



GBAN LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - JANUARY 13, 2017

Legislative Calendar

Thursday, January 12th marked the 4th legislative day of the 2017 legislative session. Next week, the General Assembly will be adjourned as both chambers conduct budget hearings and will reconvene Monday, January 23rd.

Legislation of Interest

The session having just started, our staff is monitoring pre-filed bills and early legislation as bills begin the process of being assigned to committee. Anticipate a greater volume of bills in the coming weeks. Below, you can preview some of the "first readers" that have been read for the first time in each chamber.

- [House First Readers](#)
- [Senate First Readers](#)

Campaign Update

Chuck Payne won the special election for Senate District 54 on Tuesday, January 10th 2017. Payne was endorsed by the Georgia Chamber and received 65% of the vote. A breakdown of the vote tallies can be found on Secretary of State Brian Kemp's website, [here](#). Congratulations to Senator-elect Chuck Payne! For more information about how to get involved with our political engagement efforts, please contact Chelsey Ruppensburg at cruppensburg@gachamber.com.

Eggs and Issues Recap

The Chamber was honored to have over 2,300 guests at our annual Eggs and Issues Breakfast at the Georgia World Congress Center on Monday, January 9th. As the kick-off to the 2017 legislative session, the breakfast was a huge success. Below is a brief overview of speakers and their remarks.

2017 Chamber Chairman, Mr. Bill Linginfelter

Chairman Linginfelter restated the Georgia Chamber's commitment to preserving and protecting Georgia's award-winning business climate, including Chamber support of sound state policy initiatives to achieve that goal. In addition, Linginfelter addressed the Chamber's plan to be active early on in the 2018 campaign season.

President and CEO Chris Clark

Clark elaborated on the Chamber's "Georgia 2030" strategic plan to engage rural Georgia in addressing economic development and access to healthcare. To emphasize this priority, Clark announced that the Chamber would open its first regional office in Tifton, Georgia.

Senator David Perdue

Senator Perdue highlighted new opportunities in Washington, given the incoming administration, to institute regulatory reform to benefit businesses across the country. Perdue cited the budget, repealing the Affordable Care Act, and our nation's defenses as his top priorities this Congress.

Governor Nathan Deal

Governor Deal addressed transportation funding for projects across the state, noted the \$2.2 billion dollar rainy day fund, and recapped 417 economic development projects totaling more than \$5.29 billion dollars in investment since last year. Deal also announced a new cyber security academy located in Augusta in an effort to make Georgia a central hub in regional cyber security.

Lt. Governor Casey Cagle

Citing a need to reform Georgia's education system, Lt. Governor Cagle called a quality education "the great equalizer". Cagle also urged state lawmakers to address costs and access to healthcare in Georgia.

Speaker David Ralston

Ralston announced a new commission to study transportation and transit in Georgia. Furthermore, Speaker Ralston encouraged attendees and state leaders to not rest on their laurels as we work to continue moving Georgia forward.

Governor Deal's State of the State

The Governor outlined his priorities for the 2017 session on Wednesday, January 11th. Those included education reform, pay increases for teachers and law enforcement, and higher payments for doctors who accept Medicaid patients. Read more about it [here](#), and read the Governor's press release with highlights of the speech, [here](#).

New Committee Chairpersons

House:

- Appropriations Subcommittee on Education
 - **Rep. Robert Dickey (R -Musella)**
- (New Committee) Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation
 - **Rep. Jason Shaw (R - Lakeland)**
- Code Revision
 - **Rep. Buzz Brockway (R - Lawrenceville)**
- Defense and Veterans Affairs
 - **Rep. Bill Hitchens (R - Rincon)**
- Ethics
 - **Rep. Randy Nix (R - LaGrange)**
- Higher Education
 - **Rep. Rick Jasperse (R - Jasper)**
- Industry and Labor
 - **Rep. Brian Strickland (R - McDonough)**
- Information and Audits
 - **Rep. Darlene Taylor (R - Thomasville)**
- Juvenile Justice
 - **Rep. Mandi Ballinger (R – Canton)**
- Legislative and Congressional Reapportionment
 - **Rep. Johnnie Caldwell (R – Thomaston)**
- Motor Vehicles
 - **Rep. Bubber Epps (R – Dry Branch)**
- Small Business Development
 - **Rep. Chad Nimmer (R - Blackshear)**
- Special Rules
 - **Rep. Buddy Harden (R – Cordele)**
- Transportation
 - **Rep. Kevin Tanner (R – Dawsonville)**
- Not committees
 - Military Affairs Working Group
 - **Rep. Dave Belton (R – Buckhead)**
 - Medical Cannabis Working Group
 - **Rep. Allen Peake (R – Macon)**

Senate:

- Banking and Financial Institutions
 - **Sen. William Ligon (R – Brunswick)**
- Economic Development and Tourism
 - **Sen. Mike Dugan (R – Carrollton)**
- Finance
 - **Sen. Chuck Hufstetler (R – Rome)**
- Insurance and Labor
 - **Sen. Burt Jones (R – Jackson)**
- Reapportionment and Redistricting
 - **Sen. Ben Watson (R – Savannah)**
- Retirement
 - **Sen. Ellis Black (R – Valdosta)**
- Transportation
 - **Sen. Brandon Beach (R – Alpharetta)**

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