

News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports

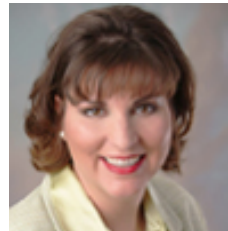


THE GATES PORTAL

2017 Georgia Legislative Primer

by Dawn A. Randolph, MPA

January 9, 2017



They're Back...

Monday morning the Georgia General Assembly convened at 10am for the first of a two year session. They set the calendar for the next four weeks and are scheduled to be in the first four days this week. The week of January 23rd and 30th they will also be in for the first four days both weeks. All legislators were sworn in Monday morning and all leadership was reelected to their positions in both chambers. We are still awaiting committee and chair assignments, which should be finalized and available by mid week. These first two weeks will be rather slow in typical fashion for the beginning of a two year session as they make assignments to committees and offices as well as any rules and procedures as to the order of legislative business.

State of the State & Budget Speech

Governor Nathan Deal will be giving his annual **State of the State Address on Wednesday, January 11th at 11am.** He will also provide an overview of his recommendations and priorities for both the Amended 2017 and 2018 budgets. The Joint Appropriations Hearings will only meet for two days next week on January 17th and 18th. We are waiting for the schedule when each agency will present during those two days. House Subcommittees held their first meetings last week from January 3-4 to hear from agency leaders on their requests and policy

In This Issue

[2017 Georgia Legislative Primer](#)

Special
Announcements



**Georgia State
Use Council**

Jan. 26, 2017

10 AM

Sloppy Floyd
Building, West
Tower, Conference
Room 1816-A

200 Piedmont Ave.
Capitol Square

priorities. This was huge change from past years when subcommittees waited until after the Joint Budget Hearings to hear from agency officials. You can view the schedule for the Joint hearings and subcommittees [here](#). You can watch the Governor's Budget and hearings by following the House Broadcast Schedule [here](#) and click on the event when it is live. All agencies, except Education and Medicaid, were required to request only flat funding for the FY 2018 fiscal year. Revenue has only increased by 4% the last six months over the same time frame. Decembers revenue figures were just released and they were virtually flat at just a 0.7% increase or \$15.2 million over December 2015. This will set a very, very conservative spending tone for the session.

Session Scope

It seems there may be a mix of old and new controversial issues which take center stage this year. The top five issues at the moment are:

- Schools that are not performing to set standards
- Legalizing cultivation of marijuana in Georgia for medicinal purposes
- Casino Gambling
- Provider fees hospitals pay to match Medicaid spending
- Guns on Campus & Religious Freedom Bill (again although leadership is not giving these high priority since the Governor's veto last year)

Affordable Care Act Repeal - Georgia Impact

Many health committee chairs and members have said they will wait and see what Congress does in terms of the Affordable Care Act. Speaker David Ralston (R-Blue Ridge) said at a Press Conference last week that the issue of Medicaid Expansion died the night of Nov 8th. Senator Renee Unterman (R-Buford) has said they will now need to wait and see what happens at the federal level. Lt. Governor Casey Cagle established a Senate Health Care Reform Task Force to "identify any provisions of state law that may need to be changed, while developing conservative solutions to increase access to personalized health insurance across Georgia." The task force members are Senator Unterman, Senator Dean Burke (R-Bainbridge), Senator Ben Watson (R-Savannah) and Senator Judson Hill (R-Marietta). Senators Burke and Watson are physicians.

Study Committee Reports and Recommendations

Most of the House and Senate Study Committees wrapped up their work in December and issued their reports the first week of January. A few others wrapped up the first week of January after being granted extensions and hope to be able to view their reports in the next few weeks.

Here is the [final report](#) from The House Study Committee on Programs that provide Services for Reading to the Blind & Visually Impaired. All House Study Committees can be viewed online under the [House Study Committee page](#) and clicking on each Committee for 2016. Senate

Atlanta, GA

GATES Board of Directors Meeting

Feb. 3, 2017

9:30 AM

Location - TBA

Georgia State Use Council

Mar. 23, 2017

10 AM

Sloppy Floyd Building, West Tower, Conference Room 1816-A

200 Piedmont Ave.

Capitol Square
Atlanta, GA

Working Wonders Recognition Luncheon

Mar. 23, 2017

Noon

Sloppy Floyd Building, West Tower, Empire Room

200 Piedmont Ave.

Capitol Square
Atlanta, GA

Study Committee reports are listed under [Current Study Committees](#).

Happy New Year! Here is to 2017 bringing successful policy and budget discussions.

[Back To Top](#)

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



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*

GATES

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports

100 Edgewood Avenue
Suite 975
Atlanta, GA 30303
Phone: 404-523-6674

GATES, 404-523-6674, 44 Broad Street, Suite 503, Atlanta, GA 30303

Constant Contact 

[Try it free today](#)