

News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports



THE GATES PORTAL

Midway - Will weather force a halftime?



February 10, 2014
By Dawn A. Randolph, MPA

Today marks the 20th day of the legislative session, which is required by the constitution to last only 40 days each year. The current schedule has them in Monday through Thursday with a break on Feb 14th for Valentine's Day. A full calendar of committees is already planned for the entire week as all bills must pass from their Chamber of origination to the next by Day 30. Weather projections could hamper these plans or, as with the last winter event, keep the clock ticking.

Budget Progress

This past Friday the Senate passed the Amended FY 14 Budget which will require a conference committee to come together to iron out a few differences. The Senate made one change to GVRA in reducing funds for the Hospital at Warm Springs from \$5,416,290 to an even \$5 million. This will be worked out in the conference committee. The conference committee is expected to complete this quickly and get it back to each Chamber for a final vote and onto the Governor.

The House took public comment last week on the FY 2015 Budget. Wayne McMillan, Cheryl Cornett and Kathy Carlisle testified before the committee asking to fully fund GVRA at \$8.2 million to draw down all VR funding. They did a great job on behalf of GATES CRP members. Today the House subcommittees are scheduled to meet and make their recommendation and then the full Appropriations Committee is scheduled to vote out the Budget Tuesday after lunch to make it eligible for a Floor vote as early as next Monday, weather permitting. You can

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Special
Announcements



**State Use
Council
Meeting**
March 27, 2014
10:00 AM
Location: Sloppy
Floyd Bldg - West
Tower

**Working
Wonders Day**
March 27, 2014
Noon
Location: Sloppy

watch the subcommittees online [here](#). GVRA's budget will be under consideration from 4:00-4:30pm.

Resolutions to cap tax rates

Georgia legislators are considering two constitutional amendments that would limit the state's ability to adequately meet the needs of its people in the future. The proposals, Senate Resolutions [412](#) and [415](#), would create two new and separate tax caps in the state Constitution.

- S.R. 412 would permanently cap Georgia's sales tax rate, with two exceptions:
 - Cities and counties would be free to raise local sales taxes through new SPLOST referendums to fund specific infrastructure projects, like roads and schools.
 - State lawmakers would be allowed to raise the sales tax only to reduce the income tax.
- S.R. 415 would permanently cap the state's top marginal income tax rate at its current level of 6 percent.

Adopting these proposed constitutional amendments could deliver several unintended consequences:

- hinder Georgia's ability to meet future challenges;
- limit available options for future tax reform;
- jeopardize Georgia's ability to make public investments, especially in emergencies; and
- would put Georgia on a path toward more extreme tax changes.

In a state where the tax rate is already below the national average and the state's bond rating is stellar, these new limitations put future lawmakers in an unnecessary bind.

For more information the Georgia Budget and Policy Institute has developed a fact sheet you can read [here](#).

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THE PORTAL is a communication tool for GATES and GATES members. If you have stories about your organization, staff announcements, program descriptions, or other information you want to share with other GATES members, please send the info to Charles Hall, chall@asqinfo.net



Floyd Bldg

**GATES Board
of Directors
Spring Meeting**
April 25, 2014
Location: -TBD

**Galaxy of Stars
and Tommy
Awards
Luncheon**
April 30, 2014
Cobb Galleria
Centre
(sponsored by
Nobis Works)

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