicted therein is convicted.

STATUS: House Governmental Affairs Committee

[HB 889](#) (Thomas-65th) States that in cases where the court has been unable to make contact on at least eight occasions within a 90-day period with such child's parent, guardian, or legal custodian, the court shall find that parental, guardian, or custodial consent has been waived and may order such child for rehabilitation, counseling, and in counsel and advice.

STATUS: House Juvenile Justice Committee

[HB 909](#) (Hagan-156th) Provides for the restriction and seal of First Offender Act sentences until such status is revoked.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

[HB 926](#) (Reeves-99th) Provides for issuance of certificates ("Program and Treatment Completion Certificate") by a court for purposes of demonstrating rehabilitation and good moral character. The bill also sets out certain provisions regarding driver's licenses.

STATUS: House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee

[HB 930](#) (Ridley-22nd) Prohibits the release or posting of a booking photograph unless and until the individual is convicted.

STATUS: Committee yet to be assigned

[HB 932](#) (Mathis-149th) Provides that a person commits the offense of murder when, under certain circumstances, he or she causes the death of another human being irrespective of malice, by manufacturing or distributing the Schedule II controlled substance fentanyl or any controlled substance containing fentanyl or any derivative thereof.

STATUS: Committee yet to be assigned

Child Welfare & Protection

[HB 875](#) (Roberts-52nd) Prevents persons convicted of family violence offenses or subject to family violence temporary protective orders from receiving, possessing, transporting, purchasing, or transferring firearms.

STATUS: House Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee

[HB 910](#) (Jasperse-11th) Creates a civil remedy for damages against commercial entities that distribute material harmful to minors without performing age verification.

STATUS: House Judiciary Committee

[SB 335](#) (Albers-56th) Includes "by virtue of adoption" in the definition of relationships in which the offense of incest is possible.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee

SB 342 (Robertson-29th) Authorizes the disclosure or use of information from child abuse and neglect registries by the Department of Human Services to locate, recover, or provide services to a child determined to be missing or a victim of sexual exploitation. The bill also allows for access to records concerning reports of child abuse and missing or exploited children to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

STATUS: Senate Children and Families Committee



Health & Behavioral Health

HB 874 (Hawkins-27th) Requires automated external defibrillators in all schools; the establishment of emergency action plans to address a person in cardiac arrest; as well as internal response teams and practice drills.

STATUS: House Health Committee

HB 897 (Ridley-22nd) Repeals the authority of the Department of Public Health and all county boards of health to require persons to submit to vaccinations against or other measures to prevent contagious or infectious diseases.

STATUS: House Public Health Committee

HB 913 (Barnes-86th) Establishes of a grant program for the purpose of creating emergency psychiatric assessment, treatment, and healing (EmPATH) units in hospitals.

STATUS: House Public Health Committee

HB 924 (Ballinger-23rd) Prohibits insurers from discriminating against certain healthcare facilities and providers in connection with the procurement, delivery, and administration of provider administered drugs.

STATUS: House Insurance Committee

SB 336 (Kirkpatrick-32nd) Allows the heads of the certain state agencies to be represented by a delegate or agent at any meeting of the Behavioral Health Coordinating Council or subcommittee meeting. Such representative will be counted toward a quorum, have all voting privileges as the member's delegate, and shall not be considered an absence of the member.

STATUS: Senate Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee

SB 350 (Kirkpatrick-32nd) Prohibits the sale of consumable hemp products to, and the purchase or possession of consumable hemp products by individuals under the age of 21 years.

STATUS: Senate Judiciary Committee



Maternal & Infant Care

No bills have been filed in this category.



Early Childhood Education & Out-of-School Time

HB 941 (Erwin-32nd) Allows capital outlay funds to be used for educational facilities for voluntary pre-kindergarten programs (i.e., Georgia's Pre-K Program) provided by the school system; The bill also allows that student projection counts may include pre-kindergarten.

STATUS: Committee yet to be assigned



K-12 Education

HB 914 (Barnes-86th) Authorizes local boards of education and other public school governing bodies to offer driver education as an elective course; to provide for funding from local funds, student fees subject to waiver, and state funding subject to appropriations.

STATUS: House Education Committee

HB 936 (Bonner-73rd) Requires multiple occupancy restrooms and changing areas in public schools to be designated for exclusive use by males or females. The bill also states that a public school or local school system that sponsors or supervises an overnight trip involving public school students shall ensure that a public school student attending the overnight trip either shares sleeping quarters with a member or, if necessary, multiple members, of the same sex; or is provided single-occupancy sleeping quarters. A public school student attending an overnight trip may share sleeping quarters with a member of the opposite sex if the member of the opposite sex is a member of such student's immediate family.

STATUS: Committee yet to be assigned



Higher Education

HB 853 (Bell-75th) Repeals the "Drug-free Postsecondary Education Act of 1990", thereby removing provisions that make students convicted of certain drug offenses ineligible for loans, scholarships, and grants. Notably, the bill provides that students shall not be deemed ineligible for HOPE scholarships or grants based solely on certain convictions.

STATUS: Prefile



Environmental Safety

HB 855 (Au-50th) Proposes a tax credit for eligible expenses up to \$300 per year related to firearm safe storage devices. The bill caps the total amount of tax credits allowed for any year at \$5 million.

STATUS: Prefile

SB 340 (Kirkpatrick-32nd) Exempts sales of firearm safes and firearm safety devices from sales and use taxes.

STATUS: Senate Finance Committee

SB 351 (Anavitarte-31st) Requires local boards of education to adopt, implement, and enforce social media policies; and authorizes the Attorney General and the Department of Education to consult with and assist local boards of education in the development and implementation of such policies. Additionally, the bill requires social medial platforms to provide certain information to parents upon request; and gives enforcement authority to the Attorney General.

STATUS: Senate Education and Youth Committee



Shelter & Nutrition

HB 852 (Bell-75th) Repeals the prohibition on local governments regulating the amount of rent to be charged for privately owned, single-family or multiple-unit residential rental property.

STATUS: Prefile



Miscellaneous

HB 851 (Bell-75th) Exempts the sale of food and food ingredients to individual consumers for off-premises human consumption from all local sales and use taxes.

STATUS: Prefile

HB 858 (Bell-75th) Provides for the issuance of an alternative state identification card by the Department of Driver Services. Notably, the bill states that the department shall make a notation on the driving record of any person who retains a foreign identification card or driver's license, and this information shall be made available to law enforcement officers and agencies on such person's driving record through the Georgia Crime Information Center.

STATUS: Prefile

HB 859 (Bell-75th) Repeals the state income tax in its entirety.

STATUS: Prefile

HB 870 (Washburn-144th) Provides that Georgia shall at all times observe the standard time of the United States.

STATUS: House State Planning and Community Affairs Committee

HB 880 (Ballard-147th) Allows military spouses to use an existing license in good standing from another state to obtain employment in Georgia.

STATUS: House Regulated Industries Committee

HB 887 (Thomas-65th) Prohibits the use of artificial intelligence in making certain decisions regarding insurance coverage, healthcare, or public assistance.

STATUS: House Technology and Infrastructure Innovation Committee

HB 890 (Thomas-65th) Provides for protections against discrimination by artificial intelligence and automated decision tools.

STATUS: House Technology and Infrastructure Innovation Committee

HB 923 (Taylor-92nd) Provides for issuance of a special license plate for individuals with a physical, mental, or neurological condition which impedes the ability to communicate; and for notation of such condition upon a driver's license.

STATUS: House Motor Vehicles Committee

HB 940 (Jones-25th) Requires retail stores to accept cash for purchases.

STATUS: Committee yet to be assigned

HR 779 (Efstration-104th) 2024 Legislative Session Adjournment Resolution (schedule)

STATUS: PASSED & ADOPTED

SB 172 (Cowsert-46th) Authorizes and provides for the regulation and taxation of sports betting, overseen by the Georgia Lottery Corporation.

*STATUS: Recommended DO PASS by Senate Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee.
TABLED in the Senate*

Advocacy Ask

The Ask:

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

The Why:

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

The Message:

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

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

Other Helpful Resources

- [Find Your Legislator](#)
- [Contact Your Legislator](#)
- [Voices' 2\(ish\) Minute Takes](#)
- [Voices' Factsheets](#)
- [Voices' Whole Child Primer, 3rd Edition](#)