

News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports



THE GATES PORTAL

Crossover Week

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Key Events This Week

This week all bills that have a chance to make it in their original form must pass one chamber by Thursday, March 7th.

House and Senate are in Monday & Tuesday, committee break Wednesday, then back in Thursday & Friday this week.

The House convenes at 10am Monday while the Senate will be in at 1pm.

Flow of the Session

This week is when bills will be flying out of committees and onto the chamber floors. That is because all bills must pass a chamber completely in their original form by Crossover day this Thursday, March 7th. You can view the schedule in [HR152](#). However, there are currently only a handful of committees being scheduled and only a few bills in each committee. That could change by the end of Monday with committee chairs filling up the day Tuesday and Wednesday. Reminder that the session is scheduled to end on April 2nd - Sine Die.



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Special Announcements



THE PORTAL is a regular publication

The Budget

The House passed the FY 2020 Budget on Thursday, Feb 28th and transmitted it to the Senate on Friday, March 1st. We are awaiting Senate Appropriations Committees to schedule budget meetings on FY 2020. It is possible, but highly unlikely they will schedule budget hearings before Crossover day because they are focused on getting legislation out of the Senate. Budget documents can be viewed [here](#).

Legislation

Last week legislators from both Chambers continued to introduce new bills with the House slowing down a bit filing 103 pieces of legislation to reach 554 bills assigned to committee while the Senate processed 70 more bills to reach 229. Here is a update on bills we are currently tracking. There were no new bills of interest introduced last week. The bills which had action last week have their status update in bold.

[HB 1](#) Rep. Petria is proposing to change the name of the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Act to the Senator Eric Johnson Scholarship Act. Senator Johnson is a former Senator from Savannah. ***The bill passed the House Education Committee on March 1st.***

[HB 5](#) Rep. Park Cannon and other Democratic members are sponsoring the Georgia Prospective Employer Act. The bill would prohibit employers from using salary history during the hiring process. This could be helpful to employment opportunities for people with disabilities and veterans. *The bill has been assigned to the House Industry and Labor Committee. No action has been taken yet.*

[HB 40](#) Rep. Sandra Scott has sponsored a bill to require schools to screen for dyslexia. *The bill has been assigned to the House Education Committee. No action yet.*

[HB 69](#) Rep. Scot Turner wants to amend the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program to allow students of active duty military parents to access the program if they lived in Georgia the previous year or qualify for the scholarship the previous year through an IEP. *The bill was favorable voted out of the House Education Committee on 2/15/2019.*

[HB 70](#) Rep. Chuck Efstrotation is proposing changes to the guardian and ward statute for youth and adults. This may effect those that work with guardians in dealing with court orders. ***The House passed by substitute on 2/25/19 by a vote of 170-0. The bill has been assigned to the Senate Judiciary Committee.***

[HB 79](#) Rep. Carl Gillard is sponsoring this bill to change definitions and provisions pertaining to blind persons in child custody issues. ***The bill received a due pass by House Juvenile Justice Committee on 2/27/19 and is awaiting a vote by the House.***

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:

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[HB 102](#) Rep. Chuck Martin is sponsoring a bill to tweak the property tax code for buildings owned by charitable organizations. Truly there are three word changes in this bill but it may impact a non-profit's tax liability in a positive manner. I recommend you have your CPA review the implications for your organization and the positive or negative impact. *The bill has been assigned to the House Ways and Means Committee but no action has been take yet.*

[HB 114](#) Rep. Heath Clark has introduced this bill to remove the sunset date of sales and use tax by qualified job training organizations. I am not sure if this applies to any CRPs but wanted to make everyone interested or impacted aware of this bill. *The bill is before the House Ways & Means Committee but no action on it yet.*

[HB 123](#) Rep. Bill Werkheiser has proposed moving the State Workforce Development Board from The Technical College System to the Department of Labor. Some may recall that Governor Nathan Deal during his eight years in office removed all of the administrative agencies from DOL and put them into other agencies throughout state Government. This may signal a move to put more programs back under DOL. *This bill received a favorable due pass from the House Industry and Labor Committee on 2/13/2019 and awaits a vote on the House floor.*

[HB 126](#) Rep. Randy Nix proposed establishing a GeorgiaBest program within the Georgia Department of Labor. The GeorgiaBest program would be an "employability skills program" with a defined curriculum. When I see a bill like this I typically believe there is someone out there promoting their curriculum. If any CRPs are familiar with this program please let me know so I can share with others. *The House Committee on Industry and Labor favorable passed the bill on 2/13/2019 and it awaits a vote by the full House.*

[HR 52](#) Rep. John Corbett has sponsored a resolution to bring attention to dyslexia and the impact it has on their educational experience. This type of resolution is really urging educational systems to take this diagnosis more seriously and see the potential of those with dyslexia. *The House Education Committee will consider the bill but no action has been taken yet.*

[SB 100](#) Sen. P.K. Martin wants to bring the state relay service and audible reading program managed by the Georgia Public Service Commission into the 21st Century. I received a lot of input about this program when I ran for the GA Public Service Commission. By adding wireless devices and applications to the law and striking telephone relay the PSC will be able to upgrade to new technology, a long overdue update. ***The Senate Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee passed the bill on 2/27/2019 and the full Senate will vote on the bill Monday, March 4th.***

[SR 193 & SR 194](#) Sen. Greg Kirk has introduced two resolutions to create a study committee to transfer the Division of Developmental Disabilities from the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to the Department of Community Health (DCH). The Study Committee would have this year to make their recommendations and then a bill could be introduced in the 2020 Legislative Session to move the Division effective July 2020. There are two bills because SR 193 is a Senate Study Committee and SR 194 is a Joint Study Committee. The rationale for this bill is because the majority of funding for DD services come from Medicaid, which DCH manages and contracts with BHDD to administer. There has been a thought for many years that DD would be better administered through DCH because of the Medicaid dollars. *Both resolutions have been assigned to Senate Rules.*

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