

## News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports



# THE GATES PORTAL

## Last two days - Sine Die Thursday March 20th



March 18, 2014  
*By Dawn A. Randolph, MPA*

The legislature has only two voting days to complete all its work and pass the budget. Monday both the House and Senate Rules Committees met to set their agenda for bills to be voted on from the opposite chamber. The Senate added 81 House Bills to already 10 being held over from last Thursday. The House selected 24 Senate Bills, several resolutions and study committees. They can also add more bills. While it has been the fastest session in two decades, it has also been one filled with the longest days.

The most bizarre and unusual tactic this year has been for House and Senate Chairs to attach bills from their Chamber to bills from the other Chamber. The AJC has called these Franken-bills because they are cobbled together from bits and pieces of bills that have languished in committee after crossover day. This tactic is expected to continue as bills move through on these final days. While this is not new, in past sessions we have called it gutting a bill, Christmas treeing a bill, or finding a new vehicle to ride an old bill; however, this session it has taken on a life of its own. To many watching, we are all concerned that bills pronounced "It Is Alive" will stalk us for years to come.

### **FY 2015 Budget Complete**

The Budget Conference Committee completed their negotiations after most people left the Capitol Monday night, March 17th. After only one quickly called Budget Conference Committee there have been no other open meetings to view how the budget was being shaped. The budget is

## In This Issue

[Sine Die](#)

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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**

now public and up for a final vote in both Chambers. You can read an initial article in the AJC on the [\\$20.8 billion budget deal](#). The FY 2015 Conference Committee Report continues to direct BHDD and GVRA to work together but sets the amount for BHDD to put up as \$1,000,000, therefore showing only \$3,694,835 in federal funds to GVRA. There is additional language for GVRA to work with other State Agencies to create MOUs to maximize federal funds. You can view the budget conference committee House and Senate Conference Agreement [here](#). This is now a "done deal" and no changes can be made by either the House or Senate.

The language states:

**27.24.3 CC: Yes; By January 1, 2015, the Department shall provide a report to the Georgia General Assembly with an actionable plan to create third party cooperative arrangements with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the University System of Georgia, the Technical College System of Georgia and the Georgia Student Finance Commission to maximize financial assistance for vocational rehabilitation clients. NO FUNDING IDENTIFIED FOR THIS.**

**27.28.6 CC: Yes; Recognize and execute a Memorandum of Understanding agreement with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (\$1,000,000) and receive additional federal funding for Vocational Rehabilitation services. TOTAL FUNDS \$3,694,835**

#### **Autism Mandated Coverage**

Chairman Richard Smith (R-Columbus) assigned [SB 397](#) to a special committee and it was never seen again. The following week Senator Renee Unterman (R-Buford) attached the entire bill to HB 885 (Medical Marijuana). The bill was placed on the Senate Calendar for consideration Tuesday. This is an example of one of the Franken-bills still in play.

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## Call for Information

*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](mailto: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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*THE PORTAL is a regular publication of GATES. If you have staff or others associated with your organization that you would like to receive THE PORTAL, please send their email address to: Charles Hall, [chall@asqinfo.net](mailto:chall@asqinfo.net)*

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