

Bills are **SIGNED** unless otherwise indicated. This report is posted on www.lwvaf.org.

The governor has 40 calendar days, May 8, to sign or veto legislation. If a bill is not signed, it becomes law anyway. Resolutions and constitutional amendments need no signature. Bills which did not pass this year are dead. They must be reintroduced for consideration next session.

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|-------------------|-----|---------------|-----|
| Total bills | 124 | | |
| Resolutions NNS | 15 | | |
| CAs | 4 | | |
| Bills to governor | 105 | SIGNED | 101 |
| | | VETOED | 4 |

CA = constitutional amendment. Requires a 2/3s vote in each chamber and a majority vote in the next general election in November 2018. CAs need no signature and go directly to the ballot.

NNS = Needs No Signature

BUDGET

count = 2

HB 683 Ralston – 7 F2018 Amended Budget. The current year budget is being amended to reflect the increase in revenues of \$300 million. The governor increased his revenue estimate another \$109 million reflecting increases in income in December and January. The top items are:

\$29.7 million in Community Affairs for grants to local governments to replace funding now received from sales taxes on jet fuel. Taxes earned at airports must be spent at airports, the feds say. Previously it went to local governments and school districts.

\$10 million in Community Affairs for beach nourishment projects, after recent hurricanes.

27 million in Community Health to reflect increased need in Medicaid

23 million in Community Health to provide a state match for hospital federal funds

1.2 million in Community Health to pay for flu cases in hospitals

3 million in Corrections for emergency repairs, sustainment, and equipment

4.5 million in Economic Development & Tourism for development grants

102 million in Education for QBE student increases not part of projected enrollment in original budget

15.8 million in Education to buy 204 local school buses @ \$77,000 each with cash, not bonds as in the past.

Bus life is about 12 years, and there are over 1300 school buses older than this in the state.

3 million in Forestry Commission to combat wildfires.

15 million in Human Services for Out-of-Home Care utilization

5 million in GBI for implementation of the statewide criminal justice e-filing system

2.7 million in Natural Resources to provide additional public access and land management activities

1.6 million in Natural Resources for improvements at Jekyll Island Great Dunes and Ocean View Parks

5.2 million in Public Health for GA Trauma Care from Super Speeder fines and collections

4 million in Public Safety to purchase 93 law enforcement pursuit vehicles @ \$43,000 each

10 million in University System for Augusta University Graduate Medical School to cover an operating deficit

60.7 million in Revenue for Forestland Protection grant reimbursements

43 million for land conservation grants

9.6 million in Student Finance Commission for additional students in dual enrollment programs, Lottery funds

18 million in Student Finance Commission for public school students for the Zell Miller scholarship, Lottery funds

12.3 million in Technical Colleges for marketing and equipment

25.7 million in DOT to expand 13 runway lengths to handle larger aircraft.

8.7 million in Justice to equip and furnish the new \$100 million courthouse being built on the old Archives building site.

HB 684 Ralston – 8 FY2019 Budget for the year beginning July 1, 2018. A sampling of items to spend the over \$1 billion in revenue expected, including \$195 million additional added by the governor late in the session, are:

\$316 million to shore up Teacher Retirement funds spread through budgets of Education, University System, and Technical College System of GA

20 million in Behavioral Health and Development Disabilities for children’s mental health

6 million in Behavioral Health and Development Disabilities for autistic children under age 21

3.7 million in Economic Development, OneGeorgia Authority, for economic development projects

144 million in Community Health, net, for Medicaid-Aged Blind and Disabled

97 million in Community Health for Medicaid-Low Income

4.4 million in Corrections to increase private prison correctional officer pay.

(95 million) reduction in DOE to reflect QBE reduction because of increased local property values

167 million in Education to **eliminate** the annual austerity cut to QBE, in effect since 2003. ***QBE statutory requirements are now fully met. It is not yet fully funded as cost components have not been adjusted for inflation since 1988.***

31 million in Education in Equalization Funds to low wealth school districts

112 million in Education to local school systems for additional students enrolled

5 million in Education for State Commission Charter School supplemental funds

1.6 million in Education for student mental health awareness training

15 million in Education for replacement of buses, bonds

15 million in Education for School Safety, bonds

1.6 million in Office of Student Achievement for a statewide leadership academy

-.75 million in Office of Student Achievement for one non-STEM AP exam fee for low income students

2.3 million in GBI to combat the opioid epidemic

27.3 million in Human Services for Out-Of-Home Care

2.7 million in Natural Resources for additional law enforcement rangers

2 million in Public Health to address maternal mortality in GA

54.3 million in Regents for increases in enrollment and square footage

1.4 million in Regents for Public Libraries technology improvements

26.7 million in Student Finance Commission to fund additional students in dual enrollment programs, Lottery funds

35.7 million in Student Finance Commission for increased funds for public school students HOPE scholarships, Lottery

30 million in Student Finance Commission to fund HOPE Zell Miller scholarships, Lottery funds

12.2 million in Transportation for capital construction projects

100 million to repair, replace or renovate bridges statewide, bonds

35 million for the Savannah Harbor deepening project to match federal funds, bonds

100 million for State Road and Tollway Authority for transit needs state wide, bonds

121.4 million increased debt service costs.

CHILDREN

count = 5

SB 131 Tillery – 19 Adoption proceedings will be stayed while an appeal of an order to terminate parental rights is pending.

HB 159 Reeves – 34 Enacts the recommendations on child adoptions by the GA Child Support Commission which developed them over 3 years. A parent may give a power of attorney to someone other than the grandparent to make parental decisions, particularly on health and school issues, for a year. The affidavit recipient must pass a background check and the annual affidavit must be filed with the probate court. The birth mother will have 96 hours to make her decision about keeping the child or giving it up for adoption. ***Living expenses for the mother paid by private attorneys were removed from the bill as was the religious language. A power of attorney may be needed by single parents called to military duty, with health issues or other situations where the parent may not be a home to care for the child. The adoption law has not been updated in over 30 years. Includes out-of-state and foreign adoption. Covers***

only state adoptions. Private adoptions will be covered in another bill. A Senate study committee will be formed to look at the costs of and issues that may have to be dealt with in private placement adoptions.

HB 344 Dempsey – 13 Allows certain parties other than movants to request a paternity test from DHS in a case regarding child support orders.

HB 513 Dickerson – 113 Hospitals are to post signs that they are a safe place to leave newborns for adoption as prescribed by the Department of Community Health.

HB 906 Dempsey – 13 Department of Human Service records from foster parents or former foster parents are not eligible for public disclosure except for the name. Department of Family and Children Services may provide extended care youth services to foster children between the ages of 18 and 21, during which time a transition plan will be developed. Placement of a child shall require DFCS to provide the foster or pre-adoptive parent, caregiver, or relative specific information to ease the transition – how to enroll in school, any available financial assistance, contact information for county/district DFCS, medical information, any court dates scheduled, health insurance information.

EDUCATION – PREK – 12

count = 23

SB 3 Tippins – 37 Creating Opportunities Needed Now to Expand Credentialed Training, CONNECT, is a grade 6-12 career education program which includes work based learning such as internships, apprenticeships, cooperative education, service learning or employability skill development. Department of Education to develop the program with Technical College System of GA and may include industry credentialing. Updates to the 6-12 capital outlay programs to include career education labs and facilities to support industry credentialing and may include funds for equipment grants. Adds industry credentialing to programs of schools eligible to receive students in the BRIDGE program, Building Resourceful Individuals to Develop GA's Economy. This and other industry credentialing programs are for schools which are low performing.

HB 217 Carson – 46 Income tax credits for school scholarship organizations, SSOs, to provide expenses to students attending a private school are increased to \$100 million for 10 years then will revert back to the current \$58 million. Annual reporting requirements must include the number of scholarships given to poverty level students. Establishes a sales tax exemption for charitable organizations, 501.c.3's, for noncommercial materials and mailings if located in GA and provided to charity supporters for education, charitable, religious, or fundraising purposes. Tax is paid to the vendor, and submitted to Department of Revenue for a refund. Exemption expires 7-1-21. The Public Education Innovation Fund Foundation income tax credit sunset is extended until 2023. The tax credit is \$1000 for single taxpayers and \$2500 for joint taxpayers. The proceeds are used for public schools that need financial help in increasing their student achievement. **League of Women Voters OPPOSES the voucher component of this bill.**

SB 330 Wilkinson – 50 Georgia Agriculture Education Act. Agriculture education in grades 6-12 will be based on a nationally recognized model with 3 parts, daily instruction, hands on real-world learning through supervised agriculture experience (SAE), with leadership and learning opportunities through Future Farmers of America participation. DOE shall develop the curriculum with input from agriculture education teachers. A pilot program will begin in 2019-2020 to provide agriculture education in 6 elementary schools, one in each Agriculture Education region which shall be evaluated at the end of the third year with a report to legislative Education committees. Professional Standards Commission shall extend the agriculture education in-field certification to elementary school (K-5) teachers.

SB 362 Tippins – 37 The State Board of Education shall establish an innovative assessment pilot program of 3 to 5 years to examine one or more alternative assessments (tests) and accountability systems aligned with state academic standards. Up to 10 school districts may participate, selected by the SBOE, and each would be excused from using the state testing instruments. SBOE will handle any necessary approvals or waivers needed from USED. The SBOE and DOE will demonstrate comparability between innovative assessments chosen and state-wide assessments. Effective 2018-19 school year. **DOE worked closely with author to develop this program as did some school districts.**

SB 401 Tippins – 37 Students in middle school will have their career oriented aptitudes in addition to their career interests be a factor in developing their individual graduation plan to be used in selecting some high school courses. In 2018, school counselor roles in grades 6-12 will be reviewed by DOE and a report prepared for the state board of education and the General Assembly by 12-31-2018. The report shall include recommendations for changes to ensure student success. This study is effective for 2018 only. Technical colleges which have dual enrolled high school students are to report grades and other student aspects of the course to Office of Student Achievement for inclusion in the longitudinal data system. Age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education for K-9 students added to the existing sex ed requirement. ***This curriculum has been implemented in 31 states. There is a curriculum for sex ed available with federal funding.***

HB 494 Dempsey – 13 Early Care and Learning hearings regarding emergency closure of a program shall permit hearsay evidence. Background checks of directors, employees, provisional employees and employee applicants shall be comprehensive, not just a fingerprint check. If the person does not pass, that person cannot work nor live at the facility while children are present. No one convicted of crimes against children can be in the facilities with children present.

HB 718 Scott – 76 Up to 5 excused absences each year for two years are to be allowed for students of active or former military on extended active duty for the student to attend individual or group therapy as recommended by a licensed physician or psychologist.

HB 739 Williams – 168 Renames the law section that permits expedited certification for military spouses the Tracey Rainey Act. ***She is the wife of a military general and has publicized far and wide the GA program for military spouses.***

HB 740 Nix – 69 Before PreK-3 students are to be given out of school suspension for more than five days in the school year, the student shall be enrolled in the RTI, Response to Intervention, process to determine if there are any physical reasons for the misbehavior, such as vision, hearing, or speech-language issues. Does not apply for infractions of possession of a weapon, drugs or other dangerous instruments or if the student's behavior endangered others. Requires parental permission. Special education students or those under Section 504 shall have a meeting convened to review appropriate supports for the student. ***Statewide, 2600 students in this age group receive suspensions exceeding 4 days at a time when the schools are trying to lay the foundations for literacy. RTI is a process defined at the federal level for students who have disciplinary issues and a cause, if any, needs to be determined.***

HB 763 Nix – 69 Improvement in school climate shall become a focus of the student attendance committee for each school system. Student discipline data is to be included in the annual report to the state board of education. Requires schools to practice the response to risks as defined in their safety plans on a schedule recommended by GEMA. ***Safety plans are already required for GEMA oversight. GEMA is to set a schedule for schools to practice the responses defined in those plans so all will know what to do. Fire drills and weather related situations already are required.***

HB 787 Hilton – 95 State charter schools may be members of RESAs, Regional Education Service Agencies, and utilize any services provided to membership. Changes the state charter school funding in lieu of a local tax digest to be based on a state-wide average, currently an average of the 5 lowest wealthy school systems. Forward funding for expected enrollment over 2%, to be adjusted with the October student count. Virtual charters will get funding for the hardware provided to students and the servers to handle them, 25% of capital that goes to brick and mortar students. ***Traditional schools must wait until the midterm budget to get paid for the number of students who have enrolled over the previous year and get no money for computer hardware. A fiscal note indicates the cost of changing the funding basis will cost \$17 million in the first year. There are 90,000 students enrolled in charter schools, 33,000 in the 32 state charter schools; traditional schools have 1.7 million. Three state charter schools are virtual schools - one will close in May 2018.*** A grant for students in an institution of the University System, if appropriated by the General Assembly, of \$1500/semester if several conditions are met: family income is \$48,000 or under, students is receiving a federal PELL grant but not a HOPE scholarship, has a high school GPA of at least 2.3, and either ACT scores of 21 or higher, SAT scores of 480 or higher on the reading-writing portion and 530 or higher on math, earned a 3 or better on at least 2 Advanced

Placement courses, 4 or higher on at least 2 International Baccalaureate exams, or passed an end-of-gateway assessment under the Carl Perkins Act. Additionally, the student must work 15 hours/week during the semester and maintain a GPA of at least 2.3.

HB 844 Houston – 170 The Georgia Commission for Persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing is the new name for the existing GA Commission of Hearing Impaired and Deaf Persons. Membership is increased to 10, from 7, and includes those who are deaf or hard of hearing, use American Sign Language or Spoken English or a combination. A task force with this commission shall make recommendations to the governor and General Assembly regarding improvements to services to these populations from birth through literacy at the end of grade 3. Establishes coordination between Departments of Education, Early Care and Learning, and Health.

HB 852 Smith – 41 Allows school systems to permit a student to finish a school year at the school enrolled if more than half the school year has elapsed when the student’s residence changes, as long as student is still living within the school system. Parent will be responsible for transportation of the student. Students with chronic disciplinary problems are excluded from this privilege. ***Currently, many school systems allow similar options.***

HB 853 Dempsey – 13 No student placed in a psychiatric residential treatment facility by the parent pursuant to a physician’s order can be charged tuition. ***There are 6 facilities in the state. A student who is admitted will continue the student’s educational program. If there is an IEP, it will also follow the student. Funds will be supplied by the home school for the duration of the stay.***

HR 898 Coleman – 97 Creates the 15-member Joint Study Committee on the Establishment of a State Accreditation Process. Members include 3 legislators from each chamber, state school superintendent, state board of education chair, state Charter School Commission chair, Office of Student Achievement director, chancellor of the University System, and five appointees of the governor to include a local board of education member, a local school superintendent, a principal, a teacher, and a parent. The group is to study the resources and structure needed, any impediments, the interaction with existing private accreditation agencies, aligning accreditation reviews with charter or contract renewals for charter systems and strategic waiver systems, establishment of a state process for annual review of system charters and contracts including student achievement, local board of education governance and financial management, possible consequences of losing state accreditation and the possibility of establishing a school board review commission. Report due 12-1-18. ***Called for in legislation passed last year. Current accreditation looks at local school governance but not much academics.***

SR 935 Albers – 56 **NNS** Creates an 8-member Senate School Safety Study Committee to ensure a safe learning environment for students and to evaluate the policies, plans, and procedures in place to respond to any emergency.

HB 978 Nimmer - 178 Authorizes the use of speed detection devices with camera within a school zone . Owner must pay the fine of \$250, reduced from \$300 for first offense, or have notification go to the Department of Revenue which will not allow renewal of the vehicle license or transfer of title until the fine and fees are paid. A school safety zone is 1000 feet around the perimeter of the school property. Allows motor vehicles to continue moving when a school bus is stopped on a divided highway, as well as a highway with separate roadways. Reduces the fine for not stopping for a school bus to \$200, currently \$300 for the first offense and \$750 for the second, and \$1000 for each subsequent offense in a five year period. If fines are not paid, the owner will not be able to renew the registration of the motor vehicle nor transfer the title within the state.

HR 1017 Corbett - 104 **NNS** Encourages all schools and local and state education agencies to recognize that dyslexia must be addressed because it has a profound effect on education of the person who has it.

HR 1036 Kendrick – 93 **NNS** Encourages schools to offer computer skills, and to ensure access to them by all students. Computing jobs are the number one source of new wages in the U.S., the average salary for such jobs is almost twice the average salary for all jobs, and there are 20,000 open computing jobs now in the state.

SR 1064 Sims – 12 **NNS** Creates a 5-member Senate Study Committee on Continual Audit Exceptions of Local School Systems to determine if there should be additional penalties for school systems that have the same audit exceptions over several years.

SR 1068 Gooch – 51 **NNS** An 11-member Senate Study Committee on Evaluating the School Calendar of GA Public Schools relative to tourism needing low-wage workers and tourists.

HR 1162 Coleman – 97 **NNS** Creates the 5-member House Study Committee on the Establishment of a State Accreditation Process to study the resources and structure needed, any impediments, the interaction with existing private accreditation agencies, aligning accreditation reviews with charter or contract renewals for charter systems and strategic waiver systems, establishment of a state process for annual review of system charters and contracts including student achievement, local board of education governance and financial management, possible consequences of losing state accreditation and the possibility of establishing a school board review commission. Report due 12-1-18. **Called for in legislation passed last year. Current accreditation looks at local school governance but not academics.**

HR 1414 Jasperse – 11 **NNS** A 9-member House Study Committee on School Safety will look at various factors which can affect school safety and how to curb incidents of school violence and facilitate life-saving responses to same.

EDUCATION – POSTSECONDARY

count = 5

SB 82 Jackson – 2 Residency requirements for HOPE scholarship and grant for students will be satisfied if the student is in the GA National Guard, the reserves of any U.S. armed forces, an active duty military service member stationed in GA or lists GA as the member's home of record or the member's spouse or dependent child.

SB 331 Henson – 41 Lottery winners of more than \$250,000 may remain anonymous with a written request from winner. **Four states currently allow total anonymity and several more offer partial confidentiality to winners.**

SB 339 Ligon – 3 University System of GA and its institutions shall adopt policies to allow free speech as long as it does not disrupt instruction or conflict with another's rights. Restrictions of student speech allowed for activity not protected by the First Amendment, such as violations of state or federal law, defamation, harassment, threats, invasion of privacy, or action that unlawfully disrupts the function of the institution. **This bill initially was significantly more restrictive on the university system, but was amended to allow governance to protect the primary purposes of the campus, that is to instruct, and to allow some regulation on the use of space to avoid conflict with other groups.**

HB 432 Dubnik – 29 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 currently runs about \$1000/year. The state is acknowledging that there would have been a cost if that student had enrolled in one of the public universities. The proposal is for two institutions that were for-profit and converted to not-for-profit and have not yet resolved a couple of issues in their new accreditation request. Each was eligible for TEGs prior to the conversion.**

HB 700 Belton – 112 The service cancellable loan available to GA National Guard members for undergraduate degrees is extended to post graduate degrees. The Guard member must remain active in the Guard for two years following the last period of study for the degree.

ELECTIONS/ETHICS

count = 2

HB 907 Fleming – 121 If there is a vacancy in the office of district attorney with 27 months or less left in the term, the governor appoints a successor. A special election is to be called for the next state wide general election to fill that term. **This process is the same as that of a superior court judge vacancy.**

HB 973 Jones – 47 Lobbyists shall acknowledge and agree to abide by the sexual harassment policy of the General Assembly by signing a written document when being issued a lobbying badge. The badge can be revoked or not issued if there are violations of the policy.

GOVERNMENT - GENERAL

count = 12

SB 17 Unterman – 45 The Brunch or Mimosa Bill. Sunday alcohol sales may begin at 11 a.m. in private establishments and wineries if approved in a local referendum. Government owned facilities such as GA World Congress Center already have this privilege. **Currently, private establishments may not serve alcohol until 12:30 on Sunday. There are about 4000 such establishments in the state.**

HB 190 Hanson – 80 Updates and clarifies antenuptial agreements, prenups. Must be in writing and signed by both parties with two witnesses, one of which is a notary. **Currently, GA doesn't require that these contracts be written and witnessed.**

HB 309 Barr – 103 The state shall incur no liability when an organized militia, GA State Defense Force or the GA National Guard, is engaged in state or federal duty or training except for vehicle accidents. **GA State Defense Force is uniformed but unarmed; GA National Guard is both uniformed and armed. The governor may call up either entity when needed, often to help with weather emergencies.**

SB 338 Ligon – 3 **VETOED** Allows the General Assembly to have oversight over executive branch regulations from departments and agencies. Requires 60 days notice before a rule change, adoption, or repeal, with a public hearing 30 days before the vote. Rules adopted become effective 30 days after being sent to the Secretary of State, currently after 20 days. The rules will be sent to the presiding officer of each chamber who will forward each to a relevant committee chair. The committee may object to the rule by a majority vote after which a resolution may be adopted by the full chamber and sent to the other chamber. If adopted by both chambers, the agency rule is no longer effective. There are provisions for emergency regulations in cases of health and safety and if complying with federal requirements.

SB 376 Shafer – 48 Bans consumer credit reporting agencies from charging a fee for placing or removing a security freeze on a customer's account. **Currently, fees of \$3 to \$10 are allowed for each action.**

SB 402 Gooch – 51 Achieving Connectivity Everywhere, ACE, Act. Broadband and other communications technologies may be deployed on interstate highway rights of way if enabled by DOT. DOT in consultation with Georgia Technology Authority will plan for, establish, and implement a long-term policy regarding use of interstate highway rights of way and state owned roads for such purposes. Authorizes electric and telephone cooperatives to provide broadband services within their geographical areas. The Department of Community Affairs will determine underserved broadband areas of the state and there shall be a state emphasis on contracting for service to those areas. DCA will establish a Georgia Broadband Ready Community Site designation to cities which adopt policies to have their citizens be served by broadband providers. A model policy will be provided by DCA. Grants, if appropriated, will be available for broadband underserved communities. **This proposal is for expansion of the 5G technology which can move data through boxes mounted on existing utility poles. It does not need the height of existing cell towers. This is a very extensive proposal.**

SR 607 Kirk – 13 **NNS** Senate commends Mrs. Eunice Lastinger Mixon as the Distinguished Older Georgian for 2018. **Mrs. Mixon was a doorkeeper in the Senate for 12 years where I first met her. Her first name is Sally which she didn't use because it was also the name of another female family member. She also served on the state Board of Elections and board of Student Finance Commission. Eventually, she joined the League to support our work.**

HB 699 Belton – 112 Documented military firefighting training may be accepted as basic firefighting training. The GA State Firefighters Standards and Training Council may by rule or regulation waive the high school diploma requirement.

SR 711 Miller – 49 **NNS** Senate recognizes the handoff from the Minnesota Super Bowl Host Committee to that of Atlanta which is hosting Super Bowl LIII in February 2019.

SR 737 Seay – 34 **NNS** Senate recognized Senator Nan Orrock for her induction into the National Center for Civil and Human Rights Museum Walk of Fame. **Senator Orrock represents southeast Atlanta and parts of TriCities south of Atlanta.**

SR 794 Miller – 49 Creates the 6 member Joint Georgia-North Carolina and Georgia-Tennessee Boundary Line Commission, 3 legislators from each chamber. The boundary is to lie at the 35th parallel, north of the southernmost bank of the Tennessee River. A flawed survey of 1818 erroneously marked the 35th parallel south of its actual location and the survey was never accepted by Georgia. Several attempts have been made to adjust the borders to the true location of the 35th parallel but none has been successful. **Georgia wants the 35th parallel accurately defined so it can access water from the Tennessee River.**

HB 809 Hitchens – 161 Georgia State Patrol vehicles may be painted in a solid color. **Currently, they must be two-toned, light grey and dark blue. The single color is not identified in this bill.**

GOVERNMENT – COUNTIES AND CITIES

count = 8

HB 257 Tankersley – 160 A local government entity must register with the Department of Community Affairs to receive state funds, and shall not incur debt or credit obligations before registering.

SB 324 Albers – 56 Cities may contract with any abutting county for the construction and maintenance of bridges within the boundaries of both the city and county. **Currently, cities may contract only with the county in which part of the city lies.**

HB 381 Corbett – 174 Vacant mobile homes can be classified as derelict or intact for purposes of disposal or creation of liens by the local authority governing the land on which it is located. The owner of the land can have the vacant mobile home removed if derelict, or the owner of the mobile home will have a lien imposed for costs to make the home habitable.

SB 397 Watson – 1 Cities and counties may hire state licensed real estate brokers to help sell surplus real property.

HB 419 Silcox – 52 Counties and cities can further regulate fireworks between 10 a.m. and midnight for noise. Governor may restrict fireworks in areas of drought. **Currently, local governments may not subject anyone to noise ordinances until 9 p.m.**

HB 475 Harden – 148 Collection receptacles for donations placed on private property must have written notarized permission of the owner or leaseholders. If asked to be removed, the owner of the receptacles must comply within 30 days. If no compliance, a judge may assess a fine of up to \$2500. Local government may opt to remove receptacle from boundaries of local government for up to three years. May set fines higher for receptacles owned by for-profit entities than those owned by non-profits.

HB 876 Corbett – 174 Local governments cannot ban use of wood in building construction if all other requirements are met. **Part of the Rural Agenda to support GA's forestry industry. Some cities have banned the use of wood in buildings over 3 stories tall to reduce the loss of life and property in apartment house fires.**

HR 1429 Hanson – 80 **NNS** Creates the 5-member House Study Committee on County Governance to study all forms of county governance to see if citizens are receiving the most efficient, effective, and responsive government and governmental services as possible. Report due 12-1-18.

SB 127 Kennedy – 18 Defines the process for victims to redress rights which may have been violated. Enabling legislation for SR 146.

SR 146 Kennedy – 18 **TO BALLOT** CA to itemize victim rights when committed or attempted to be committed in violation of criminal or juvenile delinquency laws. They have the right to:

- Be treated with fairness, respect, and dignity
- Timely, reasonable and accurate notice of arrest, release, or escape of the accused
- 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
- Be informed of one's rights.

Enabling legislation is SB 127. **36 states have encoded these rights in their constitutions.**

SB 315 Thompson – 14 **VETOED** Unauthorized computer access is defined as a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature. **GA is one of three states which has no violation for unauthorized access. A hack of Kennesaw University data was the genesis of this bill.**

SB 327 Albers – 56 A medical examiner's inquiry will no longer be required for patient deaths while untended by a physician. **A hospice patient probably would not require an inquiry. The coroner or medical examiner shall decide if an inquiry is needed. The GBI's morgue is behind on autopsies, so unnecessary ones will not contribute to the backlog.**

SR 588 Unterman – 45 **NNS** Senate lauds the Child Exploitation and Computer Crimes Unit of the GBI in its mission to detect, investigate and assist in prosecution of those who exploit children via the Internet and to conduct forensic analysis and processing related to criminal activity for the GBI and other law enforcement agencies. Declares January as the Human Trafficking Month at the Capitol.

HB 703 Hitchens – 161 Creates the Governor's Office of Public Safety Support to provide counseling and support to those in law enforcement, firefighters, prison guards, first responders. The director is appointed by the governor and shall have experience as a public safety officer. The office shall respond to requests to provide counseling services or any other critical incident support services for any incident including death or other tragedies. May use chaplains, mental health professionals and trained public safety officer personnel. The office shall develop and hold training courses in critical incident stress management. **Sponsor, a former GA State Patrol officer, indicates there is data to show that such support provided within the first 24 to 72 hours can keep officers from getting PTSD. The suicide rate among first responders is 10 times that of the general population. Counseling may improve that rate.**

HB 732 Silcox – 52 Expands the offense of trafficking a person for sexual servitude to include patronizing such person in addition to solicitation of that person.

HB 803 Willard – 41 Prohibits trafficking of a disabled adult, elder person or resident or of any taking of the property or money of such person for use by someone other than such person. Establishes penalties for such felonies.

HB 890 Fleming – 121 Using an emergency exit after shoplifting shall be a misdemeanor. **If caught, the shoplifters will be charged with one more crime. Emergency exits frequently have audible alarms which cause people to vacate stores. First responders then have far more obstacles to navigate in trying to find the shoplifters.**

HR 993 Efstrotation – 104 **TO BALLOT** CA to permit the state to establish a state-wide business court. Judges to be appointed by the governor for 5 year terms, not elected, and approved by a majority vote in both Judiciary Committees of the General Assembly. Permits any superior court to create a business court division.

GOVERNMENT - EMPLOYMENT

count = 3

SB 333 Black – 8 A city may choose to pay the costs or fees associated with an employee’s 401K type deferred compensation plan. A public employer may choose to automatically enroll all employees in such a plan. **Asked for by GA Municipal Association.**

HB 701 Tanner – 9 Applicants for state employment are tested for illegal drugs which now include opioids and derivatives. **Opioids are synthetic opiates.**

HB 816 Gravely – 67 Fingerprinting and criminal records checks shall be required to become an employee of Department of Revenue, must be renewed every 10 years, and must apply to contractors and their subcontractors.

GOVERNMENT – ENVIRONMENT

count = 1

HB 205 Meadows – 5 Regulates hydraulic fracking in GA to protect our underground fresh water supply. Increases drilling permit fee to \$500, now \$25. Raises bond maximum to \$100,000. Levies a severance tax on oil and gas extracted with 1/3 going to the county where the well is located and 2/3 to the state.

GUNS

count = 1

HB 657 Petrea – 166 Knowingly and intentionally providing a gun to a person on probation or as a felony first offender is a felony. But such provider is not required to inquire if the person receiving the gun is a felon.

HEALTH

count = 6

HB 65 Peake - 141 Adds 2 conditions for which THC (marijuana) oil can be prescribed, PTSD and intractable pain. The GA Composite Medical Board shall annually recommend, based on medical research, any additional conditions that may benefit from low THC oil. Creates a 10-member joint study committee to look at all aspects of in-state access to THC oil from acquiring the seeds to plant to destruction of any unused parts of the plant, security, training, distribution. There will be 3 legislators from each chamber and 2 citizens appointed by each presiding officer. Report is due 12-31-18.

SB 118 Unterman – 45 Autism must be covered by insurance up to age 21, currently age 6, for up to \$35,000/year, effective 1-1-19. **Currently, GA has the lowest age for capping coverage in the nation. Medicaid and the State Health Plan already cover autism until age 21.**

SB 321 Tillery – 19 Increases civil penalties for fraudulent Medicaid claims to the federally authorized amounts plus 3 times the damages which the GA Medicaid program sustains because of the act of the claimant. **Refers directly to federal law for the amounts. When federal law changes the amounts, state law does not need to be changed. Currently, the amounts in state law are between \$5500 and \$11,000; in federal law between \$11,181 and \$22,363.**

SB 370 Wilkinson – 50 Medicaid recipients who die shall have the first \$25,000 of their estate waived from recapture by Medicaid. **Currently, if the estate is valued under \$25,000, there is no recapture, but if it is above \$25,000, Medicaid takes all of it up to the Medicaid liability. Generally, this is the home, as eligibility for Medicaid limits other assets to \$2000.**

SB 382 Martin – 9 A Board of Optometry shall get prior approval from the Department of Public Health for an appropriate curriculum for any injectable training for optometrists so as to safeguard the public health of GA citizens.

SB 406 Strickland – 17 Owners, employees, and employee applicants of health care entities serving the elderly shall pass a background check. Owners will be fingerprinted.

HR 51 Powell - 171 **TO BALLOT** CA to modify an existing constitutional clause for valuing forest land conservation use under covenant. Forest land must be at least 200 acres and revalued every 3 years beginning with 2016. The state is authorized to make local grants to cities, counties and school districts to compensate for the loss of income due to the covenants. For five years, 2019 to 2023, the grants may be higher than the 50% of the loss now in law. The General Assembly may authorize a separate class of property which is that used in the production of trees for timber for commercial uses, 'qualified timberland property', the value of which is 175% of forest land conservation use. The required covenant is now for 10 years, down from 15. Enabling legislation is HB 85.

HB 61 Powell – 171 Retailers (e-tail and catalog sales), with annual sales of \$250,000 in the state or 200 transactions, who do not collect sales tax are to begin collecting and remitting it to the state or notifying each buyer that taxes are due, and filing with the state annually in January of the next year an itemized statement of each buyer in GA and the total amount of purchases made the previous tax year of \$500 or more. Effective 1-1-19. ***The collection of state sales tax of 4% is required; local tax collection is not. Think Amazon and other on line retailers. The state lost \$274 million in sales tax revenue due to internet sales; local entities collectively lost \$205 million.***

HB 85 Powell – 171 Qualified timberland property must be at least 50 contiguous acres and producing timber is the primary activity on the property. A separate valuation and appeal process is established for this property. The local assistance grants for 2019 through 2023 shall be 80%, 60%, 40%, 20%, and 0% of the difference of the grant in that year compared to the grant in 2018. Effective 1-1-19. Enabling legislation for HR 51.

HR 238 Watson – 172 **TO BALLOT** CA to put 80% of sales tax revenues from sporting goods stores into a trust fund to be used for protection and preservation of conservation land to protect drinking water sources, water quality, state and local parks and conserve forests, fish, wildlife habitats. The trust fund shall not lapse. Enabling legislation is HB 332. ***The constitution requires all funds unspent at year end to be returned to the general treasury. Because the funds in this trust account will not lapse, a constitutional amendment is required.***

SB 328 Albers – 56 Repeals as of 12-31-18 these income tax exemptions:

- Federal qualified transportation fringe benefits
- Private drivers education courses
- Diesel particulate emission reduction technology equipment.

Bills raising revenue must start in the House, but bills decreasing revenue may start in either chamber.

HB 329 Powell – 171 The title ad valorem tax on motor vehicles has been revised, again -- leased vehicles are valued at the amount to be paid under the contract plus any down payment; used cars are valued at the price paid, not the wholesale book value which is usually lower. MARTA and the Atlanta sewer sales tax revenues were never included in the TAVT revenue sharing, and that is remedied going back to 2012. The fees are remitted to the county in which the vehicle is to be housed, which withholds its share, 65%, and forwards the rest to the state. The county then keeps 51% of its share and sends 49% to the county school district. If the revenue is earned in a city, the county amount is 28% and the city is 23%. An independent school district serving the city gets the 49%. Effective 7-1-18. ***Currently, the local amounts are stated in the law per year and change annually. The bill makes the amounts more predictable for budgeting purposes of the local entities.***

HB 332 Watson – 172 Enabling legislation for HR 238.

SB 371 Anderson--24 Department of Revenue will furnish to cities a list of businesses within that collect sales taxes. The city may know of other businesses within that should be collecting sales taxes.

HB 696 Kelley – 16 A sales tax exemption until 2028 for computer equipment sold or leased for use in high-technology data centers if there is a \$20 million bond filed. A high-technology data center for a county of 50,000 or more means

\$250 million in aggregate costs for design, construction, and equipment over 10 years; in counties of 30,000 but less than 50,000, the investment required is \$150 million; in counties less than 30,000, the minimum investment is \$100 million. Annual reports of investment and jobs created to be filed with the Department of Revenue. Exemption can be revoked and repayment required if investment minimums are not met.

HB 697 Taylor – 173 A sales tax exemption until 2019 for purchases by non-profit health centers and volunteer health clinics. Current exemptions sunset on 6-30-18. ***The original proposal was for a 5 year extension. The legislature is waiting for information to extend for the additional 4 years.***

HB 735 Bentley – 139 An income tax credit for expenditures on the maintenance of a railroad track owned or leased by a Class III, short line, railroad as of 1-1-18. Credit is 50% of the total expenditures up to \$3500 per mile of track owned or leased by that railroad. Any credit claimed reduces the costs basis of the track. Effective 1-1-2019. Repealed 1-1-23. Some railroad property is exempt from county or city storm water fees if located within the railroad's right of way and covered with ballast and rail. A 50% income tax credit for 5 years for an employer who recycles post-consumer waste into polyester bulk continuous filament fiber and invests \$20 million in GA and creates 25 new full time employee jobs.

HB 749 Blackman – 146 Excludable from taxable net income is any military income received by a veteran when such income is based on the veteran's service record. If received by a surviving family member, it is excluded whatever the age of the beneficiary. ***GA is one of 9 states that does not exclude military retirement income. It is to be treated much like the Social Security exemption -- taxpayer must be 62 if disabled or 65 to claim the exemption.***

HB 793 LaRiccia – 169 A sales tax exemption for an aquarium (***GA Aquarium in Atlanta***) is extended to 2022 or \$4.5 million in sales tax, whichever occurs first. Requires an annual report to the Department of Revenue and the House Ways & Means and Senate Finance committees and is to include the total number of visitors admitted, average monthly number of full time employees, and total amount of exempt purchases made in the prior year. A sales tax exemption from 7-1-18 to 12-31-20 for an automobile museum of at least 57,000 square feet with 3 temporary galleries, a theater, and a garage of at least 26,500 square feet for restoration and storage.

HB 811 Powell – 171 Allows the Department of Revenue to release taxpayer information to contractors to analyze further taxpayer delinquencies. Contractors will be compensated with a portion of the funds collected. All data shared with the contractor is to be kept confidential, and destroyed after the analysis is made.

HB 840 Hitchins – 161 A taxpayer on active military duty in a combat zone shall not incur any penalties or fines for business and occupational taxes not received on time. Such tax and fees are to be paid within 60 days of return from military service.

HB 871 LaRiccia – 169 A sales tax exemption for manufactured homes up to 50% if it is to be converted to real property, when it will no longer be eligible for a Certificate of Removal from Permanent Location.

HB 886 Watson – 176 The sales tax exemption for agriculture purchases is increased to \$5000, from \$2500. Adds 'livestock' to the products grown over several years where the amount of sales can be averaged for tax purposes. Fees increased to \$150 for a three year exemption certificate. Requires greater oversight to insure the exemption is not misused.

HB 918 Efration – 104 The revision of the tax code prompted by the changes in the federal tax code. Standard exemption is doubled for state income taxes for all taxpayers. The top income tax rate is lowered to 5.75% for tax year 2019, down from 6%. If the General Assembly agrees and the new governor signs, it will be further lowered to 5.5% for 2020 and beyond. Waives motor vehicle title tag fees for vehicles 15 years and older. Removed exemption of jet fuel from most sales taxes (\$40 million). ***The governor's proposal to rebate to taxpayers the increase in state income taxes expected from changes in the federal tax code. The windfall is estimated to be over \$5 Billion over 5 years. The requirement remains to file state taxes with either itemized or standard deduction as was used in the federal return***

for the same tax year. GA Budget & Policy Institute estimates that this bill will cost the general treasury more than \$100 million per year, that is, more is forgiven than would have been taxed without the bill. (Analysis done prior to removal of the jet fuel exemption.) Part of the windfall could have been used to replace the old voting machines (\$100-\$125 million), and/or to increase the elements in education funding formulas to reflect actual costs in 2018, or to expand Medicaid to the 600,000 without insurance. Then, consider a rebate.

TRANSPORTATION/DRIVING

count = 8

HB 79 Pezold – 133 Data captured by an automated license plate recognition system or any other source must be destroyed after 30 months and can only be accessed for law enforcement and judicial purposes. Data is not available for freedom of information.

HB 150 Powell – 32 State Road and Tollway Authority may cause a vehicle registration to be placed on hold if tolls and fees are not paid. May access any state income tax refund to satisfy the indebtedness.

HB 287 Kirby – 114 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.

SB 342 Harbin – 15 **VETOED** An owner of a motor vehicle cited for not having a revalidation decal attached to the license plate is to be fined only \$50 if proof of payment is available when appearing in court.

SB 391 Beach – 21 Vehicles owned or operated by a transit authority are exempt from requirements for identification and regulations of motor vehicles.

HB 673 Carson – 46 Use of wireless telecommunication devices while driving is banned unless using GPS. Device shall not be touching the body of the driver while vehicle in motion. Allowed use while operating a vehicle are earpieces, headphone devices, devices worn on the wrist for voice communications or a standalone device. Wireless telecommunication device use while driving will lose 1, 2 or 3 points on the driver's license for respectively the first, second, or third and subsequent violations with fines of \$50, \$100, and \$150. Use exceptions are when: the motor vehicle is lawfully parked; reporting on some type of emergency; used by a public safety employee within the scope of employment; used by a public utility employee or contractor within the scope of employment while responding to a public utility emergency.

HB 717 Kelley – 16 Consumer protection laws for motor vehicles shall also apply to autonomous motor vehicles.

HB 930 Tanner – 9 Creates the 11-member Atlanta-region Transit Link 'ATL' Commission to plan and coordinate transit services, establish facilities, and fund throughout the region. Members include the governor who serves as chair, DOT commissioner, CEO of MARTA, Atlanta mayor, Clayton County Commission chair and one mayor from Clayton County, DeKalb CEO and one mayor, Fulton County Commission chair and one additional mayor. It shall determine and prioritize transit projects throughout the region and shall administer the payment of such projects through a sales tax of up to 1% levied by the county in which projects are to be located. The county must call the referendum and levy the tax. Operations will be under MARTA.

LOCAL

count = 20

SB 317 Albers – 56 **Fulton County School District**

HB 707 Price – 48 **Roswell**

HB 708 Raffensperger – 50 **Johns Creek**

HB 710 Jones – 47 **Milton**

HB 711 Jones – 47 **Mountain Park**

HB 712 Martin – 49 **Alpharetta**

A homestead exemption for (insert city or school district name) for the increase in assessment over the base year for (municipal or school district) purposes, but not bonded indebtedness interest or retirement. The base year is lowest of 2016, 2017, or 2018, times 1.0423, the inflation rate between 2015 and 2017, or the previous year the exemption is first granted to the current owner. The base year assessment can be increased annually by the lesser of 3% or the urban consumer CPI. The exemption will not apply to improvements or additional land. An unremarried surviving spouse will retain the exemption as long as the spouse occupies the homesteaded property. Applies to 2019 and beyond. Local referendum is required, to be held Nov. 6, 2018. **Critics of the huge assessment increases for 2017, which were rolled back by Fulton County Commission to those of 2016, will not be satisfied. Assessments will rise in 2018. January 1 of each year is the date for determining fair market value.**

SB 412 Orrock – 36 City of Hapeville is authorized to levy an excise tax.

SB 485 Parent – 42 A homestead exemption for Atlanta for municipal purposes of \$50,000 of assessed value (\$125,000 of fair market value). A local referendum is required on the Nov. 6, 2018 ballot.

HB 538 Willard - 51 Effective 7-1-18 the Fulton County Schools Board of Education will create a new pension plan for teachers into which all assets of the current teachers retirement system will be transferred. The board shall be chosen as determined by local act of the General Assembly. The board may change other aspects of the plan without getting legislative approval, but must notify the local delegation chair when such changes are made.

SR 618 Albers – 56 **NNS** Senate recognizes Senator Branden Beach – 21 on his retirement as CEO of the North Fulton Chamber of Commerce, having served 15 years in that position.

HB 820 Beskin – 54 City of Atlanta homesteaded property valuations can only rise 2.6% or the percent of CPI increase, whichever is lower, in any one year. Requires a local referendum within the entire state. **Appears to be the same computation for the homestead exemption as for other cities in Fulton County, except for the increase in values allowed. The requirement for the entire state to vote in the referendum is also a departure. Usually only the voters in the affected area are allowed to vote.**

SR 882 Jones - 25 **NNS** Creates the 13-member Senate Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport Operations & Authority Creation Study Committee to determine what federal laws and regulations must be complied with to accomplish a transfer of the airport to an authority and what financial obligations must be considered.

HB 869 Bruce – 61 **TO BALLOT** CA to repeal the prohibition that the Fulton County Industrial Park cannot be annexed to an incorporated city. Local referendum required. **Local constitutional amendments were allowed prior to the 1983 revision of the state constitution, but those in place continued to exist.**

HB 870 Bruce – 61 **VETOED** City of South Fulton annexes the Fulton County Industrial Park, only if the local CA creating it is repealed, HB 869.

HB 929 Efration – 104 Atlanta may renew its 1% sales tax for water and sewer projects to correct additional conditions cited by federal authorities. Local referendum required.

HB 979 Raffensperger – 50 The City of Johns Creek mayor and any council member shall serve no more than three consecutive 4-year terms of office. Serving as a council member is not to be counted for any term as mayor.

HB 1036 Martin – 49 Fulton Court Superior Court will require that tax parcel identification number information be included on documents recorded in the real property records of the clerk.

HB 1063 Bruce - 61 City of South Fulton mayor and council members shall be limited in any authority they can exercise over personnel. The charter is changed to give to the city manager that power over department and agency heads, who

will then have the authority over personnel within their departments, offices, or agencies. The mayor and council members may hire/fire only the city manager.

HB 1064 Martin - 49 A Fulton County homestead exemption for persons over 65 in the amount of \$60,000 of assessed value, \$150,000 of market value, effective in the 2019 tax year. A local referendum is required on the Nov. 6, 2018 ballot. This exemption is in lieu of any other homestead exemption on the property and must be applied for.

SR 1067 Jones – 10 **NNS** Senate Study Committee on the Financial Impact of Atlanta Annexation on Schools. The members of the committee are the senators who represent DeKalb County and City of Atlanta. It is to study the financial impact on DeKalb and Decatur school systems because Atlanta annexed areas in those school systems and schools, lock stock and barrel, now belong to Atlanta as well as the tax digest associated with those areas and the state school funding for those schools.

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