Legislative Update
As of 03/18/2023

Justice, Public Safety, and School Discipline

HB 142 (Mainor-56th)  Bill Link
Provides for the establishment of unified campus police forces through agreements entered into by colleges and universities, whereby a campus policeman employed by any of the colleges or universities participating in the unified police force agreement who is P.O.S.T. certified shall have the same law enforcement powers, including the power of arrest, as a law enforcement officer of any local government with police jurisdiction over such campuses. Status: PASSED HOUSE, PASSED SENATE Needs agreement from the House to the Senate Changes.

HB 227 (Leverett-123rd)  Bill Link
Clarifies that the offense of criminal damage to property in the first degree can be committed through electronic means against critical infrastructure or any vital public service. The penalty for this crime is increased to imprisonment between two to 20 years. The bill revises the misdemeanor crime of interfering with property of public utility companies, municipalities, or political subdivisions owning critical infrastructure by prohibiting a person from altering or interfering with critical infrastructure. The definition for "critical infrastructure" in O.C.G.A. 16-11-220 is amended to include other vital public services. Status: PASSED HOUSE Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee.

HB 231 (Gullett-19th)  Bill Link
Creates the Prosecuting Attorneys Oversight Commission, which consists of an investigative panel and a hearing panel. The investigative panel is responsible for investigating alleged conduct that constitutes grounds for discipline, which is specifically outlined in the bill and includes: mental or physical incapacity; willful misconduct in office; willful and persistent failure to perform duties; conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude; conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice; allowing an assistant district attorney or assistant solicitor general to commit acts that would constitute removal; and violating the State Bar of Georgia's Rules of Professional Conduct. Complaints made to the investigative panel are required to show evidence that constitutes the grounds for discipline. If the complaint makes an allegation on the basis of a charging decision, plea offer, or one of the other specific issues in the bill, then the complaint must also show that it was likely that the decision was made based on one of the specific criteria such as: undue bias; an undisclosed conflict of interest; or a stated, written policy that demonstrates a district attorney or solicitor general categorically refuses to prosecute certain offenses. Status: PASSED HOUSE Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee.

HB 462 (Ballinger-23rd)  Bill Link
"Raise the Age Act" - The bill increases the jurisdiction of the juvenile court to include children who are 17 years old and revises various references in the Code to reflect this change. The bill establishes an implementation committee, which consists of 12 members and is responsible for conferring with appropriate agencies and interested parties regarding standards and practices of other jurisdictions, the most recent national standards, and the interested parties' views. A superior court will maintain jurisdiction of those who are 17 years old at the time of the alleged crime when those individuals are alleged to have committed criminal gang activity or an offense that would be a felony, if tried as an adult, for a second or subsequent time. Parts I and IV of the bill become effective upon the governor's signature. Parts II and III of the bill become effective January 1, 2025, subject to appropriations. If the co-chairpersons of the implementation committee determine that money was not appropriated for that year, the determination will be made during the following years until January 1, 2030. If those funds are appropriated in one of the following years, it will become effective on January 1 of that fiscal year. Status: PASSED HOUSE Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee.