

## News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports



### And they're off...

**Dawn A. Randolph, MPA**

January 14, 2020

#### Key Events This Week

*Monday, Jan 13th the first day of the second half of the 2019-2020 legislative session. Schedule for the first 14 voting days passed with HR 879. Schedule [here](#) and summary below.*

*Thursday, Jan 16 (tentative time)*

*11:00am Governor Brian Kemp - State of the State and Highlight of Budget Recommendations. Online video broadcast [here](#).*

Welcome to a new year and a new decade. I posted on my social media yesterday that on the first day of each session I feel like I am in a confessional. "Bless me legislators, for I have Bills & Budget items, this is my 25th legislative session, these are my issues. Please help me get through. I need more than a few Our Fathers and Hail Marys."

The first day of the session was spent in reflection and commemoration of two deceased colleagues. On the House side Rep. Jay Powell (R-Camilla) died suddenly after attending a Republic legislative leadership retreat in Brasstown Valley Resort on November 25th. Powell was chair of the powerful House Rules Committee which sets the calendar for debate each day and allows bills to move forward.



### In This Issue

[And they're off...](#)

\*\*\*\*\*

### Special Announcements



**State Use Council Meeting**  
**Thursday, January 23, 2020**  
**10:00 AM**

**Floyd Building - West Tower**

\*\*\*\*\*

He has been replaced by Rep. Richard Smith (R-Columbus). In the Senate Chambers Senator Greg Kirk's (R-Americus) desk was draped with a black cloth and on it a vase of white roses. I had the real pleasure of knowing Greg for the last two decades. He was a counselor and worked tirelessly for people with disabilities and mental health diagnosis. Greg, and I do feel like I can call him by his first name, served on the first GVRA Board after talking with him about how critical it was to have his viewpoint from South Georgia. He was then elected to the Senate in 2014 and stepped off the GVRA board. Colleagues honored their work and remembered their humanity. Both were truly more statesman than politicians. I will miss them.

### Leadership

Except for the replacement of Chairman Powell there are no significant leadership changes in the House at this time and the same is true with the Senate. Lt. Gov. Geoff Duncan now has a full year of leadership and is settling in to manage the Senate.

### Governor's Priorities for 2020 Session include:

1. Reduce the budget by 4% this fiscal year and 6% next fiscal year. Due to the income tax reduction from 6% to 5.75% last year the state is now witnessing a revenue challenge. The Governor wants to cut the rate again to 5.5% which will definitely be up for debate;
2. Foster care opportunities and making adoption easier; and
3. Cracking down on sex trafficking and gangs.

### Flow of the Session

This session could be longer than expected because of the budget cuts, revenue challenges, advocates for tax cuts/increases and a natural disaster or two. We have the first 14 days of the session laid out through [HR879](#). Here is the schedule:

*Days 1-4 => Jan 13-16*  
*Jan 21-23 Joint Budget Hearings*  
*Days 5-9 => Jan 27-31*  
*Days 10-13 => Feb 3-6*  
*Day 14 => Feb 10th*

They can introduce a new resolution to change this at any time but it is likely they will have a new resolution between Day 11 or 13 laying out the rest of the session. The biggest hang up will be the budget and income tax.

### Lights Out

A little time after 11 am just as the House and Senate were wrapping up the lights went out in the Capitol. TV monitors shut down, News

**GATES**  
**Board Meeting**  
**Friday,**  
**January 24, 2020**  
**10:00 AM**  
**Tommy Nobis**  
**Center**

\*\*\*\*\*

*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](mailto:chall@asqinfo.net)*

\*\*\*\*\*

Crews lights blew out and everything was dark and quiet. The emergency lighting came on about two minutes later and in five minutes power was restored. I joked to a fellow lobbyist, "*I guess they couldn't pay the bill or maybe Georgia Power was sending a message.*" Either way I think it was an omen that we may be in the dark for some of this session because political futures are on the line this year with such a big election in 2020. Welcome to a new decade!

[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@asginfo.net](mailto:chall@asginfo.net)



## GATES

*Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports*

251 SL White Blvd.  
LaGrange, GA 30241  
Phone: 706-298-0477

GATES, 706-298-0477, 251 SL White Blvd., LaGrange, GA 30241