

News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports



THE GATES PORTAL

Status Quo in Leadership and Sluggish Revenue result in Stagnant Budget Requests



by Dawn A. Randolph, MPA
December 3, 2014

Just before the Thanksgiving week all the major political caucuses of the legislature had finally met to elect their leadership for the next two years. There were no surprises and each caucus looked about the same as the last two years, with only a few members elevated to fill vacancies for those legislators who did not run for re-election or lost their primary race. If you have any of these legislators in your service area you can still invite them to end-of-year events or holiday activities, especially when consumers and families are involved.

Georgia House of Representatives

House Republican Majority Caucus

Speaker David Ralston (R-Blue Ridge)
Speaker Pro Tem Jan Jones (R-Milton)
Majority Leader Larry O'Neal (R-Bonaire)
Majority Whip Matt Ramsey (R-Peachtree City)
Caucus Chair Matt Hatchett (R-Dublin)

House Democratic Minority Caucus

Minority Leader Rep. Stacey Abrams (D-Atlanta)
Minority Whip Rep. Carolyn Hugley (D-Columbus)
Caucus Chairman Virgil Fludd (D-Tyrone)
Vice-Chairman Billy Mitchell (D-Stone Mountain)
Treasurer David Wilkerson (D-Austell)
Deputy Whip Simone Bell (D-Atlanta)

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[Status Quo](#)

Special
Announcements



**GVRA Board
Meeting**
January 21, 2015
Location: TBD
1:00 PM

**State Use
Council**
January 22, 2015
Location: Sloppy
Floyd Twin
Towers, Capitol
Square

Caucus Secretary Pat Gardner (D-Atlanta)

There was one major challenge to the leadership position for Speaker Pro Temp. Sen. Butch Miller challenged Sen. David Shafer, with Senator Shafer retaining his position after a tie breaking vote. There are many new leaders now in the Georgia Senate due to those who choose not to run for their seat again or lost in the primary.

Georgia State Senate

Senate Republican Majority Caucus

Senate President Pro Tem David Shafer (R-Duluth)
Majority Leader Sen. Bill Cowsert (R-Athens)
Majority Whip Sen. Steve Gooch (R-Dahlonega)
Caucus Chairman Sen. William Ligon (R-Brunswick)
Vice Chairman Sen. Hunter Hill (R-Smyrna)
Caucus Secretary Sen. John Wilkinson (R-Toccoa)

Senate Democratic Minority Caucus

Minority Leader Sen. Steve Henson (D-Tucker)
Minority Whip Sen. Vincent Fort (D-Atlanta)
Caucus Chair Sen. Horacena Tate (D-Atlanta)
Caucus Vice Chair Sen. Valencia Seay (D-Riverdale)
Caucus Secretary Sen. Nan Orrock (D-Atlanta)

I wish that we could say that 2015 is looking to be an exceptional year for state budget revenue collections. While income from state taxes has increased each year since 2010 it has not been enough to bring the budget back to its high point in 2007 or even keep pace with inflation. The Georgia Budget and Policy Institute released it's latest report on the Georgia state budget. As an introduction to the new report they posted the following summary on their website:

Revenues are growing just fast enough to avoid new budget cuts that grew commonplace in recent years, but not nearly fast enough to restore government services most important to return the economy to its pre-recession strength. [Download the full report.](#)

Governor Nathan Deal continues to reject Medicaid expansion and other opportunities to maximize federal dollars for state programs, especially in the social service area. The Governor directed each agency to request no more than the funding appropriated in FY2015 for FY2016. However, the Governor said his emphasis for the next four years will focus on education. Monday, December 1, 2014 he appointed a statewide Education Advisory Board to provide input into education issues facing Georgia. The members of the Board can be viewed [here](#). It is our hope that we can reach out to members of this new Board to help them see that vocational training and programs for young adults transitioning out of the K-12 system can be addressed by CRPs. If you know one of these board members, help them to see how critical vocational rehabilitation and job training is to the education process.

10:00 AM

GATES Board of Directors Meeting

February 6, 2015

Location:
Macon, GA

10:00 AM

State Use Council

March 19, 2015

Location: Sloppy
Floyd Twin
Towers, Capitol
Square

10:00 AM

Working Wonders Recognition Luncheon

March 19, 2015

Location: Empire
Room Sloppy
Floyd Twin
Towers

Noon

THE PORTAL is a regular publication of GATES. If you have staff or others associated with your organization that you would like

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