

Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

Friday, March 4, 2022

The legislature convened on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday with Wednesday, March 2 as a committee workday.

Next week, the general assembly will convene on Tuesday, March 8 for legislative day 25, Wednesday, March 9 for legislative day 26, and Friday, March 11 for legislative day 27. Thursday, March 10 is a committee workday.

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

GHCC LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

The Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce hosted our Annual Legislative Breakfast on Tuesday, March 1, 2022. We would like to thank all of you for your attendance and we hope you enjoyed the event. If you would like to see event photos, [click here](#).

If you would like to see the photos from GHCC Day at the Capitol with Governor Kemp, [click here](#).

LEGISLATION OF INTEREST

KEY LEGISLATIVE ACTION

House Bill 1064: Income tax; certain retirement income for military service; provide exemption

House Sponsor: [Jesse Petrea \(Savannah\)](#)

GHCC Position: **Support**

House Bill 1064 allows for Georgians receiving military retirement income to have most, or all income exempt from state tax. HB 1064 passed out of the full House of Representatives on Monday, February 28 by a vote of [161-0](#).

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

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

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 passed out of the full House of Representatives on Thursday, March 3 by a vote of [168-0](#). The legislation will now be considered in the Senate where it'll be carried by Senator John Kennedy.

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, and this bill removes the DOR discretion to allow taxpayers to make their own filing determinations. HB 1058 passed out of the full House of Representatives on Thursday, March 3 by a vote of [163-0](#). The business community is supportive of this legislation.

House Bill 1150: Freedom to Farm Act; enact

House Sponsor: [Robert Dickey \(Musella\)](#)

House Bill 1150, also known as the Freedom to Farm Act, aims to protect farmers from nuisance litigation from neighboring property owners that encroach on existing agricultural areas. Additionally, the bill addresses vagueness and ambiguity in the law that Georgia shares with other states whose farmers have fallen victim to this type of litigation. The bill passed out of the full House of Representatives on Thursday, March 3 by a vote of [102-62](#). The business community is supportive of this legislation.

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

House Bill 1467: Administrative Services, Department of; define certain terms; provide for powers and duties

House Sponsor: [Steven Sainz \(St. Marys\)](#)

House Bill 1467 would create the Department of Administrative Services. The department would provide powers and duties of the department to designate a statewide advocate for minority-owned, women-owned, and rural business enterprises. Specifically, regarding these companies when working on state contracts. This bill would also provide for a state-wide disparity study. On Thursday, March 3 HB 1467 was second read and referred to the House Governmental Affairs Committee.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

House Bill 1013: Mental Health Parity Act; enact

House Sponsor: [David Ralston \(Blue Ridge\)](#)

GHCC Position: **Support**

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. On Wednesday, March 2, HB 1013 passed out of the House Health & Human Services Committee. The bill will be up for consideration by the full House of Representatives on Tuesday, March 8.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

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 \(McDonough\)](#)

GHCC Position: **SUPPORT**

Senate Bill 379 would create the Office of Workforce Development. This entity will establish a program to promote the creation and expansion of registered apprenticeship programs in the state. SB 379 will incentivize 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. 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. On Wednesday, March 2, SB 379 was passed out of the Senate Economic Development and Tourism Committee.

Senate Bill 452: Education; administration of a nationally recognized college entrance exam to public school students in grade 11 who choose to participate; require

Senate Sponsor: [Sheila McNeill \(Brunswick\)](#)

Chamber Position: **Support**

Senate Bill 452 seeks to ensure every 11th and 12th grade student in Georgia has the opportunity to take a college entrance exam during the school day. Currently, students take college entrance exams off-site and during the weekend. If passed, this legislation will be subject to appropriations to fund testing and be fully enacted in future years. On Wednesday, March 2, SB 452 was passed unanimously out the Senate Education & Youth Committee. On Friday, March 4, the companion bill, [House Bill 1184](#), sponsored by [Al Williams \(Midway\)](#), was heard in House Education Committee.

LAW & JUDICIARY

Senate Bill 353: Drivers' License; judicial discretion in suspension of a driver's license upon failure to appear for certain traffic violations; provide

Senate Sponsor: [Bruce Thompson \(White\)](#)

GHCC Position: **Support**

SB 353 allows for judges' discretion in suspending drivers' licenses in "Failure to Appear" instances. When a license is suspended for "Failure to Appear" this bill would allow for automatic reinstatement upon adjudication or by court order. SB 353 was heard in the Senate Public Safety Committee on Tuesday March 1.

TRANSPORTATION

House Bill 1039: Income tax; expenditures on maintenance for Class III railroads; extend tax credit

House Sponsor: [Mack Jackson \(Sandersville\)](#)

House Bill 1039 extends the sunset on the short line railroad maintenance tax credit from 2026 to 2028. The state issues a \$3,500-a-mile tax credit to short line companies, which costs the state about \$5.3 million a year, in exchange for an additional \$10 million of investments. The bill passed unanimously out of the full House Ways & Means Committee on Thursday, March 3. This bill has been supported by the business community.

ENTERTAINMENT

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

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

Chamber Position: **Support**

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 extending post-production industry in Georgia. HB 1053 had its second subcommittee hearing this week and was considered in the full House Ways and Means Committee on Thursday, March 3. The bill was

tabled and will be voted on by the full committee at a later date. The business community is supportive of this legislation.