

Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

Friday, February 11, 2022

The legislature convened on Monday, February 7, 2022, for legislative day 12, and also convened on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday with Wednesday, February 9 being a committee workday.

Next week, the general assembly will reconvene on Monday, February 14, 2022, for legislative day 16, and will work Tuesday and Thursday with Wednesday, February 16 as a committee workday.

To view Senate Resolution 382, the current adjournment resolution dictating the legislative calendar, [click here](#).

STATE OF THE JUDICIARY 2022

On Tuesday, February 8, 2022, Georgia Supreme Court Chief Justice David Nahmias delivered the State of the Judiciary address to the joint session of the Georgia General Assembly. His remarks focused on Georgia's judiciary response to the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Chief Justice Nahmias also noted that Georgia's courts and there are hard at work to remain as functional as possible — ensuring that all Georgians have access to justice. While emphasizing the courts' use of technology to conduct proceedings remotely, he praised the efforts of judges to protect the health of in-person participants. He also discussed the backlog of serious criminal cases— many of which are gang-related and likely to go to trial. To help address the problem, the state allocated \$110 million in federal funds under the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to the judicial system — to extend capacity. Chief Justice Nahmias concluded by emphasizing the courts focus of a fair and efficient process and equal justice for all.

To read the State of the Judiciary Address, click [here](#). To view the live stream recording, click [here](#).

LEGISLATION OF INTEREST

KEY LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate Bill 231: Education; pilot program; individuals between ages 21 and 35 who have not attained a high school diploma; provide

Senate Sponsor: [Jason Anavitarte \(Dallas\)](#)

GHCC Position: **Support**

Senate Bill 231 would provide a pilot program for individuals who have dropped out of school to further their education by enrolling in a charter school. SB 231 creates a pathway for nontraditional students to gain the skills and education necessary to enter the workforce, addressing our statewide labor shortage. This program focuses on individuals aged 21-35 and allows those participating in this pilot program to be eligible to receive a Georgia high school diploma upon completion. Additionally, this program would alleviate traditional burdens for adult learners such as childcare, transportation, and financial needs. This

proposal would serve Georgians who would like to continue their education in hopes of achieving a postsecondary degree or entry into the workforce. On Thursday, February 10, SB 231 passed out of the senate with a [51-3](#) vote.

Senate Bill 257: Georgia Crime Information Center; criminal history record restrictions for certain persons cited with or convicted of certain criminal offenses; provide
Senate Sponsor: [Tonya Anderson \(Lithonia\)](#)

Senate Bill 257 clarifies and prudently extends Georgians' access to criminal record restriction and sealing, commonly known as expungement. SB 257 includes provisions allowing for automatic expungement upon receiving a pardon; clarification of certain misdemeanor crimes eligible for expungement; the sealing of citation records when charges are dismissed; and earlier access to expungement for human trafficking victims. The Chamber supports this legislation as a tool that could enhance job opportunities for certain non-violent offenders to help address current statewide labor shortages. SB 257 was heard in the Senate Judiciary Committee during the 2021 special session and passed out of committee Wednesday, February 2, 2022. The bill was voted on by the Senate on Monday, February 7, and passed out with a vote of [48-3](#).

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

House Resolution 627: House Study Committee on Bureaucratic Hindrances to Businesses; create
House Sponsor: [Bill Yearta \(Sylvester\)](#)

House Resolution 627 creates a legislative study committee which will identify current state laws and/or agency regulations that may be repealed to allow businesses across Georgia to continue to prosper. On Tuesday, this measure was passed out of the House Small Business Development Committee and is not eligible for consideration by the full House of Representatives. HR 627 is supported by the business community.

House Bill 1222: Insurance; uninsured and underinsured motorist coverage maintained by transportation network companies; reduce amount

House Sponsor: [Noel Williams Jr. \(Cordele\)](#)

House Bill 1222 helps reduce the amount of coverage costs on uninsured motorists and underinsured motorists (UM/UIM) maintained by transportation network companies (TNCs). TNCs contract with thousands of drivers in Georgia and as such they are required to maintain policy coverage for their uninsured motorists and underinsured motorists (UM/UIM). Current UM/UIM policy requirements make Georgia an outlier in comparison with our neighboring states, putting these companies' insurance requirements higher than 37 other states. This bill would significantly lower policy cost minimums for TNCs and could help pass along those savings to riders. HB 1222 is supported by the business community.

House Bill 78: Administrative Services, Department of; create Division of Supplier Diversity House
Sponsor: [Roger Bruce \(Atlanta\)](#)
GHCC Position: [Support](#)

On Monday, February 7, HB 78 had a committee hearing in the House General Governmental Affairs Subcommittee. This bill would allow the Department of Administrative Service to create the Division of Supplier Diversity. This office would serve as an entity to support minority and women-owned business enterprises state-wide as an advocate. It would also provide benefits for non-minority owned companies by partnering with minority companies. President and CEO, Veronica Maldonado-Torres testified in support on behalf of the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. This bill was only eligible for a hearing.

Senate Bill 331: "Protecting Georgia Businesses and Workers Act"; enact Senate Sponsor: John Albers (Roswell)



Senate Bill 331 is a local preemption bill designed to prevent local governments from enacting ordinances dictating employee hours, scheduling, or regulating employee output during work hours. The committee took up SB 331 on Wednesday, February 9 and passed it out with a unanimous vote. The bill is now eligible for consideration by the full Georgia State Senate and it has received support from the business community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TAXATION

House Bill 1044: Local government; creation of regional development authorities; provide House Sponsor: Clay Pirkle (Ashburn)

House Bill 1044 allows counties to bind together to form regional development authorities. The Chamber has long supported such an initiative as integral to the success of our rural communities. HB 1044 was heard in the House Economic Development and Tourism Committee this week and passed out with a unanimous vote. The bill is now eligible for consideration by the full House of Representatives. The business community is supportive.

House Bill 1058: Income tax; affiliated corporations file separate or consolidated returns; provisions

House Sponsor: Bruce Williamson (Monroe)

House Bill 1058 allows for elective consolidated corporate tax returns. Currently, the law allows for the Georgia Department of Revenue (DOR) Commissioner to give permission for consolidated reporting, this bill removes the DOR discretion and allows taxpayers to make their own filing determinations. HB 1058 has been assigned to the House Ways and Means Committee and has received the support of the business community.

House Bill 1064: Income tax; certain retirement income for military service; provide exemption
House Sponsor: [Jesse Petrea \(Savannah\)](#)

House Bill 1064 allows for Georgians receiving military retirement income to have most, or all income exempt from state tax. HB 1064 had its first of two Ways and Means Subcommittee meetings on Tuesday, February 8. The business community is supportive of HB 1064.

House Bill 1187: Sales and use tax; exemption for certain high-technology data center equipment; extend sunset

House Sponsor: [Noel Williams Jr. \(Cordele\)](#)

House Bill 1187 is a 10-year extension of the high-tech data center tax credit. This credit has been successful in recruiting data centers, and the businesses they support, to Georgia. HB 1187 had its first of two Ways and Means Subcommittee meetings on Tuesday, February 8. The business community is supportive of this legislation.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

House Bill 932: Education; noncitizen students with certain refugee, special immigrant, or humanitarian parole status under federal law are classified as in-state for tuition purposes; provide

House Sponsor: [Wes Cantrell \(Woodstock\)](#)

HB 932 would classify lawful permanent residences, refugees, and special immigrant visa (SIV) holders as in-state students for tuition purposes. This bill provides a pathway to grow our much-needed workforce. Many of these federally approved students eligible to benefit from these educational opportunities have already contributed to the U.S. workforce, and this legislation would further enhance their skillsets to contribute to Georgia's economy upon relocation. There has yet to be any legislative committee action on this proposal. The business community is supportive of HB 932.

Senate Bill 379: State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia; establish a program to promote the creation and expansion of registered apprenticeship programs in the state; provide

Senate Sponsor: [Brian Strickland \(McDonough\)](#)

SB 379 would create the Office of Workforce Development under the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia. This entity will establish a program to promote the creation and expansion of registered apprenticeship programs in the state. SB 379 will incentivize small and medium-sized businesses that serve as sponsors of this program. The goal is to create more programs to support the demands of our growing economy and current workforce challenges. This apprenticeship expansion

program will train Georgians in jobs that are in high demand which is critical to our workforce. Businesses that train up to five students will be eligible to receive compensation of up to \$10,000 per student upon completion of the apprenticeship course. There has yet to be any legislative committee action on this proposal. SB 379 is supported by the business community.

ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY

House Bill 1083: The Georgia Cogeneration and Distributed Generation Act of 2001; change certain provisions

House Sponsor: [Ed Setzler \(Acworth\)](#)

House Bill 1083 is a bill that would set up a comprehensive set of mandates that would alter the course of consumer billing for energy. HB 1083 would require utility companies to financially compensate solar panel owners for more electricity over and above what they are generating. Unfortunately, this legislation would have a negative impact on non-solar consumers as they would ultimately bear the reimbursement cost of solar panel generators, both commercial and residential which can be very costly. On Tuesday, February 15, HB 1083 will have a hearing in the House Energy, Utilities, and Telecommunications committee. HB 1083 has received opposition from the business community.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

House Bill 1013: Mental Health Parity Act; enact House Sponsor: [David Ralston \(Blue Ridge\)](#)

House Bill 1013 seeks to expand access to much-needed behavioral mental health services in the state; address alternative outcomes for mental health individuals to alleviate overcrowding in our criminal justice system; enhance resources for frontline responders; address parity for providers and clients; and provide solutions for individuals dealing with substance abuse. HB 1013 will be eligible for a committee hearing in House Health & Human Services on Wednesday, February 16. The business community is supportive of HB 1013.

LAW & JUDICIARY

House Bill 1093: Local government; residential dwellings; prohibit certain use restrictions House Sponsor: [Dale Washburn \(Macon\)](#)

House Bill 1093 waives the sovereign immunity of a local government that enacts any restrictions on land or dwellings that are or are anticipated to be subject to a residential rental agreement. The business community is supportive of this measure.

House Bill 961: Torts; authorize apportionment of damages in single-defendant lawsuits; provide for evidence of fault of nonparties

House Sponsor: [Chuck Efstrotation \(Dacula\)](#)

GHCC Position: **Support**

House Bill 961 cleans up statutory language in Georgia's apportionment statute addressing damages in civil litigation originally passed in 2005. In a recent Georgia Supreme Court ruling, *Hatcher v. Alston & Bird*, inconsistencies in the statute were at issue. Under the guidance of the ruling in that case, HB 961

clarifies the legislative intent of the statute and reinstates the apportionment of damages aligned with the apportionment of fault in single-defendant cases. HB 961 unanimously passed the House Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, January 25. HB 961 was scheduled for a vote by the full House of Representatives on Monday, February 7, 2022, but it has been postponed temporarily. This bill is supported by the business community.

Senate Bill 393: ‘Common Carrier Non-Discrimination Act’; enact Senate Sponsor: [Greg Dolezal \(Cumming\)](#)

SB 393 defines large social media companies as "common carriers" and creates new rules around the moderation of content and management of user accounts. The bill additionally provides for the general public to enforce the statute by way of a lawsuit. The business community opposes this measure.

Senate Bill 394: "Georgia Computer Data Privacy Act"; enact Senate Sponsor: [Greg Dolezal \(Cumming\)](#)

Senate Bill 394 is a consumer data privacy bill with complex compliance provisions and new private rights of action against employers, which will have far-reaching implications for Georgia’s business community. The Chamber maintains the position in support of a federal law to address data privacy standards rather than forcing multi-jurisdictional businesses to navigate and comply with a patchwork of state laws. The bill has been assigned to the Senate Science and Technology Committee. The business community opposes this measure.

ENTERTAINMENT

House Bill 1034: Sales and use tax; exemption for sales of admissions to nonrecurring major sporting events; revise

House Sponsor: [Marcus Wiedower \(Watkinsville\)](#)

House Bill 1034 extends the sunset provision for a sales tax exemption on certain sporting event tickets through 2031. The bill proposes a 9-year extension which is necessary to secure major events like the Super Bowl, World Cup, and other professional sports championships. HB 1034 had its first of two Ways and Means Subcommittee meetings on Tuesday, February 8. The business community has been supportive of HB 1034.

House Bill 1053: Income tax; certain expenditures made by postproduction companies; extend tax credit

House Sponsor: [Ron Stephens \(Savannah\)](#)

House Bill 1053 extends the film post-production tax credit set to expire on January 1, 2023, through 2027. The tax credit has been fully subscribed since its inception and has successfully supported an expanding post-production industry in Georgia. The House Creative Arts and Entertainment Committee unanimously voted to recommend adoption of HB 1053 on Wednesday, February 2. The bill is now eligible to be heard in House Ways and Means Committee and the business community has been supportive.

IMMIGRATION

Senate Bill 448: Law Enforcement Officers and Agencies; peace officer in this state who lawfully arrests an individual with or without a warrant or as the result of a traffic stop shall check such individual's citizenship status; provide

Bill Sponsor: [Butch Miller \(Gainesville\)](#)

Senate Bill 448 would allow law enforcement officers and agencies to check an individual's citizenship status if they are lawfully arrested or detained in a traffic stop with or without a warrant. This bill is currently assigned to the Senate Judiciary Committee and it has not received a hearing.

GHCC LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

The Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce is hosting our annual legislative breakfast on Tuesday, March 1, 2022. The event will begin promptly at 8:00 A.M. We are expecting several special guest speakers so please save the date. This breakfast will only be open to GHCC members.

For more information about our legislative breakfast, click [here](#).



Annual LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST
MEMBERS ONLY

MARCH 1, 2022
8:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.

REGISTER NOW

James H. "Sloppy" Floyd Building
200 Piedmont Ave. SE
Atlanta, GA 30303

<https://ghcc.org/en/legislative-breakfast/>

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