

News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports



THE GATES PORTAL

4...3...2...none



by Dawn A. Randolph, MPA
March 14, 2017

Overview

Monday, March 13th, marked the 32nd day of the session. This week the session will be in voting Monday-Thursday. The next week Monday, Wednesday and Friday and the last week Tuesday and Thursday, ending March 30th. You may wonder why I start each update with the timeline of the session. It is because I want to make sure you understand the timing of the legislative process and why some weeks are more critical than others.

FY 2018 Budget

In This Issue

[4...3...2...none](#)

Special
Announcements



**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



The Senate Appropriations Committee was scheduled to meet at 8 am Monday morning to review and vote out its adds and changes to the FY 2018 Budget. As I got to the session around 7:30 am there were police cars with lights on surrounding the building and blocking the roads. It seems that there were suspicious packages found around the Capitol. It took until 9 am for the all clear signal for us to enter the building. Thus pushing the Senate Appropriations committee to meet at 9:30 am.

While Chairman Jack Hill (R-Reidsville) did not specifically point out the GVRA budget items I was able to review the budget and find **the Senate agreed with the House on the \$500,000 in new state funding for VR to match federal funds for a total of \$2.5 million for training, employment and supports.** They also moved it out of BEP and into the VR Program. They slightly lowered the amount of money to support the Inclusive Post-Secondary Education (IPSE) initiative to \$450,000 in state funding which will provide a total of \$2,250,000. You can find both appropriations on page 129 of the [senate budget document](#) lines 200.5 (IPSE) and 200.6 (training, employment and supports).

Please send a thank you to members of the Senate Human Development and Public Health Subcommittee and Chairman Jack Hill

Senators

[Hill, Jack - Chairman](#)

[Burke, Dean](#)

[Hufstetler, Chuck](#)

[Miller, Butch](#)

[Tate, Horacena](#)

[Unterman, Renee S](#) - Subcommittee Chair

Legislation

Working Wonders Recognition Luncheon

Mar. 23, 2017

Noon

Sloppy Floyd Building, West Tower, Empire Room

200 Piedmont Ave.

Capitol Square
Atlanta, GA

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*Charles Hall,
chall@asginfo.net*

Most of the bills we are following made it to the next chamber on Crossover Day. Those that did not could still have key elements amended into another bill. We will continue to track these bills during the final month of the session.

Service Animals

[HB 288](#) by Rep. Tom Kirby (R-Loganville) clarifies a person with a disability, whether physically or mentally impaired, has the ability to be guided or accompanied by a service animal, replacing dog throughout the code section. It also provides penalties to anyone misrepresenting themselves as a service animal trainer, handler or breeder. It also adjusts the code to ensure no one harass a service animal while holding the person liable for any property damage by a service animal. The bill has been assigned to the House Judiciary Non-Civil committee. ***Not viable for passage this session.***

Rep. Kirby has also introduced [HB 473](#) which has similar provisions but also includes oversight by the Georgia Department of Human Services. HB 473 was introduced on February 22nd and has been assigned the House Health & Human Services Committee. ***Not viable for passage this session.***

[HR 510](#) by Rep. Kirby creates the House Study Committee on Service Animals for Physically or Mental Impaired Persons comprised of five House members to examine how to handle legitimate versus "fake service animals". ***The resolution has been assigned to the House Special Rules Committee and is likely to be put into place before the end of the session.***

[HB 343](#) by Scott Hilton (R-Peachtree Corners) is a update to the criminal code to replace "mental retardation and mentally retarded" with the term "intellectual disability". ***The House passed the bill by 168-0 and it has been assigned to the Senate Judiciary Committee.***

[HB 475](#) by Rep. Buddy Harden (R-Cordele) addresses the placement, permission and appearance of collection receptacle on property not owned or leased by the owner of the collection receptacle. This bill passed the House 162-3. ***The Senate Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee meet Monday with a small change needed to language in the bill requested by United Way of Atlanta.***

[SB 4](#) by Sen. Renee Unterman (R-Buford) creates the Georgia Mental Health Treatment Task Force. This creates a committee to include legislators, state agency officials and advocates to examine mental health and substance abuse services. The bill passed the Senate February 7, 2017 by a vote of 44-0. ***On the agenda for House Health and Human Services Committee Tuesday, March 14th at 2pm.***

[SR 118](#) by Sen. Renee Unterman (R-Buford) extends the age of benefits

for children with autism from 6 to 21 years. Last year Senator Unterman successful moved her bill to cover children with autism in private insurance plans but limited that to children up to age 6. This bill moves that to age 21. The Senate Insurance and Labor Committee quickly reviewed and approved the bill for due passage. **No change so the bill is not viable to pass this session.**

[SB 144](#) by Sen. Ed Harrison (R-Columbus) has introduced a bill to designate lottery funds for veterans services. The bill would direct funds to services and programs to aid with post-traumatic stress disorder, homelessness, health insurance support, disability benefits, veterans service organizations, centers and commissions, long-term care, and employment or employment training. The bill has been assigned to the Senate Higher Education Committee. **No change so this bill is not viable to pass this session.**

Study Committee Resolutions

[HR 318](#) by Rep. Tom Kirby (R-Loganville) creates the House Study Committee on Inclusive Postsecondary Education to evaluate and make recommendations on the opportunities for students beyond high school in higher education. The resolution has been assigned to the House Special Rules Committee. **No change but as a House only Study Committee it is still viable for consideration.**

[Back To Top](#)

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