

News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports



April Fools No One

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April 1, 2019

Key Events This Week

The final day of the session or sine die is Tuesday, April 2nd.



Flow of the Session

This is it, we are at the end. There is one remaining voting day of the 40 day 2019 Legislative Session. There are no more committee meetings scheduled. The House and Senate will be working to finalize all conference committees to arrive at mutual agreements on the final version of bills still in contention. All bills must be voted on by each Chamber in the exact same form with not even a period out of place. The Senate had 47 house bills on the rules calendar to be voted on Friday and the House had 13 senate bills. The Senate did not make it through its entire voting calendar and those bills they did to get to can be taken up on Tuesday. Neither the House nor Senate will hold another Rules Committee meeting so only bills outstanding that were tabled or have a conference committee will be considered on sine die.

The Budget

The House and Senate both approved the final version of the budget via the Conference Committee Report on Thursday, March 28th ([HB 31](#)). The House agreed to the Senate's language by *the Georgia Council on Development Disabilities who requested a funding increase*

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Special Announcements



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for Academic transition Teachers in Inclusive Post-Secondary Education (IPSE) programs. This amounts to \$106,500 in state funds to draw down \$393,500 in federal funds for a total of \$500,000 to expand IPSE. The final vote on the Budget Conference Committee was 53-0 in the Senate and 165-11 in the House.

The Governor will have 40 calendar days from April 2 (May 12th) to review the budget. The Georgia Governor has line item veto and can strike out changes made by the legislature or delay their implementation. He can not add or change amounts or legislative intent. Because we have a new Governor it is likely he will take five weeks to evaluate each change before he signs the final budget. Because you can't take politics out of this process some items may be scrutinized more than others if the Governor needs leverage in the future on a particular issue or geographic area in the state.

Senate budget documents can be viewed [here](#).

Legislation

Last week House members introduced 53 pieces of legislation to reach 714 bills assigned to committee with the Senate processing 11 bills to reach 272. Bills introduced late in the session will be held over to the 2020 Legislative Session for consideration. There were no new bills of interest this week. The bills which had action last week have their status update in bold

NOTE: Bills making it though this session are at the beginning of this update and bills held over to next session are next.

Bills Passed or still in Play

[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 Senate Judiciary Committee favorably reported out the bill by substitute on March 21st. ***The bill was set to be voted on Friday, March 29th but was tabled and could still be voted on the final day.***

[HB 79](#) Rep. Carl Gillard is sponsoring this bill to change definitions and provisions pertaining to blind persons in child custody issues. The bill passed the House on 3/5/19 by 167-0. It has been assigned to the Senate Judiciary Committee. ***The Senate passed the substitute on Thursday, March 28th by a vote of 49-2 and now the House may agree or disagree or appoint a conference committee to work out differences..***

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[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 decided to move on it March 21st and voted it out of committee. ***The House passed the resolution on March 25th by a vote of 155-0.***

[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 passed the bill 55-0. ***The House passed the bill 164-1 on March 21st. Awaits Governor's consideration.***

Bills held over to the 2020 Session

[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 but did not make it to the House Floor for a vote by Crossover Day and will be held over to 2020.***

[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. Will be held over to 2020 Session.***

[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. Will be held over to 2020 Session.***

[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. Did not make it to the House Floor for a vote by Crossover Day and will be held over to the 2020 Session.***

[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. Will be held over to 2020 Session.*

[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. Will be held over to 2020 Session.*

[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 but did not make it to the House Floor for a vote by Crossover Day. Will be held over to 2020 Session.*

[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. Will be held over to 2020 Session.*

[HB 569](#) Rep. Spencer Frye and leading Democratic Representatives have sponsored a bill to establish the State Revenue Investment and Employment Act of 2019 'STRIVE Act' to establish a commission to analyze state policies and revenue investments directed at furthering the economic development of the state and full employment. The bill was introduced on Tuesday, March 5th and had no chance of making it to the floor for a vote this session. *It has been assigned to the House Industry and Labor Committee and could be a good place to talk about vocational rehabilitation and 110 dollars if it can get a hearing in 2020. Will be held over to 2020 Session.*

[HR 530](#) Rep. Karla Drenner filed a resolution last week to urge Uber and Lyft to incorporate wheelchair accessible services into their ride-sharing. The bill has been assigned to the House Transportation Committee. A resolution of this nature cannot require a company to change their business practices but raises awareness to several statistics and urges them to support ride-sharing services for people with disabilities who need wheelchair support. *Will be held over to the 2020 Session.*

[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. ***These resolutions did not pass, however in speaking with Sen. Kirk the Study Committee on Mental Health Reform (HB 514) may look at this issue.***

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