



Wednesday, April 6, 2022 LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

Last week, the legislature convened for legislative day 36 on Monday, March 28 and worked through Friday, April 1. Thursday, March 31, Saturday, April 2, and Sunday, April 3 were all committee workdays.

The Georgia General Assembly convened Monday, April 4 for legislative day 40 marking Sine Die, the final day of the 2022 Legislative Session. To view Senate Resolution 382, the adjournment resolution that dictated the legislative calendar, [click here](#).

Governor Brian Kemp and his administration now have 40 calendar days in which to vet legislation passed by the general assembly and decide whether to sign or veto these bills. If the governor takes no action on any given bill by May 14, 2022, the legislation will become law according to the enactment date outlined in the proposal.

The Georgia Hispanic Chamber tracked approximately 550 bills from the 2021-2022 Legislative Session.

2022 ELECTION CYCLE

The week of Monday, March 7, the Georgia State Capitol served host to the qualifying process for all candidates running for elected office in 2022. To view qualified candidate information, please visit the Georgia Secretary of State's website [here](#).

LEGISLATION OF INTEREST

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

Senate Bill 331: "Protecting Georgia Businesses and Workers Act"; enact

Senate Sponsor: [John Albers \(Roswell\)](#)

House Sponsor: [Mandi Ballinger \(Canton\)](#)

GHCC Position: **Support**

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. This bill passed the full Senate on Thursday, February 17 by a vote of [31-21](#). The bill passed the full House of Representatives on Tuesday, March 22 by a vote of [99-67](#). SB 331 will now go to the Governor for his consideration.

Senate Bill 438: Contracts; certain provisions relating to retainage of progress payments; change

Senate Sponsor: [Lindsey Tippins \(Marietta\)](#)

House Sponsor: [Stan Gunter \(Blairsville\)](#)

Senate Bill 438 addresses construction retainage for public contracts. Current law allows state and local government to keep 10% retainage until a project is 50% complete, and then 0% retainage thereafter. SB 438 has a flat 5% retainage threshold for all providers for the life of the project and levels the playing field. Every other state in the southeast has a similar model. SB 438 passed out of the full Senate on Tuesday, February 15 by a vote of [52-0](#). SB 438 passed the full House of Representatives on Monday, March 28 by a vote of [151-0](#). SB 438 will now go to the Governor for his consideration. The business community supported this legislation.

House Bill 1150: Freedom to Farm Act; enact

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

Senate Sponsor: [Larry Walker, III \(Perry\)](#)

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. 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](#). HB 1150 passed out of the full Senate on Friday, April 1 by a vote of [31-23](#). The House agreed to the Senate substitute on Monday, April 4. The bill will now go to the Governor for his consideration. The business community supported this legislation.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TAXATION

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

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

Senate Sponsor: [John Albers \(Marietta\)](#)

GHCC Position: **Support**

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. On Tuesday, March 15, HB 1034 passed the full House of Representatives by a vote of [155-15](#). This bill passed out of the full Senate on Wednesday, March 30 by a vote of [48-6](#). HB 1034 will now go to the Governor for his consideration.

[House Bill 1044: Local government; creation of regional development authorities; provide](#)

House Sponsor: [Clay Pirkle \(Ashburn\)](#)

Senate Sponsor: [Steve Gooch \(Dahlonega\)](#)

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 passed the full House of Representatives on Tuesday, February 15 by a vote of [165-0](#). HB 1044 passed out of the full Senate on Friday, April 1 by a vote of [42-10](#). The House agreed to the Senate substitute on Monday, April 4. The bill will now go to the Governor for his consideration. The business community supported this legislation.

[House Bill 1058: Income tax; affiliated corporations file separate or consolidated returns; provisions](#)

House Sponsor: [Bruce Williamson \(Monroe\)](#)

Senate Sponsor: [Billy Hickman \(Statesboro\)](#)

House Bill 1058 allows for elective consolidated corporate tax returns. Currently, the law allows for the Georgia Department of Revenue (DOR) 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 bill passed out of the full Senate on Monday, April 4 by a vote of [51-0](#). HB 1058 bill will now go to the Governor for his consideration. The business community supported this legislation.

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

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

Senate Sponsor: [Kay Kirkpatrick \(Marietta\)](#)

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](#). On Friday, March 25, HB 1064 passed out of the full Senate by a vote of [56-0](#). HB 1064 will now go to the Governor for his consideration.

[House Bill 1291: Sales and use tax; exemption for sale or lease of computer equipment of high-technology companies; revise spending threshold and extend sunset date](#)

House Sponsor: [Vance Smith \(Pine Mountain\)](#)

Senate Sponsor: [Steve Gooch \(Dahlonega\)](#)

House Bill 1291 contains a slight modification to the tax exemption for the sale or lease of the computer equipment of high-technology companies. HB 1291 extends the current exemption's sunset and requires companies to pay sales tax on 10% of the first \$15 million spent annually to qualify for the credit. On Tuesday, March 15, HB 1291 passed out of the full House of Representatives, by a vote of [150-17](#). HB 1291 passed out of the full Senate on Friday, April 1 by a vote of [44-8](#). The House agreed to the Senate substitute as amended, to include the language originally drafted for House Bill 1187 (the data center tax credit) on Monday, April 4. The bill will now go to the Governor for his consideration. The business community supported this legislation.

[House Bill 1437: Income tax; revise rates of taxation on income](#)

House Sponsor: [Shaw Blackmon \(Bonaire\)](#)

Senate Sponsor: [Chuck Hufstetler \(Rome\)](#)

House Bill 1437 is a comprehensive change to Georgia's personal income tax. This legislation now lowers the standard tax rate from 5.75% to 4.99% phased in over nine years. Additionally, it eliminates most deductions but raises the standard deduction to \$12,000 per year for single filers and \$24,000 for those filing jointly. HB 1437 passed out of the full House of Representatives on Wednesday, March 9 by a vote of [115-52](#). This bill passed out of the full Senate on Friday, April 1. The House and Senate agreed to an income tax reduction. The conference report for HB 1437 was adopted in the House and in the Senate, it is now eligible for the Governor's consideration. The business community supported this legislation.

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 \(McDonough\)](#)

House Sponsor: [Chuck Martin \(Alpharetta\)](#)

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, with the goal of creating 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. SB 379 passed out of the full Senate on Tuesday, March 8 by a vote of [42-4](#). On

Wednesday, March 30, SB 379 passed out of the full House of Representatives by a vote of [166-1](#). This bill will now go to the Governor for his consideration.

House Bill 385: Teachers Retirement System of Georgia; employ beneficiaries; permit public school systems

House Sponsor: [Shaw Blackmon \(Bonaire\)](#)

Senate Sponsor: [Russ Goodman \(Cogdell\)](#)

GHCC Position: [Support](#)

House Bill 385 allows retired teachers who have 30 years of credible service to return to the classroom in high-needs areas while still drawing their retirement, but not accruing any more years of service. These retired educators who wish to return will be allowed to resume full-time instruction after 12 months of retirement. In order to best serve each community's individual needs, high-demand areas will be determined for each Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) by the Georgia Department of Education. HB 385 passed out of the full House of Representatives on Tuesday, February 1, 2022 by a vote of 169-0. HB 385 passed out of the full Senate on Tuesday, March 22 by a vote of [50-1](#). HB 385 will now go to the Governor for his consideration.

House Bill 1215: Education; provision that reduced the amount of certain funding to state charter schools that offer virtual instruction; remove

House Sponsor: [Brad Thomas \(Holly Springs\)](#)

Senate Sponsor: [John Albers \(Roswell\)](#)

House Bill 1215 would allow students enrolled in a public school to withdraw without penalty from a local school and enroll in a public charter school with available classroom space. This would also allow funding to be carried over with the student. Currently, students can only move from a charter school to a public school. HB 1215 would allow local boards of education to implement a universal and more streamlined transfer process that allows for transfers similar to that of public schools. HB 1215 passed out of the full House of Representatives on Thursday, February 24 by a vote of [113-45](#). This bill passed out of the full Senate on Monday, April 4 by a vote of [45-9](#). **HB 1215 will now go to the Governor for his consideration.** The business community supported this legislation.

House Bill 1435: Education; needs based financial aid program; include eligibility for students with a financial aid gap

House Sponsor: [Chuck Martin \(Alpharetta\)](#)

Senate Sponsor: [Max Burns \(Sylvania\)](#)

House Bill 1435 seeks to provide needs-based financial aid to eligible students while pursuing an undergraduate degree. The finances would be applicable to students enrolled in a University System of Georgia or a Technical College System of Georgia school. To remain consistent, students would still need to submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in order to receive this funding. Students would be eligible to receive a maximum of \$2,500 total per semester. On Tuesday, March 15, HB 1435 passed out of the full House of Representatives by a vote of [171-3](#). This bill passed out of the full Senate by substitute on Monday, April 4 by a vote of [53-1](#). It received an agreement in the House by a vote of [154-4](#) and now it will now go to the Governor for his consideration. The business community supported this legislation.

ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY

Senate Resolution 463: Joint Study Committee on the Electrification of Transportation; create

Senate Sponsor: [Steve Gooch \(Dahlonega\)](#)

House Sponsor: [Rick Jasperse \(Jasper\)](#)

Senate Resolution 463 would create a Joint Study Committee on the Electrification of Transportation. The electric vehicle market is expected to experience significant growth which will require the expansion of the public charging network. The joint study committee created by SR 463 will engage various stakeholders, elected officials, and other community leaders to examine opportunities with respect to the public charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. This effort is vital for the state to remain economically competitive, a leader in transportation and logistics, and the number one state in which to do business. On Tuesday, March 15, SR 463 passed out of the full Senate by a vote of [53-0](#). On Wednesday, March 30, SR 463 passed out of the full House of Representatives by a vote of [167-0](#). The business community supported this legislation.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

House Bill 1013: Mental Health Parity Act; enact

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

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

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. HB 1013 passed out of the full House of Representatives on Tuesday, March 8 by a vote of [169-3](#). On Wednesday, March 30, HB 1013 passed out of the full Senate by substitute by a vote of [54-0](#). The House of Representatives agreed to the Senate substitute by a vote of [166-0](#). This bill was signed by Governor Brian P. Kemp on Monday, April 4.

LAW & JUDICIARY

Senate Bill 10: "Jaye Mize Law"; promoting illegal drag racing and laying drags; provide for an offense

Senate Sponsor: [Emanuel Jones \(Decatur\)](#)

House Sponsor: [Houston Gaines \(Athens\)](#)

This bill passed out of the full House of Representatives by substitute with a vote of 155-0. The Senate agreed to the House substitute on Monday, April 4. SB 10 will now go to the Governor for his consideration. The previously supported SB 353 (judge discretion on driver's license suspension) has been inserted into SB 10. The business community supported this legislation.

Senate Bill 361: "Law Enforcement Strategic Support Act" or "LESS Crime Act"; enact

Senate Sponsor: [Larry Walker \(Perry\)](#)

House Sponsor: [Tyler Paul Smith \(Bremen\)](#)

Senate Bill 361 uses a proven tax incentive structure to encourage investment in local law enforcement. A priority of Lieutenant Governor Duncan, SB 361 creates a dollar-for-dollar tax credit for private and corporate taxpayers choosing to invest in law enforcement organizations. SB 361 passed out of the full Georgia State Senate on Thursday, February 10 by a vote of [52-0](#). [This bill passed out of the full House of Representatives on Wednesday, March 30 by a vote of 153-5. The Senate agreed to the House substitute on Friday, April 1 with a vote of 54-0.](#) [SB 361](#) will now go to the Governor for his consideration. The business community supported this legislation.

Senate Bill 441: Courts; reestablishment of the Criminal Case Data Exchange Board as an advisory board to The Council of Superior Court Clerks of Georgia; provide

Senate Sponsor: [Bo Hatchett \(Cornelia\)](#)

Senate Bill 441 is a comprehensive bill tackling issues with Georgia's "GCIC" criminal record database. The bill creates a new advisory board with the aim of improving the speed and accuracy of data transmission to the state database, ensuring all criminal records in Georgia are complete and accessible. SB 441 passed out of the full Senate on Tuesday, March 8 by a vote of [53-0](#). On Monday, April 4, SB 441 passed out of the House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee by substitute with a vote of 5-2. It was later considered on the House floor and passed 98-69. The Senate agreed to the House substitute by a vote of 33-22. The business community supported this legislation.

Senate Bill 470: Mortgage Lenders and Brokers; different categories of felony convictions for purposes of investigations of mortgage loan originator applicants; provide

Senate Sponsor: [Randy Robertson \(Cataula\)](#)

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

Senate Bill 470 allows mortgage lending companies to employ individuals with certain previous non-financial felony convictions in certain circumstances. On Tuesday, March 15, SB 470 passed out of the full Senate by substitute with a vote of [47-1](#). SB 470 passed the full House of Representatives on Friday, March 25 by a vote of [142-1](#). This bill will now go to the Governor for his consideration. The business community supported this legislation.

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

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

Senate Sponsor: [John Kennedy \(Macon\)](#)

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 passed out of the full House of Representatives on Thursday, March 3 by a vote of [168-0](#). This bill passed out of the full Senate on Wednesday, March 30 by a vote of [52-0](#). HB 961 will now go to the Governor for his consideration. The business community supported this legislation.

House Bill 1134: Crimes and offenses; prosecute offenses involving criminal gang activity; provide for concurrent authority

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

Senate Sponsor: [John Kennedy \(Macon\)](#)

House Bill 1134 allows the Office of the Attorney General to concurrently investigate and prosecute gang-related crimes with local district attorneys. HB 1134 passed the full House of Representatives on Monday, February 14 by a vote of [101-56](#). This bill passed out of the full Senate on Monday, March 28 by a vote of [50-5](#). HB 1134 will now go to the Governor for his consideration. The business community supported this legislation.

TRANSPORTATION

House Bill 934: Sales and use tax; special district mass transportation; local government; provisions

House Sponsor: [Rob Leverett \(Elberton\)](#)

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

Current law prohibits (in the case of single county TSPLOST) a county from collecting past the projected revenue number cited after the adoption of the resolution, even if that number is reached before the full term of the program. House Bill 934 would allow the county to continue that revenue collection until the conclusion of the SPLOST program for the full five years. HB 934 passed out of the full House of Representatives on Friday, March 11 by a vote of [150-8](#). HB 934 passed out of the full Senate by substitute on Wednesday, March 30 by a vote of [46-4](#). The House agreed to the Senate substitute on Monday, April 4 by a vote of [146-5](#). This bill will now go to the Governor for his consideration. The business community supported this legislation.