

3 March 2017

LWVAF, Report from the Capitol, Week 8

This week the legislature met for four days, ending with Day 28, CrossOver Day. This report is a couple of days late so that we can report as many bills as possible that are eligible to pass this year. If bills do not get out of their chamber of origin by the end of CrossOver Day, they can be taken up again next year or amended to other bills that did cross over.

Some biggies that moved are the campus carry bill, the gentler school takeover bill, the reduction in the state income tax rate, medical marijuana, and an extensive revision of adoption law among others. Already passed and signed are the renewal of the bed tax, correction ballot errors by the local election superintendent, and the midyear budget.

BOLD Bill Number = final passage

CA = constitutional amendment. Requires a 2/3s vote in each chamber and a majority vote in the next general election scheduled for November 2018.

TGFS = To Governor for Signature

In CHAMBERS

CHILDREN

HB 116 Reeves – 34 **PASSED** House S.Judiciary

Superior Court, rather than Juvenile Court, shall have original jurisdiction over minors charged with aggravated assault with use of a firearm and aggravated battery. The Superior Court may return it to Juvenile Court for jurisdiction unless the victim is a law enforcement officer or older than 65.

HB 159 Reeves – 34 **PASSED** House S.Judiciary

An extensive revision of adoption law regarding non-residents allowing adoption of his/her child, adopting foreign-born children, a waiver to revoke a surrender of parental rights, age for accessing the Adoption Reunion Registry, and under certain circumstances, the annulment of an adoption.

SB 160 Harper – 7 **PASSED** Senate H.Judiciary Non Civil

Superior court shall have primary jurisdiction of minors, age 13 – 17, for aggravated assault or aggravated battery on a police or other public safety officer in the line of duty. Imprisonment imposed will not be suspended, stayed, probated, deferred by the sentencing judge. Any person causing public safety officers to be exposed to bodily fluids or materials while in the line of duty is guilty of a felony.

SB 168 Miller – 39 **PASSED** House H.Juvenile Justice

Grants access to child abuse records to a licensed adoption agency when placing a child for adoption. Also law enforcement agencies in GA, departments of Community Supervision, Corrections, and Juvenile Justice may have access when such departments are providing supervision or services concurrently with Department of Family and Children's Services, unless federal law or regulations prohibit release.

SB 170 Hill – 6 **PASSED** Senate

GA SERVES Act of 2017. Certifies volunteers to be available to help foster children in capacities less than a foster parent. There are three levels of certification. Level 1 includes babysitting for less than a day and not overnight. Levels 2 and 3 are higher levels of certification and can provide respite care, overnight care, and even in home care. Requires a criminal background check and training as defined by DFCS.

SB 175 Kennedy – 18 **PASSED** Senate H.Juvenile Justice

Juvenile courts may impose conditions on parents of children in need of services, delinquent, involved in a court's community based risk reduction program. Such conditions may be insuring attendance at school, monitoring homework and studies after school, attending meetings requested by school personnel, participation with child in counseling or treatment and following their recommendations, providing transportation to the child to attend counseling, programs, and other court ordered services, providing instruction and guidance to improve behavior, banning some people from contact

with the child, entering into and completing a substance abuse program, abstaining from offensive conduct against the child.

HB 266 Kelley – 16 **PASSED** House

A natural guardian of a minor may hold up to \$25,000 for use of that minor without becoming a legally qualified conservator of the minor. ***The current limit is \$15,000.***

HB 330 Abrams – 89 **PASSED** House

When a relative is considered for caring for a child, the relative shall be provided with contact information in DFCS to assist kinship care givers. Financial assistance descriptions should also include a pilot program for kinship care. ***There are 128,000 kinship care families in GA.***

HB 331 Abrams – 89 **PASSED** House

Kinship caregivers may be given authority to enroll a child in school and get medical care related to education, such as vaccinations. The caregiver will become the primary contact for that child's education experience, and eligible to sign permission for field trips, extracurricular activities. The affidavit signed by the parent is good for 1 year and can be revoked at any time. No other parental powers are authorized, such as getting more comprehensive health care for the child, consenting to marriage, or approval for an abortion.

HB 344 Dempsey – 13 **PASSED** House

Allows certain parties to request a paternity test from DHS in a case regarding child support orders.

HB 391 Clark – 98 **PASSED** House

Adding to the safe places where a newborn may be left are fire stations or police stations. The child can be up to 30 days old, currently one week.

EDUCATION

SB 29 Fort – 39 **PASSED** Senate

Testing for lead in drinking water shall be required for child care learning centers and public and private schools. Parents are to be notified if findings include lead contamination. Remediation plans to be submitted to the Department of Public Health and posted on the school's web site and at the facility location.

SB 30 Fort – 39 **PASSED** Senate

Creates Sustainable Community School Operation Grants to low performing schools and those in poverty communities, known as community schools. The effort requires community or business partners and an approved plan. Each grantee school shall have a 12-15 member leadership team of teachers, parents, residents, and community partners. High schools shall include up to 2 students on their leadership teams.

HB 114 Dickey – 140 **PASSED** House S.Education & Youth

Bans local boards of education for excluding students from consideration of valedictorian or salutatorian if the student is enrolled in any dual enrollment courses. Student must have taken at least one course at the high school during grades 9-12. Does not apply to students transferring into a school in the third year or later. ***With more students taking dual credit courses there has been some resentment when those students were given valedictorian or salutatorian, especially if they had taken no courses at the school. Many local school boards have adopted policies about the number of credits or courses a student must take at the school to be eligible for these recognitions. This bill sets a minimum standard.***

SB 139 Hill – 6 **PASSED** Senate H.Education

Schools may petition the SBOE and DOE to create specific career pathways. ***SBOE has approved 17 pathways, but some communities have industry that doesn't fit into those molds. This allows the educators to work with businesses to create programs that might result in a job in the community.***

SB 149 Jones – 10 **PASSED** Senate H.Education

School resource officers must have training as defined by the GA Peace Officers Standards & Training Council if assignment of duties is to any K-12 school. The training is at least 40 hours and is not applicable to officers who have had SRO training in the last 24 months. At a minimum the training shall cover search and seizure in a K-12 school, criminal offenses, gang awareness, drug awareness, interviews and interrogations, emergency preparedness, and interpersonal interactions with adolescents including encountering mental issues.

SB 152 Jones – 10 **PASSED** Senate H.Education

Students under age 16 must not be assigned more than two semesters to an alternative school or program, except for those who have committed physical battery, bullying, or unlawful use or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol. After two semesters, one of which may be partial, students may request a hearing for assessment of returning to a regular classroom.

SB 186 Tippins – 37 **PASSED** Senate H.Education

Students completing high school through dual enrollment at technical colleges or via internet are eligible for a HOPE grant towards an associates degree. ***Funds for dual enrollment are from Move On When Ready appropriations. Should there be course work still needed to get a degree, HOPE could be used, which is lottery money.***

SR 192 Wilkinson – 50 **PASSED** Senate H.Education

CA to allow by local legislation and a local referendum the election of the school superintendent. If such superintendent is elected, the members of the board of education shall be appointed by the county grand jury. ***LWV OPPOSES. This structure was in place prior to 1992 and was repealed. LWV believes that administrators should be appointed and policy makers should be elected.***

SB 211 Tippins – 37 **PASSED** Senate H.Education

SBOE is to consult with local boards of education regarding use of formative tests so as to align with summative tests. A summative test will be given only in grade 12. ***Formative tests are used to determine what students need to meet the criteria for the class. Summative tests queries the students about the standards that are supposed to have been taught. Summative tests are what the state requires now, but they are given after the teaching. Formative tests are given before the teaching, thus one cannot use the results of a formative test to determine if a teacher has taught all that is supposed to be covered.***

HB 224 Belton – 112 **PASSED** House S.Education & Youth

Students who live in military housing on or off base may attend any school within the school system if space permits. Parent provides transportation. Effective with the 2017-18 school year. ***If parent leaves the military, must the student transfer to the school in which the residence is located? There is some thought that this proposal and others for students in military families might be an asset when the next BRAC commission is looking at closing military bases.***

HB 237 Coleman – 97 **PASSED** House S.Finance

The Public Education Innovation Fund Foundation under the Office of Student Achievement is authorized in 2018 to receive private donations to provide competitive grants to the lowest performing public schools to implement academic and organizational innovations to improve student achievement and to disseminate information about successful innovations in other public schools. Criteria for grant awards include the potential for improvement in achievement, potential for adoption by other schools, quality of the proposal design, costs and other characteristics. The foundation shall report annually to the Department of Revenue a number and amount of grants and other data as requested. DOR shall post the report on its web site. Donors and amounts donated shall be public information as shall be the schools receiving the grants. An income tax credit to donors of up to \$1000 for single taxpayers and \$2500 for married taxpayers is created. Members of an LLC, subchapter S corporation or a partner in a partnership may claim up to \$10,000 per year credit against income from those sources. Unused tax credits can be carried forward. The total state cap for the credits is \$7 million for the first seven years, first come first served. In 2026, the cap is \$10 million. The grant sunsets in 2032.

HB 245 Williams – 168 **PASSED** House

Professional Service Commission is to establish a path for military spouses to get temporary teaching certification and endorsements.

HB 273 Douglas – 78 **PASSED** House S.Education & Youth

There shall be an average of 30 minutes daily of physical activity for students in K-5, both structured and unstructured. Physical Education will be counted in this time.

HB 338 Tanner – 9 **PASSED** House S.Education & Youth

A Chief Turnaround Officer, CTO, will be hired by the state board of education, work and consult with the state school superintendent, and report to the board. This person shall have at least 10 years of experience, advanced degrees, experience as a principal or higher for at least three years in a public school system, extensive experience in turning around failing schools. The CTO will then hire turnaround coaches to work with schools in the greatest need of assistance. These schools are identified by the CTO. Students will be screened within the first 60 days of the school being identified. An evaluation will be done by the turnaround team as to the needs in the school. Coaches will assist in creating local collaborations to address personal and community conditions such as poverty, lack of economic development, safety, transportation options for parents and students, adult educational opportunities, wellness, and mental health services. Each local board under a contract with DOE, currently 178 of the 180 school districts, will request changes to the contract to agree to receive and pay for assistance for its needy schools. Those without contracts will be held to current law for school underachievement. If after 2 years, the school is not improving and not cooperating with the CTO or following the turnaround plan, the CTO may consider the efforts as likely to make progress or require various adjustment by the local board of education including removal of school personnel, becoming a charter school, appointing a new principal, relocating students, allowing another school system to manage the school. If after 5 years, one half or more of a local school district's schools are not improving, the governor can remove the school board members having served 2 years or more in a manner similar to removal when accreditation is lost. An Educational Advisory Committee, composed of several recognized educational groups, is to provide input on several areas such as CTO qualifications, and school district performance. A Leadership Academy is to be formed to train principals for low performing schools. A Joint Study Committee on the Establishment of a State Accreditation Process is created to audit financial responsibility and student performance. Southern Association of College and Schools, SACS, looks principally at governance. ***Plan B, the alternative to the failed Amendment 1. Familiar concepts. The CTO reports to the governor through the state board of education appointed by the governor. The mechanism for determining if a school will be considered for remediation is unstated, which means it could change annually. Paying for these new services will be through the local school systems in which these schools reside. The state school superintendent seems to be relegated to an advisory role only, even though part of DOE is already doing very similar work. And there already exists a leadership academy, GLISI, GA Leadership Institute for School Improvement.***

HB 430 Brockway – 102 **PASSED** House S.Education & Youth

Implements charter school recommendations of the Governor's Education Reform Commission.

HB 437 Dickey – 140 **PASSED** House S.Education & Youth

Recreates the Agriculture Education Advisory Committee to advise the SBOE on curriculum and other matters relative to education in the agriculture pathway.

HB 463 Dempsey – 13 **PASSED** House S.Education & Youth

DECAL can set up a foundation to receive donations for use in early care and learning.

ELECTIONS/ETHICS

SB 258 Tillery - 19 **PASSED** Senate

City employees and officials who hold public money and refuse or fail to turn it over to the treasury shall be no longer eligible to hold office. ***State and county officials are already under this requirement.***

GOVERNMENT - GENERAL

HB 87 Raffensperger – 50 **PASSED** House S.Economic Development & Tourism

Annual registration of corporations, partnerships, and associations may be extended at the option of the applicant to 2 or 3 years.

SR 130 Hufstetler – 52 **PASSED** Senate

Creates the 14 member Joint Transparency and Open Access in Government Study Committee to recommend how data can be shared with other state government entities and the public without compromising individual privacy. There are 4 members from each chamber and 6 citizens with specific data information or security experience. Report due 12-1-17.

SB 226 Miller – 49 **PASSED** Senate

Wine growers may import up to 40% of the grapes used in making their wine and still have it known as GA wine.

SR 290 Sims – 12 **PASSED** Senate

Creates the 10 member, 5 each chamber, Joint Georgia-Alabama Study Committee to make recommendations for issues which affect both the states. Members must represent border counties with Alabama. Report due 12-1-17.

HB 434 Willard - 51 **PASSED** House

Blighted property, which occurs in nearly every city, can be exempted from the restriction on eminent domain that the property must be used for 20 years for public purposes. A court will determine if the property is blighted. The local government can then condemn it, sell it to a developer to put something on the property with the same zoning as it currently has. So if residential property is blighted, it can be redeveloped for residential purposes only.

HB 515 Caldwell – 131 **PASSED** House

Changes boundary lines of 8 House members, 7 Republicans and 1 Democrat. Four of them are in Fulton: Golick, D-40, and Sheila Jones, D-53, and Jan Jones, D-47 and Chuck Martin, D-49. ***The reason for the changes was not addressed in the debate. Ms. Sheila Jones, the Democrat, testified that she did not know of the bill and its impact until she went to the committee meeting. The others affected seemed to have been warned ahead of time, or asked for the changes.***

GOVERNMENT – COURTS AND CRIMES

HB 5 Caldwell – 131 **PASSED** House S.Judiciary

Juvenile Court judges, not superior court judges assuming duties of the juvenile court, will have salary support from the state increased. Full time judges will receive \$100K state support; part time judges will receive lesser amounts depending on the number of days worked. Local governments may supplement this salary.

HB 15 Willard – 51 **PASSED** House S.Judiciary

By January 2018, superior and state courts can require electronic filing of documents and payment of fees. Once a court has begun mandatory electronic filings in civil cases, non-electronic documents may not be accepted otherwise except for an emergency, adoption proceedings, pauper affidavits, documents under seal or presented in camera or ex parte, or documents to which access is restricted by law or court order.

HB 67 Boddie – 62 **PASSED** House S.Judiciary

Entering a motor vehicle with intent to commit a theft or felony has an increased penalty of a \$5000 fine for the first conviction. For a second conviction, imprisonment is increased up to 5 years. For a third or subsequent conviction, imprisonment is up to 10 years. If the crime is at a gas station, the fine increases to \$100,000 and imprisonment is up to 15 years.

SB 95 Stone – 23 **PASSED** Senate H.Judiciary Non Civil

The state wide master jury list developed by the GA Crime Information Center will now include a token numerical value of the social security number of each name. Race as an identifier has been removed. The Council shall provide the agency supplying the names the software to generate this token numerical value. ***Why is the social security number necessary for a jury member? This exposes the jury member to identity theft if the 'token number' can be cracked.***

SB 104 James – 35 **PASSED** Senate H.Judiciary Non Civil

Requires the posting of the human trafficking hotline notice in all government buildings. Removes the sunset date for this requirement in law.

SB 130 Tillery - 19 **PASSED** Senate H.Judiciary

The right to an attorney may be waived in juvenile court, provided the waiver is made knowingly, voluntarily, and on the record. ***Currently, this right is assured by case law. This encodes it in statute.***

SR 146 Kennedy – 18 **PASSED** Senate H.Judiciary

CA to itemize victim rights when committed or attempted to be committed in violation of criminal or juvenile delinquency laws. They are the right to:

- Be treated with fairness, respect, and dignity
- Be present at all proceedings regarding the violation
- Be heard at proceedings regarding the release, plea, sentencing, disposition, or parole of the accused of the violation
- Have the proceeding occur without unreasonable delay
- Restitution, if authorized
- Refuse interview with the accused or a representative of the accused
- Be informed of all of these rights.

HB 149 Powell – 32 **PASSED** House S.Judiciary

Bodily fluids and tissue, both human and animal, need to be cleaned up after serious injury, illness, or death. Law enforcement with GBI oversight and Department of Natural Resources will establish rules and regulations, and license those who clean up such trauma sites and their employees. Entities must be licensed, bonded, free of drug use, have liability insurance up to \$1 million. Temporary licenses up to 90 days for specific services can be issued in case of a public health emergency or state of emergency.

SB 154 Kirk – 13 **PASSED** Senate H.Judiciary Non Civil

Aggravated assault on a police officer will now get a fine up to \$5000 in addition to imprisonment. Willful and malicious acts against a public safety officer in the line of duty by a juvenile shall result in parent and guardian fine of an unlimited amount.

SB 159 Anderson – 24 **PASSED** Senate H.Judiciary Non Civil

One shall be guilty of criminal trespass if one enters upon land or premises of another that has been marked with purple paint on trees or posts at least 8” long and 1” wide. ***Signs can be hidden or removed. Paint is harder to hide.***

HB 213 Golick – 40 **PASSED** House S.Judiciary

Adds fentanyl to morphine, opium, and heroin regarding the offense of trafficking in illegal drugs. ***Fentanyl is cheap to produce and is much stronger. It is often used to cut heroin, contributing to overdoses.***

SB 250 Mullis – 53 **PASSED** Senate H.Judiciary Non Civil

People who have been convicted of a sexual crime in another country can be put on the Sexual Registry in GA if they reside here.

HB 251 Ealum – 153 **PASSED** House S.Judiciary

During a declared emergency, Department of Corrects personnel and people in their custody and under their direction may go onto private property for property protection, debris removal, restoration of services, and infrastructure repair and relocation. They shall avoid interfering with the rights of the private property owner and shall vacate the property if the owner requests.

HB 258 Powell – 32 **PASSED** House S.Public Safety

Persons committing assault with a gun on a peace officer in the line of duty shall not have any portion of the sentence suspended, stayed, probated, deferred, or withheld, reduced by any earned time, early release, work release, leave or any other measure. Increases penalties for a second and third conviction.

HB 261 Werkheiser – 157 **PASSED** House S.Judiciary

First offender status can be granted retroactively for persons sentenced between March 1968 and October 1982. Sentence must have been for less than one year and would have been eligible for first offender status if it had been available.

SR 307 Unterman – 45 **PASSED** Senate

Creates the 14 member Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Joint Task Force to review and examine alternative approaches or models as to sentencing, expungement of convictions, requirements for registering as a sexual offender, and pimping and pandering definitions. Report due 12-1-17.

HB 343 Hilton – 95 **PASSED** House

Mentally retarded and mental retardation as terms are removed from the code, and instead uses intellectual disability and developmental disability. *Most states, 43, and the federal law have removed this terminology.*

GOVERNMENT – COUNTIES AND CITIES

HB 419 Silcox – 52 **PASSED** House

Counties and cities can further regulate fireworks between 10 a.m. and midnight for noise. *Currently, local governments may not subject anyone to noise ordinances until 9 p.m.*

GOVERNMENT - EMPLOYMENT

HB 202 Powell – 171 **PASSED** House S.Appropriations

Increases the salary of the governor to \$175,000 per year, currently \$139,000, effective 1 -1-19.

HB 312 Maxwell – 17 **PASSED** House S.Retirement

Employees Retirement System, ERS, may include as part of a deferred compensation plan, a Roth plan.

GUNS

SB 15 Rhett - 33 **PASSED** Senate H.Judiciary Non Civil

Retired law enforcement will incur no fee for a license to carry. Retired law enforcement must have served 10 years and retired in good standing.

HB 280 Ballinger – 23 **PASSED** House S.Judiciary

Weapons may be carried on postsecondary public campuses by license holders over age 21, except in buildings and property used for child care centers, sporting events, and student housing including fraternity and sorority houses.

Campus Carry. GA is one of 17 states that ban carrying weapons on campus.

HB 292 Jasperse – 11 **PASSED** House S.Judiciary

Anyone licensed to carry a weapon in another state may carry in GA for up to 90 days. Persons hunting or fishing, if licensed to do so, may carry a knife without a license while hunting or fishing. Law enforcement officers with 10 years of experience and honorably retired may carry a weapon in schools, at school functions, or on school buses without a license.

HB 406 Powell – 32 **PASSED** House S.Judiciary

Those licensed in other states to carry a weapon shall be able to carry a weapon in GA, if age 21 or over. *Reciprocity with other states cannot be 100% if the other state does not allow persons under 21 to carry. GA allows those between 18 and 21 to carry if they have been in the military.*

HEALTH

HB 65 Peake – 141 **PASSED** House S.Health & Human Services

For medical marijuana eligible patients, removes the requirement for ‘end stage treatment’ from a cancer, ALS, MS, Parkinson’s, or sickle cell diagnosis. Adds diagnoses of Tourette’s syndrome, autism, intractable pain, PTSD, Alzheimers, HIV, and AIDS to those eligible to be registered to legally possess medical marijuana. Hospice patients are exempted from registration.

SB 81 Unterman – 45 **PASSED** Senate H.Health & Human Services

Naloxone, which reverses opioid related overdoses, can now be dispensed by the state health officer per an executive order by the governor in December 2016. This bill codifies the executive order. Other provisions include requiring

pharmacists to report prescriptions for schedule II, III, IV, and V drugs, collection of stats on neonatal abstinence syndrome, and on-site inspections of drug abuse treatment and education programs.

SB 96 Watson – 1 **PASSED** Senate H.Health & Human Services

Death in a nursing home, hospice, or if suspicious or unusual, may be declared by a registered nurse, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, even if the patient is an organ donor. ***Currently, organ donor patients have to be declared dead by a physician.***

SB 103 Mullis – 53 **PASSED** Senate H.Insurance

Allows pharmacist to recommend alternative medication which will serve the patient, such as a generic.

SB 109 Williams – 27 **PASSED** Senate H.Health & Human Services

Recognition of Emergency Medical Services Personnel Licensure Interstate Compact (REPLICA) is a multistate compact to recognize EMTs, advanced EMTs and paramedics licensure, authority, and regulation from other states in the compact.

SB 121 Miller – 49 **PASSED** Senate H.Judiciary Non Civil

The state health officer may allow opioid antagonists to be accessible under a standing order statewide. Each pharmacy shall record every opioid antagonist dispensed and keep available for two years.

SB 153 Brass – 28 **PASSED** Senate S.Health & Human Services

Licensed hearing aid dealers may sell ready-made and preprogrammed devices not requiring a prescription to those over 18. Devices must be approved by the FDA and able to adjust volume.

HB 157 Kelley – 16 **PASSED** House S.Health & Human Services

Repeals the provision that physicians who advertise or hold themselves out to the public can be requested to provide evidence of their certification in their specialty. ***The law created a monopoly for two entities that board certified physicians. The repeal gives the legislature a chance to start over with this situation of providers claiming to be certified when they're not or their credentials are less than preferred.***

HB 165 Price – 48 **PASSED** House S.Health & Human Services

Physicians should not be required to fulfill professional development requirements in addition to medical board certification in the area of practice as a prerequisite for hospital or staff privileges, employment in state medical facilities, reimbursement from third parties or malpractice insurance coverage.

SB 166 Unterman – 45 **PASSED** Senate H.Health & Human Services

Nurse Licensure Compact. The GA Board of Nursing may enter into this compact with other states so nurses have reciprocity to practice in those states. ***There are 120,000 registered nurses in GA and 24 other states in the compact.***

SB 193 Unterman – 45 **PASSED** Senate

Positive Alternatives for Pregnancy and Parenting Grant Program will no longer have references to medically indigent women, but will promote the substantial state interest of public health by providing, extending, and improving direct maternal and child health services and access to maternal and child health services.

SB 200 Hufstetler – 52 **PASSED** Senate

Allows doctors and pharmacists to prescribe and dispense medications for chronic illnesses for less than 30 days so patients can synchronize refills.

SB206 Martin – 9 **PASSED** Senate

Requires health insurance policies to cover hearing aids for children 18 years and under.

SB 221 Unterman – 45 **PASSED** Senate

Permits optometrists to administer certain drugs by injection.

HB 322 Hitchens – 161 **PASSED** House

Veterans eligible for admission to the war veterans home are those serving until 8-1-90, currently 5-7-75.

HB 360 Cooper – 43 **PASSED** House S.Health & Human Services

Expedited partner therapy is that given to sexual partners of those diagnosed with chlamydia or gonorrhea and are treated with antibiotics without examination.

HB 382 Pruett – 149 **PASSED** House S.Health & Human Services

GA Commission on Women shall be placed under the Department of Public Health for budgetary purposes only.

HB 427 Newton – 123 **PASSED** House S.Health & Human Services

Cancellable loans for dentists, physician assistants, and advanced practice registered nurses are available if they work in rural areas. *Physicians already can get this.*

HIGHER EDUCATION

HB 51 Ehrhart – 36 **PASSED** House S.Higher Education

College students suspected of having committed a crime are to be reported immediately by the enrolling institution to the local law enforcement entity or district attorney for investigation. The institution shall not conduct an investigation unless it is done by POST certified officers of the campus law enforcement agency. Suspension of the student is allowed at any time, but final disciplinary action is to be taken only after a guilty conviction or plea of nolo contendere. All public institutions and any private entities whose students may receive Tuition Equalization Grants are covered by this policy.

Sponsor claims that due process has not always been followed by colleges when dealing with felony accusations.

HB 432 Dubnik – 29 **PASSED** House S.Higher Education

Tuition equalization grants may be made to unaccredited schools if they were previously approved. *TEGs go to private postsecondary colleges in GA for instate students enrolled and are credited against the student's tuition liability. It is the state's way of acknowledging that there would have been a cost if that student had enrolled in one of the public universities. It currently runs about \$1000/year. So why does the state want to support colleges that can't keep their accreditation?*

REVENUE/TAXATION

SB 5 Cowsert – 46 **PASSED** Senate H.Appropriations

Establishes the percentage of lottery proceeds which must be transferred to the state Lottery for Education Account. In 2018, it shall be 26.5% of gross receipts; in 2019, 27.5%; and in 2020 and beyond, 28.5%. If the lottery revenues decline by .5% or more, the percentage to be transferred does not rise. *The original lottery legislation required 30% of proceeds to be transferred to the lottery fund, with 35% in the first year. There have been only one or two years since its inception in 1993 when 30% was transferred. Currently, about 25.5% is transferred. This proposal requires a 1% increase per year for three years.*

SR 104 Heath – 31 **FAILED** in Senate **RECONSIDERED**

CA to prohibit the levy of a state wide property tax. *Currently, this is not collected by law. Those opposed said that it is a tool in the tool box if the state needs it, so why put it in the constitution and make it harder to access if needed. When imposed, this tax was one quarter of a mill, about \$20 a year on property worth \$200,000 with no exemptions.*

HB 118 Kelley – 16 **PASSED** House S.Finance

Requires licensing, registration, and taxation of fantasy contest operators by the state. Players must be over 18. No betting on college sports. *Taxes the game operators, not the players. Fantasy football, fantasy basketball, fantasy baseball, etc. Sponsor considers these games of skill, thus the players are not taxed, except on winnings.*

SB 134 Shafer – 48 **PASSED** Senate

SAVE, EARN, WIN Act. Banks and credit unions may enter a depositor into a raffle when the depositor puts money into a savings account.

HB 142 Frye – 118 **PASSED** Senate

Imposes fees on employers for late delivery of required W-2 and 1099 forms to employees. Effective for tax year 2017.

HB 155 Carter - 175 **PASSED** House

An income tax credit up to 15% for expenses by a production company of state certified musical or theater productions or recorded musical performances. A minimum expenditure in GA is required. Aggregate state credit in year 1 is \$5 million, year 2 is \$10 million, and \$15 million in years 3 through 5. Sunsets in 2022.

HB 181 Lott – 122 **PASSED** House S.Finance

The Revenue Commissioner may provide confidential personal sales tax information to a county finance officer or tax commissioner for the purpose of researching anomalies, errors, misuse of sales tax exemptions, etc. The information remains confidential and abnormalities may be revealed only to the commissioner or members of the county or city government authority in executive session.

HB 196 Dollar – 45 **PASSED** House S.Finance

An income tax exemption for music royalties paid to a musical artist. *Estimated cost to state is \$25 million.*

HB 204 Harrell – 106 **PASSED** House S.Finance

Property tax bills shall not include any non-tax fees such as storm water or solid waste service fees. These separate billings can be included in one mailing. Any partial payment is credited first to the property tax bill. *Taxpayers who receive these fees on their property tax bills tend to report the total paid as a tax deduction. Fees are not tax deductible. These proposals will increase income tax collected by denying such deductibles.*

HB 225 Powell – 171 **PASSED** House S.Finance

The sales tax of 4% shall be collected by ride sharing providers from the customers. Local governments can require that their sales tax can be collected. *Uber has contended that they do not own the vehicles and do not do the driving so they should not pay. The state argues that the Uber app creates the revenue, so Uber should pay.*

HB 325 Stephens – 164 **PASSED** House S.Finance

Property taxes for income producing property are to be based on actual income and expenses provided by the owner. *Currently, this data is used if available. It appears this proposal is requiring it to be made available by the owner.*

HB 329 Powell – 171 **PASSED** House S.Finance

Income tax will be a flat 5.4%. Creates a nonrefundable earned income tax credit for low income taxpayers.

HB 340 Blackmon – 146 **PASSED** House S.Finance

Changes the alternative property tax distribution between local government entities, i.e. county, city, school districts.

HB 342 Efstrotation – 104 **PASSED** House S.Finance

Sales taxes are exempt within an enterprise zone.

HB 357 Stephens – 164 **PASSED** House S.Finance

All water vessels are to be titled unless exempted. If hull is damaged, the title shall be so marked. Caps tax at \$600 for each vessel, \$15,000 in value. Those vessels worth more are not taxed more.

TRANSPORTATION/DRIVING

SB 183 Beach – 21 **PASSED** Senate H.Transportation

State Road and Tollway Authority may extend a toll for additional purposes.

HB 234 Frye – 118 **PASSED** Senate S.Public Safety

Rapid-flash beacons at unsignalized intersections or mid-block crosswalks activated by pedestrians or bicycle riders shall require vehicles to stop until the pedestrian or bicycle has cleared the intersection or crosswalk.

HB 253 Willard - 51 **PASSED** Senate

Increase the amount from the sale of specialty license plates that support sterilization services for dogs and cats through the Department of Agriculture. The amount now \$5 per new specialty plate and \$10 for each specialty plate renewal.

HB 287 Kirby – 114 **PASSED** House S.Veterans, Military, & Homeland Security

Adds stepparents to those who may get a Gold Star vehicle license plate free. Gold Star license plates are for parents, spouses, siblings and spouses of siblings of military personnel killed in action.

HB 320 Hitchens – 161 **PASSED** House

Counterfeit air bags sold, installed, or traded is a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature, currently just a misdemeanor. *Counterfeit air bags can be dangerous by spewing metal parts if triggered, causing injury.*

HB 390 Setzler – 35 **PASSED** House

There shall be no points and minimal fine if a traffic offense occurs traveling less than 5 mph or did not result in a direct threat of harm to anyone.

HB 412 Barr - 103 **PASSED** House

Authorizes a study to see if renewals of commercial vehicles may no longer get a decal. Renewal and registration of commercial vehicles shall be submitted electronically. Effective 1-1-18 motor vehicle dealers shall electronically submit all applications for certificates of title.

LOCAL

HB 506 Taylor – 79 **PASSED** House

MARTA contracts for concessions vendors can be awarded to those who provide the best performance and return to MARTA, not just the highest return without regard for performance or service.

HB 132 Bruce – 61 **PASSED** House & Senate **TGFS**

Repeals the local constitutional amendment to keep Fulton County Industrial Park as unincorporated, effective 1-1-18. Requires a vote of the citizens. If HB 131 also passes, the City of South Fulton will absorb the industrial park.

HB 361 Willard – 51 **PASSED** House S.State & Local Government

Fulton Schools Pension contributions made by the employees shall be considered employer contributions for tax purposes.

HB 377 Beskin – 54 **PASSED** House S.State & Local Government

Clarifies the manner of election of the chair of the Fulton County Commission.

HB 439 Beskin – 54 **PASSED** House S.State & Local Government

Two tax parcels are being deannexed from the City of Atlanta into the City of Sandy Springs. This bill will be effective only if HB 440 passes in the 2017 General Assembly.

HB 440 Beskin – 54 **PASSED** House S.State & Local Government

Two tax parcels are being annexed into the City of Sandy Springs from the City of Atlanta. This bill will be effective only if HB 439 passes in the 2017 General Assembly.

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