You may not believe me, but I have sorely missed each of you, despite the fact that there are many of you whom I have yet to meet in person! Nevertheless, in my mind’s eye, I imagine all of you dedicated readers pining away through May, June, July, August, etc. etc., longing to lose yourselves in good legislative update. More than once, I have opened my laptop, thinking I could share a morsel of statehouse gossip, agency intrigue, or simply a clever retort to a proposed amendment affecting daylight saving time, African pygmy hedgehogs or what it means legally to “engage in llama activity”, all in hopes of easing your pain and loneliness. But alas, every time I sat down to draft a missive, my dog-like capacity for focus was waylaid by “squirrels” of the internet. Various online communications ranging from Houdini Baby and Car Seat Houdini Baby to roly-poly pandas and Italian preschool kids thwarted my attempts to write to you. I hope you can forgive me and will find comfort in the abundance of information below.

Where to start? I guess with changes. There are SOOO many changes this year! And I am not talking about a one-man performance of Lord of the Rings. What I am talking about is 53 freshmen (and women) legislators between the House and Senate, a new statehouse speaker (Jon Burns), new Lt. Governor (Burt Jones), new leadership in each chamber (House Leaders, Senate Leaders), many new committee chairs, plus a few new committees (including a Senate Committee on Children and Families and a House Public Health Committee),
a new House appropriations chairman (Matt Hatchett) and new directors in both budget offices that support the chambers. In addition, there have been a few agency changes, including the movement of Commissioner Tyrone Oliver from the Dept. of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) over to head up the Georgia Dept. of Corrections. Shawanda Reynolds-Cobb is currently serving as Interim Commissioner at DJJ. And let’s not forget the appointment of Kevin Tanner as commissioner of the Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, following the retirement of Judy Fitzgerald. (On second thought maybe a one-person performance of Lord of the Rings would be easier to follow!)

For us at Voices, the biggest new news is our new executive director, Caitlin Dooley! She started with us about two weeks ago, having come from a big-huge job at the Georgia Dept. of Education. For more on Caitlin’s background, check out her impressive bio (and very nice headshot!) here. We will miss our last ED and friend, Erica Fener Sitkoff, who moved to California, but we are super excited about Caitlin and know that with her on the team, we won’t miss a beat! If you happen to bump into her in the Child Policy Universe, please be sure to say hi!

In case you couldn’t tell from the above, I love change. I love my work because no two days are the same. I love the constant parade of new ideas and jump at opportunities to learn new things. You could say that change is pretty much what gets me out of bed in the morning. But change does not always come without great sadness. I would be remiss if I failed to express how sad I feel that three of my favorite champions for children have left us this past year: Speaker David Ralston, Representative Wayne Howard, and former First Lady Sandra Deal. These remarkable individuals labored tirelessly to help kids in Georgia. I truly believe that every one of them would want us to carry on their work, advocating for the health, happiness and success of all children and families. It is with that poignant thought in mind, that I urge you to read on so you can keep track of places to help “good change” happen.

Warmly (and happy to be back!),

Polly

Polly McKinney
Advocacy Director
pmckinney@georgiavoices.org
Fiscal Year 2023 Amended Budget - Governor's Recommendations

Amended Total: $32.56 Billion
(Increased from the governor's FY23 estimate of $30.20 Billion)

Juvenile Courts
- $12,500 Added for grants to counties for the Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit

District Attorneys
- $107,065 Transferred to District Attorneys to reflect change in Department of Human Services Child Support Services contract

Dept. of Administrative Services
- $3.5 Million Added to modernize the teacher certification and ethics applications at the Georgia Professional Standards Commission to improve security, efficiency, and customer service (under the Georgia Technology Authority)

Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities
- $261,823 Eliminated from DBHDD departmental administration. These funds were originally appropriated to pay for administrative infrastructure necessary to implement the terms of the National Prescription Opiate Litigation settlement, the Georgia Opioid Abatement Trust funds, and the activities of the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory (ORRFA) Council.

Dept. of Community Affairs
- $166.7 Million Added for the projected cost of large economic development projects receiving Regional Economic Business Assistance

- $35.7 Million Reallocated from the FY 2022 broadband infrastructure grant program carryover ($21,500,000) and FY 2022 Rural Innovation Fund carryover ($14,203,211) to establish the Rural Workforce Housing Fund (Under Payments to OneGeorgia Authority)

Dept. of Community Health
- Budget Note: “The Department shall submit a State Plan Amendment (SPA) to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to expand the Express Lane Eligibility program to include Childcare and Parental Services (CAPS), Refugee Cash Assistance, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).”

- Budget Note: “The Department shall change any rules, regulations, or policies necessary to include psychiatric hospitals as an eligible facility type to provide Inpatient Psychiatric Facility Services for persons under the age of 21 years enrolled in Fee-for-Service Medicaid.”

- $6.5 Million Eliminated to replace the Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) with the Medicaid Enterprise System Transformation (MEST)

- Budget Note: “The Department shall change any rules, regulations, or policies necessary to allow Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Rural Health Centers (RHCs) to provide routine physical exams and preventative care for all Medicaid members.”
• **Budget Note:** “The Department shall change any rules, regulations, or policies necessary to allow for coverage of blood pressure monitors, incontinence supplies, portable oxygen units, nutritional supplements, and specialized formula for all Medicaid members.”

• **Transferred:** $29,237,181 in prior year state general funds from the Medicaid: Aged, Blind and Disabled program and $5,006,960 in prior year state general funds from the Low-Income Medicaid program to DHS Departmental Administration. These funds are provided by the 10% increase of the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for home and community-based services (HCBS) pursuant to Section 9817 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and utilize funds as specified in the spending plan as approved by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), (under DHS Departmental Administration). In addition, this budget recommendation recognizes and plans to use $153,828,763 in prior year ABD Medicaid state funds (also provided by the 10% increase of the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for HCBS) in the above spending plan.

• **$505.9 Million Reduced** in Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) increase provided by the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) through June 30, 2023. ($276.7 Million in ABD Medicaid, $214.5 Million in LIM, and $14.7 Million Reduced in PeachCare)

• **$278 Million Added** for Medicaid Enrollment Growth and Utilization as follows:
  o **$79.6 Million Added** for growth in Aged Blind Disabled (ABD) Medicaid based on projected utilization
  o **$15.4 Million Added** to reflect ABD Medicaid enrollment growth as a result of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) extension (through June 30, 2023)
  o **$171.3 Million Added** to reflect enrollment growth in Low Income Medicaid (LIM) as a result of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) extension
  o **$11.74 Million Added** to reflect enrollment growth in PeachCare for Kids as a result of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) extension

• **$4.5 Million Added** to continue the PeachCare for Kids premium suspension through June 30, 2023.

• **Budget Note:** Increase employer contribution per-member, per-month (PMPM) rate in the State Health Benefits Plan for certified school employees to $1,580 effective January 1, 2023. The additions of state dollars are as follows:
  o **$420.25 Million Added** for certified school employees under QBE (GaDOE)
  o **$158,912 Added** for RESAs (GaDOE)
  o **$1.34 Million Added** for GNETS (Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support) (GaDOE)
  o **$1.53 Million Added** for Preschool Disability Services certified school employees (GaDOE)
  o **$125,730 Added** for Georgia Military College Preparatory School certified school employees (USG)

**Dept. of Corrections**

• **$12.3 Million Added** for physical health and pharmacy services contracts

• **$20.9 Million Reduced** to reflect the closure of Georgia State Prison
• **$51.5 Million Added** for 33 projects at 19 state prison facilities for emergency repairs ($4,050,000), upgrades to life safety and security systems ($14,955,000), and major maintenance and renovations ($32,490,000)

**Georgia Dept. of Education**

• **$15 Million Added** for reimbursable grants in the amount of $3,000 each to paraprofessionals who earn certificates through the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP) program (Non-QBE Formula Grants)

• **$115.7 Million Added** for security grants in the amount of $50,000 per school to local school systems for school security enhancements (Non-QBE Formula Grants)

• **$149,643 Added** for Sparsity Grants to reflect a data correction for Glascock County (Non-QBE Formula Grants)

• **$25 Million Added** for learning loss grants to support student achievement and well-being to be distributed to local school systems based on the percentage of students performing below grade level on academic year 2022 standardized tests (Non-QBE Formula Grants)

• **$942,638 Eliminated** from Local Five Mill Share for four new State Commission Charter Schools and provide hold harmless for the local share of the SHBP rate increase in the midterm adjustment

• **$4.14 Million Added** for a midterm adjustment to the State Commission Charter School supplement for training and experience

• **$272,121 Added** in formula funds for a midterm adjustment to the charter system grant

• **$128.24 Million Added** in formula funds for a midterm adjustment based on enrollment growth

• **$28.1 Million Added** in formula funds for the State Commission Charter School Supplement

• **$6.36 Million Added** to reflect growth in the Special Needs Scholarship

**Dept. of Human Services (DFCS)**

• **$1.97 Million Added** for technology improvements and security upgrades to the Integrated Eligibility System in preparation for the Public Health Emergency (PHE) expiration

• **$662,433 Added** for 80 additional Medicaid eligibility caseworkers to process Medicaid redetermination cases due to the Public Health Emergency (PHE) expiration

• **$5.77 Million Added** for a management consultant to oversee and ensure quality assurance for Medicaid redeterminations due to the Public Health Emergency (PHE) expiration

**Office of the Commissioner of Insurance**

• **$92 Million Added** for the state reinsurance program
Dept. of Natural Resources
• $4.2 Million Added to the DNR Law Enforcement Division for equipment and installation associated with a new statewide public safety radio network to achieve statewide interoperability

Georgia Building Authority
• Budget Note: “Utilize existing funds to complete system wide assessments at Georgia Department of Corrections ($4,350,000) and Department of Juvenile Justice ($3,925,000).”

Dept. of Public Safety
• $30.38 Million Added for equipment, installation, and training associated with a new statewide public safety radio network to achieve statewide interoperability
• $128,815 Reduced for driver’s education and training in accordance with FY 2022 Joshua’s Law collections

University System of Georgia
• $105 Million Added to implement a state-of-the-art electronic medical records system to support medical education and training at the Medical College of Georgia (Total Funds: $115,000,000)
• $2.58 Million Reduced (“adjusted”) in formula funds for enrollment growth to reflect corrected credit hour data for Georgia Institute of Technology
• $540,159 Transferred for the Fort Valley State University land-grant match requirements to the Teaching Program (the funds were transferred from Agricultural Experiment Station ($378,752) and from Cooperative Extension Service ($161,407))

Dept. of Revenue
• $1.1 BILLION Added for one-time funds for the Homeowner Tax Relief Grant (HTRG) program to allow for a $20,000 exemption on the assessed home value for each qualifying homestead for the tax year beginning January 1, 2023

Georgia Student Finance Commission
• $1.62 Million Reduced for administrative costs associated with service cancelable loan programs and utilize existing funds to implement loan repayment programs for mental health professionals
• $1.7 Million Reduced funds associated with the Leo Scholarship Grant Service Cancelable Loans (HB 1319 of the 2022 Session, which was not enacted into law)

Technical College System of Georgia
• $129.4 Million Added for various allocations regarding Quick Start Training Centers to support the electric vehicle industry
Multi-Agency Budget Info

- **Statewide: Added $2,000 cost-of-living adjustment** for all full-time, benefit-eligible state employees effective July 1, 2023 to address agency recruitment and retention needs. This includes certified Pre-K teachers, assistant Pre-K teachers, certified K-12 teachers and certified K-12 employees.

- **State Base Salaries Adjusted by $2,000** for certified K-12 teachers, certified K-12 employees, certified Pre-K teachers and assistant Pre-K teachers (GaDOE, DECAL, DJJ, GA Military College Prep School) effective September 1, 2023

- **FMAP: Increase state funds by $227 Million** to reflect an adjustment in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) from 66.02% to 65.89%.
  (The Details: DBHDD/Adult Developmental Disability Services = $2,530,852; DBHDD/Adult Mental Health Services = $425,974; DCH/Aged Blind Disabled Medicaid = $102,313,915; DCH/Low Income Medicaid = $115,091,077; DCH-GBHCW = $186,744; DECAL/Child Care Services = $1,045,544; DHS/Adoption Services = $3,336,400; DHS/Out-of-Home Care = $1,654,598; DPH/Infant and Child Essential Health Treatment Services = $46,636)

- **e-FMAP: Increase state funds by $9.3 Million** ($2 Million from DCH/LIM, $7.24 Million from DCH/PeachCare, $28,900 from DHS/Departmental Administration) to reflect an adjustment in the enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (e-FMAP) from 76.21% to 76.12%

Council of Accountability Court Judges
- **$97,331 Added** for one Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) Statewide Coordinator position

Juvenile Courts
- **$25,000 Added** for grants to counties for the Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit

Dept. of Administrative Services
- **$51.23 Million one-time funding Eliminated** for the NextGen ERP Cloud Modernization project ($50 Million) to reduce state financial system costs and improve service delivery, and the All-Payer Claims Database ($1.23 Million) to enable analysis and public reporting of health care costs and utilization for medical, dental, and pharmaceutical services (under the Georgia Technology Authority)

Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities
- **$10.18 Million Added** to annualize the cost of 513 New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) slots for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (Adult Developmental Disability Services)
• **$4.2 Million Added** for 250 additional slots for the New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (Adult Developmental Disability Services)

• **$6.29 Million Added** for additional mobile crisis teams to address increasing demand (Adult Mental Health Services)

• **$2 Million Added** to annualize the operating cost of a 24-bed and 16 temporary observation chair behavioral health crisis center at Serenity Behavioral Health Systems in Augusta (Adult Mental Health Services)

• **$5.69 Million Added** for a 15-bed and 18 temporary observation chair behavioral health crisis center in Fulton County (Adult Mental Health Services)

• **$5.41 Million Added** to convert a crisis stabilization unit at CSB of Middle Georgia in Dublin to a 24-bed and 16 temporary observation chair behavioral health crisis center (Adult Mental Health Services)

• **$932,300 Reduction** for one-time funds for a study on reimbursement rates for behavioral health providers (Adult Mental Health Services)

• **$261,823 Eliminated** from DBHDD departmental administration. These funds were originally appropriated to pay for administrative infrastructure necessary to implement the terms of the National Prescription Opiate Litigation settlement, the Georgia Opioid Abatement Trust funds, and the activities of the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory (ORRFA) Council.

• **$1.6 Million Transferred** to the Adult Developmental Disabilities Services – Special Project program to consolidate funds for respite services

**Dept. of Community Health**

• **$6.5 Million Eliminated** to replace the Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) with the Medicaid Enterprise System Transformation (MEST)

• **$1 Million Reduction** of one-time funds for a study on reimbursement rates for mental health care providers (Departmental Administration)

• **$800,000 Transferred** from DCH Departmental Administration to the Office of Health Strategy and Coordination (OHSC) to establish operational funds for the All-Payer Claims Database

• **$79.16 Million Added** for growth in Aged Blind Disabled (ABD) Medicaid based on projected utilization

• **Recognize Reduction in ABD Medicaid ($74.65 Million), LIM ($74.25 Million), and PeachCare ($624,600)** from HB 81 (2021 Session) to reflect the temporary Federal Medical Assistance Percentage
(FMAP) increase provided by the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) through December 31, 2023 (ABD Medicaid)

- **Recognize $65.46 Million** from HB 81 (2021 Session) and **Add $52.22 Million** in new dollars to implement the Georgia Pathways to Coverage program established by the Patients First Act (2019 Session), effective July 1, 2023 (LIM)

- **Budget Note:** Increase employer contribution per-member, per-month (PMPM) rate for the State Health Benefits Plan for Certified and Non-Certified school employees to $1,580 effective January 1, 2023

**Georgia Board of Healthcare Workforce** (administratively attached to Dept. Community Health)

- **$180,000 Added** for additional staff and technology to assist with loan repayment program expansion

- **$1.77 Million Added** for 102 new residency slots in primary care medicine

- **$375,000 Added** for five Graduate Medical Education (GME) feasibility grants to assist hospitals in establishing or expanding GME programs

- **$663,100 Added** for the fourth year of the seven-year plan for Mercer School of Medicine’s medical school campus in Columbus

- **$850,000 Added** to establish a loan repayment program for mental health professionals (Physicians for Rural Areas)

- **$190,000 Added** to establish the medical examiner loan repayment program (Physicians for Rural Areas)

- **$2.04 Million Added** for the physician loan repayment program to increase award amount and update program guidelines (Physicians for Rural Areas)

- **$440,000 Added** for additional loan repayments for five physician assistants and 39 advanced practice registered nurses (Physicians for Rural Areas)

- **$1.05 Million Added** to establish the nursing faculty loan repayment program (Undergraduate Medical Education)

**Dept. of Corrections**

- **$25.66 Million Added** to reflect the opening of McRae State Prison

- **$25.15 Million Added** for physical health and pharmacy services contracts

- **$20.9 Million Reduced** to reflect the closure of Georgia State Prison
- **$18.74 Million Reduced** to reflect the closure of Lee Arrendale State Prison (but funds were transferred from a number of divisions to maintain the existing operations of the 112-bed Lee Arrendale Transition Center)

- **$2.68 Million Added** for safety and security technology projects

- **$26 MILLION in bond funds** for emergency maintenance and repairs

**Dept. of Early Care and Learning**
- **$179,000 Reduced** in formula funds for training and experience for Pre-K teachers

**Georgia Dept. of Education**
- **$4.71 Million Reduced** for enrollment and Training and Experience decline in GNETS

- **$211,250 Added** for Sparsity Grants based on enrollment data (Non-QBE Formula Grants)

- **$406,200 Reduced** formula funds for Residential Treatment Facilities based on attendance (Non-QBE Formula Grants)

- **$1.58 Million Added** for school nutrition

- **$1.58 Million Added** for a 5.1% salary increase for school nutrition workers

- **$4.47 Million Added** to Preschool Disability Services

- **$1.6 Million Added** for pupil transportation

- **$4.32 Million Added** for a 5.1% salary increase for school transportation workers

- **$122.28 Million Added** in formula funds for QBE Equalization grants

- **$155 Million Added** for enrollment growth and training and experience (QBE Program)

- **$20.67 Million Added** in formula funds for the State Commission Charter School supplement (QBE Program)

- **$26.07 Million Reduced** for State Charter Supplement funds for Mountain Education (($20,937,214)) and Coastal Plains (($11,110,101)) and increase formula funds for Foothills Charter High School based on enrollment pursuant to SB 153 (2021 Session) (QBE Program)
- **$27.76 Million Reduced** in QBE formula funds due to expiration of state charter contracts for Mountain Education and Coastal Plains pursuant to SB 153 (2021 Session) (QBE Program)

- **$296,000 Added** in formula funds for the charter system grant (QBE Program)

- **$188,500 Added** in formula funds for the local charter school grant (QBE Program)

- **$655,100 Reduced** in formula funds for differentiated pay for newly certified math and science teachers (QBE Program)

- **$26.93 Million Added** to fully fund school counselor ratio at 1:450 for all QBE student categories pursuant to HB 283 (2013 Session) (QBE Program)

- **Budget Note**: Utilize existing funds to provide a military counselor to Chattahoochee County and evaluate the utilization of existing grants for military counselors (QBE Program)

- **$37,000 Added** for RESAs based on enrollment growth

- **$481,300 Added** for a 5.1% salary increase for RESAs

- **$1.8 Million Added** for a 5.1% salary increase for school nurses, along with a **Budget Note** to maintain current funding and hold harmless for formula reduction for school nurse funding.

- **$495,700 Added** in formula finds for Training and Experience in State Schools

**Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget**

- **$1.95 Million Transferred** from the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget to reflect funds appropriated for the Georgia Data Analytic Center

**Dept. of Human Services**

- **$185,000 Added** to reflect FY 2022 collections of marriage and divorce filing fees pursuant to HB 511 (2021 Session) (Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention)

- **$3.24 Million Added** for 300 additional Medicaid eligibility caseworkers to process Medicaid redetermination cases due to the Public Health Emergency (PHE) expiration

- **$89,600 Added** to reflect FY 2022 collections from the Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund Commission

- **$3.38 Million Added** to assist in the rehabilitation of children, youth, and adult victims of sexual trafficking (Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund Commission)
- **$20,000 Reduced** for the Georgia Commission for the Deaf or Hard of Hearing

**Office of the Commissioner of Insurance**
- **$92 Million Added** for the state reinsurance program

**Criminal Justice Coordinating Council** (administratively attached to the GA Bureau of Investigation)
- **$94,250 Added** for one position to administer the sexual assault kit tracking system

**Dept. of Law**
- **$90,800 Added** for one business operations analyst position in the human trafficking unit

**Dept. of Public Safety**
- **$2.07 Million Added** for equipment, installation, and training associated with a new statewide public safety radio network to achieve statewide interoperability
- **$2.9 Million Reduced** for driver's education and training

**University System of Georgia**
- **$12.65 Million Added** to reflect a 2.3% decrease in enrollment with an increase in higher cost program areas ($10,334,073) and 0.6% increase in square footage ($2,313,043) (Teaching Division)
- **$2.76 Million Reduced** ("adjusted") in formula funds for enrollment growth to reflect corrected credit hour data for Georgia Institute of Technology
- **$2.45 Million Decreased** for the Augusta University / University of Georgia Medical Partnership Expansion
- **$540,159 Transferred** for the Fort Valley State University land-grant match requirements to the Teaching Program (the funds were transferred from Agricultural Experiment Station ($378,752) and from Cooperative Extension Service ($161,407))
- **$59,625 Added** for the public libraries’ formula based on an increase in state population

**Georgia Student Finance Commission**
- **$1.62 Million Reduced** for administrative costs associated with service cancelable loan programs and utilize existing funds to implement loan repayment programs for mental health professionals
- **$315,000 Transferred** from Engineer Scholarship to Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG) program based on the 2017 Department of Audits and Accounts Performance Audit
- **$3.23 Million Added** to meet the projected need for the HOPE Grant program at a factor rate of 100% and reduce out of pocket needs for students in Commercial Driver’s License and Law Enforcement programs at TCSG
• $1.45 Million Added to meet the projected need for the HOPE Scholarship at private institutions

• $57.9 Million Added to meet the projected need for the HOPE Scholarships programs at factor rate of 100% at public postsecondary schools

• $1.7 Million Reduced funds associated with the Leo Scholarship Grant Service Cancelable Loans (HB 1319 of the 2022 Session, which was not enacted into law)

• $3.2 Million Added to provide up to $20,000 maximum loan repayments across five years of service to support recruitment and retention of public law enforcement officers across the state

Technical College System of Georgia

• $8.98 Million Reduced to reflect a 3.5% decrease in credit hours (-$9,292,213) with an increase in funds to reflect a 2.1% increase in square footage ($315,390) (Technical Division)
**Legislative Update**  
As of Saturday, January 14, 2023

### Health and Behavioral Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HB 4</td>
<td>(Scott-76th)</td>
<td>Requires the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to create, operate, and maintain an electronic inpatient psychiatric bed registry. Status: House Prefiled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 5</td>
<td>(Scott-76th)</td>
<td>Requires the University System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia to make menstrual hygiene products available at no cost to students in certain facilities or portions of facilities of institutions. Status: House Prefiled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 6</td>
<td>(Scott-76th)</td>
<td>Provides for the submission of a waiver request by the Department of Human Services to permit the recipients of certain public assistance benefits to use such benefits for the purpose of purchasing diapers or menstrual hygiene products if the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service makes such waiver available to states. Status: House Prefiled</td>
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<tr>
<td>HB 7</td>
<td>(Scott-76th)</td>
<td>Establishes a school-linked behavioral health grant program to provide early identification of and intervention for students with mental health or substance use disorder needs and to build the capacity of K-12 schools to support students with mental health or substance use disorder needs in the classroom. Status: House Prefiled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 9</td>
<td>(Scott-76th)</td>
<td>Statutorily requires DBHDD to create, operate, and maintain the Georgia Crisis and Access Line, collect certain data, and requires any state-operated registry of available inpatient psychiatric beds, crisis residential beds, or substance use disorder beds to report data for purposes of the access line. Status: House Prefiled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 16</td>
<td>(Thomas-65th)</td>
<td>Extends the sunset provision relating to the use of sick leave for the care of immediate family members to July 1, 2026. Status: House Industry and Labor Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 37</td>
<td>(Beverly-143rd)</td>
<td>Requires the Department of Community Health to mitigate the potential loss of Medicaid coverage caused by the discontinuation of the continuous enrollment condition of the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act by providing, continuing, and expanding services; and to improve training, processes, technology, and communication to that end. Status: House Hopper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 38</td>
<td>(Beverly-143rd)</td>
<td>Expands Medicaid to cover eligibility up to a maximum of 138 percent of the federal poverty level. Status: House Hopper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
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<tr>
<td>SB 1</td>
<td>Makes permanent (by removing the sunset provision) the prohibition on state and local governments from requiring proof of COVID vaccination for government services.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Status: Senate Health and Human Services Committee</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Maternal Care and Early Care</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>HB 1</td>
<td>Provides for the compensation of pregnant women who but for a fetal heartbeat law could choose to terminate the pregnancy but are compelled to carry the pregnancy to term and give birth to a child.</td>
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<td>Status: House Public Health Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>HB 3</td>
<td>Provides for grants by the State Board of Education to local units of administration to support students living in poverty.</td>
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<td>Status: House Hopper</td>
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<tr>
<td>HB 8</td>
<td>Requires school attendance policies regarding excused absences take into consideration mental and behavioral health.</td>
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<td>Status: House Prefiled</td>
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<tr>
<td>HB 14</td>
<td>Requires the Department of Labor to establish criteria for the certification of workforce readiness programs and the certification of workforce-ready graduates. The bill allows that on and after January 1, 2024, an employer that employs a workforce-ready graduate in a full-time job for at least 40 weeks during a 12-month period shall be eligible for an income tax credit in the amount of $9,600.00 for each workforce-ready graduate.</td>
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<td>Status: House Ways and Means Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>SB 4</td>
<td>Enacts the &quot;Blind Persons' Braille Literacy Rights and Education Act&quot;. Among other things, the bill requires an evaluation of a blind or visually impaired student to determine such student's need for Braille instruction and requires Braille instruction in the individualized education program of a blind or visually impaired student as appropriate.</td>
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<td>Status: Senate Hopper</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>HB 15</td>
<td>Requires the state to establish a task force to evaluate and monitor the broadband equity of state-funded broadband network projects.</td>
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<td>Status: House Technology and Infrastructure Innovation Committee</td>
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<td>HB 24</td>
<td>Provides for the placement of a digital monument within the state capitol building or upon the capitol grounds to memorialize the Georgians who have died from COVID-19.</td>
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<td>Status: House Hopper</td>
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HB 25 (Thomas-65th)  Bill Link
Allows each toy manufacturer that increases its expenditures incurred in this state for materials or labor used directly in the manufacture of wooden toys for children by at least 30 percent from its preceding taxable year to claim a tax credit in the amount of 20 percent of the increase in such expenditures.
Status: House Hopper
HB 26 (Thomas-65th)  Bill Link
Requires the Department of Community affairs to include certain indoor air quality provisions in applicable state minimum standard codes, to require the installation of indoor air quality equipment and utilization of best practices in new construction permitted on or after July 1, 2024. These provisions include (but are not limited to) HVAC systems that can utilize a MERV 13 filter, adequate humidity control to maintain the humidity near or below 50 percent at room temperature, and fresh air ventilation through HVAC systems.
Status: House Hopper
HB 30 (Carson-46th)  Bill Link
Defines the term 'antisemitism' to have the same meaning as provided for in the working definition of antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) on May 26, 2016. The bill also requires state agencies and departments to consider such definition when determining whether an alleged act was motivated by discriminatory antisemitic intent.
Status: House Hopper
HB 32 (Douglas-78th)  Bill Link
Provides that no high school which receives funding under Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20, the "Quality Basic Education Act," shall participate in or sponsor interscholastic sports events conducted by any athletic association that does not utilize instant replay for high school football championship games.
Status: House Hopper
HR 10 (Thomas-65th)  Bill Link
Creates the House Study Committee on Public Water Systems Serving Disadvantaged Communities.
Status: House Hopper
SB 3 (Albers-56th)  Bill Link
"Reducing Barriers to State Employment Act of 2023" Requires every state department, agency, board, bureau, office, commission, public corporation, and authority to regularly assess the educational, experiential, and training requirements necessary for each position of employment within the entity and identify positions where the educational, experiential, and training requirements could be reduced from their present level, and when practicable, reduce the number of positions for which a four-year college degree is required as a condition of employment.
Status: Senate Government Oversight Committee
SR 6 (Gooch-51st)  Bill Link
Agreed upon adjournment resolution (schedule) for the General Assembly through Sine Die (the last day of the 2023 legislative session).
Status: ADOPTED by both chambers
2 MINUTE ADVOCACY ASK

Be a Voice for Children!

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.