

GEORGIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2010 Legislative Report

Without question, the 2010 session of the Georgia General Assembly, one of the longest in recent history, was good for business.

Despite the incredible challenge presented by the state budget, nearly every item on the Georgia Chamber's legislative agenda was addressed.

Legislators focused on the issues most important to Georgia business and passed bills in the areas of transportation, health care, water, tax and education that will benefit our state for years to come.

Throughout the 40-day legislative session, the Georgia Chamber's Board leadership, 400-plus member Government Affairs Council and staff worked closely with members of the executive and legislative branches of government to educate and advocate on behalf of our members throughout the state. This work continues throughout the year as we strive to make our state the very best in the nation in which to do business and has helped save our members over \$1.5 billion in 2009 and 2010 alone while achieving major milestones in key issue areas including those listed below.

The Georgia Chamber wants to thank the members of the General Assembly for their commitment to our state. The Honor Roll included in this report recognizes those who were most supportive of the business community during the 2010 legislative session.

For more information, visit www.gachamber.com.



“THE GEORGIA CHAMBER’S WORK HAS HELPED SAVE OUR MEMBERS OVER \$1.5 BILLION IN 2009 AND 2010 ALONE WHILE ACHIEVING MAJOR MILESTONES IN KEY ISSUE AREAS”



BILL SUPPORTED BY CHAMBER



BILL OPPOSED BY CHAMBER

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HB 249		Provides a new source of capital for new and growing businesses by allowing the Georgia Firefighters Pension Fund to invest up to 5 percent of its assets in alternative investments. Passed, signed by Governor.
HB 1016		Provides businesses the same protections from identity theft as individuals, ensuring they are safe from this growing crime. Passed, signed by Governor.
HB 1069		Creates an “angel investor” tax credit for investments made during the early-stage development of innovative companies, encouraging a higher percentage of high-tech startups to remain in our state. Passed, signed by Governor.
HR 178		Provides voters the opportunity this November to clarify state employment contract law. If approved, courts will have the authority to ensure that both parties to a contract are held to the terms of the original employment agreement. Passed, on November 2010 ballot.
SB 537		Would have established a process to determine reasonable scope and cost sharing for the collection of electronically stored information during the discovery phase of legal proceedings. No vote taken.

EDUCATION

HB 1195		Codifies the Georgia Work Ready program, which was originally created by executive order and today provides needed job certification and training assistance throughout the state. Passed, signed by Governor.
SB 84		Creates standard qualifications and training requirements for school board members and clarifies their roles and responsibilities, ensuring high-quality governance in Georgia public schools. Passed, signed by Governor.
SB 386		Would have created a performance-based pay system for teachers in Georgia's public schools using data tracked by the state Department of Education. No vote taken.

HEALTH CARE

HB 307		Creates a 1.45% tax on hospitals, potentially increasing the cost of providing health care for employers should it be passed on to consumers. Included in FY2011 budget at a substantial reduction from the originally proposed rate.
HB 321		Would have increased Georgia employers' cost for providing health insurance and violated ERISA protections by mandating a set time period for payment of medical claims. Passed, vetoed by Governor.
HB 1184		Would have allowed Georgians to purchase health care insurance policies offered by companies in other states, increasing competition and potentially lowering costs to employers who provide this benefit. Passed House; no vote taken in Senate.
SR 277		Provides voters the opportunity to save hundreds of lives each year by voting “yes” on a \$10 vehicle tag fee that will provide funding for critically needed trauma care services throughout the state. Passed, on November 2010 ballot.

TAXATION

HB 1008		Would have capped the sales tax on energy used by certain manufacturing and processing plants. This exemption is currently offered by states throughout the Southeast. No vote taken; recommending to Special Tax Council.
HB 1023		Called the Jobs, Opportunity and Business Success Act of 2010, this legislation would have provided tax credits for hiring the unemployed, a reduction in the capital gains tax and elimination of the corporate net worth tax. Passed, vetoed by Governor.
HB 1221		Creates a process whereby Georgia can partner with online retailers for capture of sales taxes not currently collected by the state. Passed, signed by Governor.
HB 1405		Creates the Special Council on Tax Reform and Fairness for Georgians. This council, made up of key elected officials, economists and business leaders -- including the Chair of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce -- will be charged with making recommendations for changes to the Georgia tax code in time for action by the new Governor and General Assembly in January 2011. Passed, signed by Governor.

TRANSPORTATION

HB 277		Calls for a referendum in 2012 through which 12 designated regions will be asked to support a one-cent sales tax for transportation improvements. Regional leaders will be involved in the project selection process and will have the ability to “opt out” of the tax should they so choose. Passed, signed by Governor, on August 2012 ballot.
SB 305		Allows the Georgia Department of Transportation to bid a higher percentage of contracts under the design-build system of project delivery, providing a cost-efficient option for road and bridge construction. Passed, signed by Governor.

WATER

HB 1301		Would have created onerous regulations and criteria for interbasin transfers of water, threatening access to this vital resource and impeding the existing water management planning process. No vote taken.
SB 370		Institutes measures to conserve, capture and control Georgia's water resources. This legislation will enhance the work of the Regional Water Councils and will help to ensure the state's water needs are met long into the future. Passed, signed by Governor.



GEORGIA CHAMBER HONOR ROLL - SENATE

Senator (District - City)	Senator (District - City)	Senator (District - City)
Don Balfour (9-Snellville)	Seth Harp (39-Midland)	J.B. Powell (23-Blythe)
John Bulloch (11-Ochlocknee)	Bill Heath (31-Bremen)	Chip Rogers (21-Woodstock)
Jim Butterworth (50-Cornelia)	Jack Hill (4-Reidsville)	Mitch Seabaugh (28-Sharpsburg)
Buddy Carter (1-Pooler)	Judson Hill (32-Marietta)	David Shafer (48-Duluth)
Ronnie Chance (16-Tyrone)	George Hooks (14-Americus)	Freddie Powell Sims (12-Dawson)
Bill Cowser (46-Athens)	Ralph Hudgens (47-Hull)	Preston Smith (52-Rome)
John Crosby (13-Tifton)	Bill Jackson (24-Appling)	Cecil Staton (18-Macon)
Hardie Davis (22-Gracewood)	Donzella James (35-College Park)	Don Thomas (54-Dalton)
John Douglas (17-Social Circle)	Dan Moody (56-Alpharetta)	Ross Tolleson (20-Perry)
Greg Goggans (7-Douglas)	Jeff Mullis (53-Chickamauga)	Renee Unterman (45-Buford)
Tim Golden (8-Valdosta)	Jack Murphy (27-Cumming)	Dan Weber (40-Dunwoody)
Johnny Grant (25-Milledgeville)	Nan Orrock (36-Atlanta)	John Wiles (37-Kennesaw)
Bill Hamrick (30-Carrollton)	Chip Pearson (51-Dawsonville)	Tommie Williams (19-Lyons)

GEORGIA CHAMBER HONOR ROLL - HOUSE

Representative (District - City)	Representative (District - City)	Representative (District - City)
Lee Anderson (117-Grovetown)	Ben Harbin (118-Evans)	Larry O'Neal (146-Bonaire)
Rick Austin (10-Demorest)	Buddy Harden (147-Cordele)	Butch Parrish (156-Swainsboro)
Glenn Baker (78-Jonesboro)	Keith Heard (114-Athens)	Don Parsons (42-Marietta)
Terry Barnard (166-Glenngrove)	Bill Hembree (67-Winston)	Allen Peake (137-Macon)
Paul Battles (15-Cartersville)	Calvin Hill (21-Canton)	Jay Powell (171-Camilla)
Tommy Benton (31-Jefferson)	Cecily Hill (180-Kingsland)	Jimmy Pruett (144-Eastman)
Bob Bryant (160-Garden City)	Doug Holt (112-Social Circle)	Ann Purcell (159-Rincon)
Jon Burns (157-Newington)	Billy Horne (71-Newnan)	David Ralston (7-Blue Ridge)
Mark Butler (18-Carrollton)	Penny Houston (170-Nashville)	Matt Ramsey (72-Peachtree City)
Charlice Byrd (20-Woodstock)	Sistie Hudson (124-Sparta)	Tom Rice (51-Norcross)
Amy Carter (175-Valdosta)	Mack Jackson (142-Sandersville)	Jay Roberts (154-Ocilla)
David Casas (103-Lilburn)	Mike Jacobs (80-Atlanta)	Carl Rogers (26-Gainesville)
Jill Chambers (81-Atlanta)	Sean Jerguson (22-Holly Springs)	Ed Rynders (152-Albany)
Mickey Channell (116-Greensboro)	Jan Jones (46-Alpharetta)	Tony Sellier (136-Fort Valley)
Mike Cheokas (134-Americus)	Jerry Keen (179-St. Simons Island)	Ed Setzler (35-Acworth)
Mike Coan (101-Lawrenceville)	Mike Keown (173-Coolidge)	Jay Shaw (176-Lakeland)
Jim Cole (125-Forsyth)	David Knight (126-Griffin)	Donna Sheldon (105-Dacula)
Brooks Coleman (97-Duluth)	Tom Knox (24-Cumming)	Barbara Sims (119-Augusta)
Doug Collins (27-Gainesville)	Bob Lane (158-Statesboro)	Chuck Sims (169-Ambrose)
Sharon Cooper (41-Marietta)	Roger Lane (167-Darien)	Bob Smith (113-Watkinsville)
Clay Cox (102-Lilburn)	Kevin Levitas (82-Atlanta)	Lynn Smith (70-Newnan)
Steve Davis (109-McDonough)	Edward Lindsey (54-Atlanta)	Richard Smith (131-Columbus)
Burke Day (163-Tybee Island)	John Lunsford (110-McDonough)	Tommy Smith (168-Nicholls)
Katie Dempsey (13-Rome)	Billy Maddox (127-Zebulon)	Kip Smith (129-Pine Mountain)
Tom Dickson (6-Cohutta)	Gene Maddox (172-Cairo)	Calvin Smyre (132-Columbus)
Matt Dollar (45-Marietta)	Judy Manning (32-Marietta)	Ron Stephens (164-Savannah)
Earl Ehrhart (36-Powder Springs)	Chuck Martin (47-Alpharetta)	Willie Talton (145-Warner Robins)
Terry England (108-Auburn)	Howard Maxwell (17-Dallas)	Len Walker (107-Loganville)
Bubber Epps (140-Dry Branch)	Jeff May (111-Monroe)	Tom Weldon (3-Ringgold)
Melvin Everson (106-Snellville)	John Meadows (5-Calhoun)	Joe Wilkinson (52-Atlanta)
Harry Geisinger (48-Roswell)	Fran Millar (79-Dunwoody)	Wendell Willard (49-Sandy Springs)
Mike Glanton (76-Ellenwood)	James Mills (25-Gainesville)	Al Williams (165-Midway)
Rich Golick (34-Smyrna)	Greg Morris (155-Vidalia)	Mark Williams (178-Jesup)
Gerald Greene (149-Cuthbert)	Jay Neal (1-LaFayette)	Roger Williams (4-Dalton)
Mark Hamilton (23-Cumming)	Randy Nix (69-LaGrange)	John Yates (73-Griffin)

Suzanne Sitherwood
2010 Chair

George M. Israel III
President and CEO

Haydon Stanley
2010 GAC Chair

www.gachamber.com

233 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 2000 | Atlanta, Georgia 30303-1564 | Phone: 404.223.2264 | Fax: 404.223.2290

Georgia Chamber of Commerce 2010 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Representative Mark Burkhalter



Representative Mark Burkhalter spent 18 years in the Georgia General Assembly representing North Fulton County. He left office as the Speaker Emeritus, after having served as Speaker of the House in 2009 and the Speaker Pro Tempore since 2004, a position to which he was elected with the bipartisan support of his colleagues. From 2003-2004, he served as administration floor leader for Governor Sonny Perdue.

Speaker Burkhalter played a major role in developing and helping to pass several pieces of legislation to benefit the economic growth and development of the greater metropolitan Atlanta area. Speaker Burkhalter has earned many accolades, including being named twice by *James* magazine as the "most influential politician in Georgia" and named by *Georgia Trend* magazine as one of the "100 Most Influential Georgians."

Representative Jerry Keen



As a native and lifetime resident of Georgia, Jerry Keen served five terms in the Georgia House of Representatives, representing House District 179 in Glynn County. During his time in the legislature, he authored legislation to eliminate the state income tax on capital gains, was a leader in the movement to reduce and reform ad valorem taxes on property owners in Georgia, and played a key role in the passage of tort reform legislation.

In his first term, he became the first freshman Republican since Reconstruction to pass a constitutional amendment, and when his party took control of the Georgia House of Representatives, Representative Keen was unanimously selected by the Republican Caucus to be the House Majority Leader. He also served on the Rules, Appropriations, Ethics, Insurance, and Energy, Utilities, and Telecommunications committees.

Georgia Chamber of Commerce 2010 LEGISLATORS OF THE YEAR



Representative Lynn Smith

Lynn Smith was first elected to the Georgia House of Representatives in 1997. Her background includes the role of chairman for the Newnan-Coweta Chamber of Commerce; the Coweta Economic Development Partnership; and the Shenandoah Georgia Youth Science and Technology Center. Representative Smith chairs the Natural Resources and Environment Committee and serves on the Appropriations, Legislative and Congressional Reapportionment, and Rules committees.



Representative Rich Golick

Rich Golick has served six terms in the House of Representatives representing the 34th District. He is Chairman of the Judiciary Non-Civil Committee and serves on the Insurance, Judiciary, Appropriations and Retirement Committees. Representative Golick served as Governor Perdue's administration floor leader from 2003 through 2008. Representative Golick graduated from Emory University with a degree in Political Science and earned his law degree at Georgia State University.



Representative Kevin Levitas

Representative Kevin Levitas was first elected to serve House District 82, (DeKalb County) in 2006. He serves on the House Special Committee on Small Business, as well as the Agriculture and Consumer Affairs, Judiciary Non-Civil, Science and Technology, and Transportation committees. He is an active member of numerous volunteer and civic organizations. Representative Levitas graduated from Middlebury College and earned his law degree from the University of Georgia.



Senator Bill Cowsert

Bill Cowsert was first elected to the Senate from the 46th District in 2006, representing Oconee and portions of Clarke and Walton counties. He is vice chairman of the Senate Higher Education Committee and is a member of the Appropriations, Judiciary, Reapportionment and Redistricting, and Natural Resources and the Environment committees. Senator Cowsert graduated from Presbyterian College and earned his law degree from the University of Georgia.



Senator David Shafer

David Shafer was first elected to the Senate from the 48th District (portions of Fulton and Gwinnett counties) in 2002. He chairs the Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee and is Vice Chairman of the Insurance and Labor Committee. Senator Shafer serves on several committees including Finance and Banking and Financial Institutions. He served as Administration Floor Leader for Governor Perdue in 2004. Shafer is president of a Duluth-based corporate public relations firm.



GEORGIA CHAMBER

GEORGIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
2010 Legislative Report

