

News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports



THE GATES PORTAL

Priorities



Dawn A. Randolph, MPA
February 19, 2018

Key Events This Week

Week 7 of the session they are meeting Tuesday - Friday

Wednesday, Feb 21 at 3pm House Industry and Labor will hold a hearing on HB 831, Georgia's Employment First Act

Not much floor action

Each day bills trickle out of committee and a handful are voted on the floor. The priority this session is obvious - get the bills done that are absolutely necessary, introduce those that make a statement, and get to March 29th to start raising campaign funds on March 30th. This is not a cynical viewpoint, just a realistic one. Georgia has been ranked the #1 state to do business and elected officials do not want to do anything that will jeopardize this ranking. The economy is pretty solid right now so there is no pressure to fix things. So far no major Georgia natural disaster, and we all pray that this spring will be a calm one. Thus we have had a slow movement of bills. However, this next week things should get a little more active as we approach cross over day scheduled for February 28th. Legislators would like to see their bills that make a statement cross over to show that they are trying to make a difference, even if the other chamber does not take up the legislation.

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Special Announcements



State Use Council Meeting Thursday, March 22nd 2018

10:00 AM

Location: Sloppy
Floyd Building,
West Tower,
Conference Room
1816-B,

Budget Process

The full Senate passed the amended FY 18 budget by a vote 53-0 on February 15th. There are only a few adds by the Senate so the House should agree and let it move to the Governor for his review and final approval as they did last year.

On February 14th the Senate Human Resources and Public Health Appropriations Subcommittees met to hear from agency officials one the big budget FY 19. Executive Director Sean Casey of GVRA continued to emphasize the agencies need to fully match federal 110 dollars. The current GVRA budget is composed of \$21.5 million in state funds to draw down about \$83 million in 110 federal funds. That leaves about \$30 million of federal dollars in Washington. The state would need to invest about \$8.2 million to draw down the full federal 110 program grant amount.

You can still call or email House Committee members this week to offer your support; here is the contact information of each committee member.

Katie Dempsey (R-Rome) Chair 404.463.2247 or dezzie.riley@house.ga.gov

Tom Kirby (R-Loganville) Vice-chair, 404.656.0177 or tom.kirby@house.ga.gov

Tommy Benton (R-Jefferson) 404.656.5126 or tommy.benton@house.ga.gov

Buzz Brockway (R-Lawrenceville) 404.656.0188 or buzz.brockway@house.ga.gov

Bubber Epps (R-Dry Branch) 404.656.7855 or bubber.epps@house.ga.gov

Buddy Harden (R-Cordele) 404.656.7855 or bharden@planttel.net

Michele Henson (D-Stone Mountain) 404.656.7859 or michele.henson@house.ga.gov

Henry "Wayne" Howard (D-Augusta) 404.656.6372 or wayne.howard@house.ga.gov

Greg Morris (R-Vidalia) 404.656.5115 or greg.morris@house.ga.gov

Mary Margaret Oliver (D-Decatur) 404.656.0265 or mmo@mmolaw.com

Tom Taylor (R-Dunwoody) 404.656.3947 or tom.taylor@house.ga.gov

THE ASK: GATES requests an additional **\$1,000,000** in state funds for the Vocational Rehabilitation Division to match 1:4 federal 110 dollars for an estimated total of \$5 million to serve 1,400 people across Georgia to receive community training, employment and supports.

200 Piedmont Ave.
Atlanta, GA

Working Wonders Recognition Luncheon Mar. 23, 2018

Noon

Sloppy Floyd
Building, West
Tower, Empire
Room 200
Piedmont Ave.
Capitol Square
Atlanta, GA

GATES Board of Directors Meeting Friday, April 27th, 2018

10:00 AM

Location: TBD

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

YOUR NEED: Share your agencies story as a CRP and how investments in VR need to be directed out to the community to support people with disabilities' career goals.

Legislation

[HB 794](#) and a companion resolution [HR 991](#) is sponsored by Rep. Sandra Scott (D-Rex) to create the "Georgia Lottery for Assistance of Homeless Military Veterans Act" to designate lottery game(s) for the purpose of providing funding for programs to address homelessness among the veteran population in Georgia. Both the bill and resolution have the same set of Democratic Representatives. ***The bill is in the House Higher Education Committee. NO CHANGE.***

Senator Michael 'Doc' Rhett (D-Marietta) is sponsoring [SB 360](#), a bi-partisan bill to direct the Department of Administrative Services to ensure that 10 percent of its contracts and purchases are from small business owned by veterans with disabilities. ***The is in the House Economic Development and Tourism Committee. NO CHANGE.***

Governor Deal mentioned in his State of the State Address that he would be moving The State Workforce Development Board and its programs to the Technical College System of Georgia to create a symbiotic relationship with future employees and employers. New Senator Brian Strickland (R-McDonough) has introduced [SB 377](#) to codify the transfer into law. ***The bill is in the Senate Higher Education Committee. NO CHANGE.***

Georgia's Employment First Act. Rep. Terry Rogers (R-Clarkesville) is the main sponsor of [HB 831](#). The bill's primary focus is to create a 14 member Employment First Council. The list of those who will serve on the council is named in the bill and includes a representative from the association of community rehabilitation providers (GATES). The Council will be attached to GVRA and has 5 responsibilities:

1. Developing a plan for employment first training;
2. Coordinating with other state, federal and private agencies on educational and awareness activities;
3. Evaluating funding mechanisms;
4. Review and make recommendations for a biannual report to the Governor and General Assembly; and
5. Other functions as assigned by the Governor.

The bill will have a hearing and take testimony on Wednesday, Feb 21st at 3pm in Room 506 of Coverdell Legislative Office Building before the House Industry and Labor Committee.

Rep. Penny Houston (R-Nashville) has introduced [HB 844](#) to expand the Georgia Commission on Hearing Impaired and Deaf persons to add two members, change language from "hearing impaired" to "deaf

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Charles Hall,
chall@asginfo.net

and hard of hearing", create a multiagency task force to target children birth to third grade, and submit a report by September 1st of each year. ***The bill has been assigned to the House Health and Human Services Committee. NO CHANGE.***

Rep. Carl Gilliard (D-Garden City) has sponsored [HB 891](#) to ensure a person who is blind is not discriminated against when being considered in child custody, guardianship, visitation, placement and adoption decisions. ***The bill was assigned to the House Judiciary Committee on February 12th.***

Sen. Brian Strickland (R-McDonough) is sponsoring [SB 406](#) to require background checks of all employees working with the senior population. The requirement will be for nursing homes, home health, hospice, and adult day care. If you provide adult day care you may want to take a look at this bill. ***It has been assigned to the Senate Public Safety Committee.***

Senator Lester Jackson (D-Savannah) has introduced [SB 408](#) to require a licensed clinician to be present during a law enforcement officer's interview with a person with autism. While it is doubtful this bill will have time to make it through the session it is something that you may want to consider if you work with people with autism. ***It has been assigned to the Senate Public Safety Committee.***

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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@asginfo.net



GATES

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