

A photograph of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners building, a large classical structure with a prominent golden dome. In the foreground, five flagpoles with gold finials hold various flags: a blue flag with a crest, a white flag with a blue and red emblem, a blue flag with a white emblem, a white flag with a blue emblem, and the Maryland state flag. The scene is set against a clear blue sky with green trees at the base of the building.

2022 Legislative Agenda Update

Fulton County Board of Commissioners

February 2, 2022

Ensure Local Home Rule: Redistricting

**Strengthen Behavioral Health Model & Funding
For Substance Abuse Treatment & Prevention**

**Create A More Efficient & Effective
Justice System - Compensation for Officials**

**Create A More Efficient & Effective Justice System
– Diversion & Reentry Programs**

**Create A More Efficient & Effective Justice System
– Codify Judicial Practices**

Support Certain Evictions Record Sealing

**Support Homeowner Protections With Greater
HOA Transparency**



2022 State Legislative Agenda

Legislative Session Highlights

- The Georgia General Assembly has convened through Legislative Day 10 as of February 2; there are 30 more Legislative Days.
- Georgia House Speaker David Ralston declared mental health reform as a top priority for this legislative session in a press conference with the newly created Mental Health Caucus. The bipartisan caucus unveiled an omnibus bill to expand access to mental health services in Georgia. Noted:
 - Georgia ranks 48th in the nation for access to mental health and substance abuse services.
 - The State's mental health crisis hotline has experienced a 24% increase in calls, texts and chats since the COVID-19 pandemic began.
 - There was a 36% increase in drug overdose deaths between April 2020 - April 2021.
- A Full Session Adjournment Resolution, [SR 382](#), sets the legislative calendar to Sine Die, April 4.

Fulton County Key Priority – Redistricting

- The Fulton County Board of Commissioners unanimously selected its preferred map plan, Map A, and will be asked to adopt the finalized map after certification from the GA Office of Legislative and Congressional Reapportionment (in accordance with [SB 177](#) - Requirements for consideration of local legislation revising existing districts or creating new districts).

Annexation & Cityhood

Bill Caption/Author	Bill Description	Status
HB 0836 - Atlanta, City of; change corporate limits; Rep. Bruce (61st; Atlanta)	Bill would incorporate currently unincorporated property in the Fulton Industrial District that lies north of U.S. Interstate 20.	Senate Read & Referred to State and Local Governmental Operations
HB 0854 -Buckhead City, City of; incorporate; Rep. Jones (25th; Johns Creek)	This bill would establish the City of Buckhead in Fulton County.	Senate Second Readers; Governmental Affairs
SB 324 - Buckhead City, City of; incorporate; Sen. Beach (21st; Alpharetta)	This bill would establish the City of Buckhead in Fulton County.	Senate Read & Referred to Urban Affairs

Elections

Bill Caption/Author	Bill Description	Status
<u>HB 886</u> –Security Tracking of the Security Ballot Paper Rep. Powell (32 nd , Hartwell)	This bill requires that new security ballot paper in locked containers; must be sealed and numbered, with the numbers recorded on tracking forms. Persons taking possession of the containers must provide written confirmation with the date, time, and number of ballots to tract chain of custody.	Governmental Affairs Favorably Reported
<u>HB 933</u> - Retention of ballots; Rep. Blackmon, (146, Bonaire)	This bill allows persons to inspect ballots and other elections documents (following election returns) held by the Clerk of Superior Court. No one outside the Clerk’s office will physically handle the ballots or documents Clerks may impose a fee.	House Second Readers; Government Affairs
<u>SB 0325</u> - Elections and Primaries; Sen. Miller (49 th , G’ville)	Bill eliminates the use of absentee ballot drop boxes and related legal provisions in the Official Code of Georgia.	Senate Read & Referred to Ethics
<u>SR 0363</u> - Right to register and vote; Sen. Miller (49 th , G’ville)	This proposed Constitutional Amendment would clarify that only citizens of the United States shall have a right to vote in elections in this state.	Senate Reconsidered; Failed

Expand Access to Behavioral Health Services

Bill Caption/Author	Bill Description	Status
HB 1013 -Mental Health Parity Act; (Omnibus) House Speaker David Ralston (7th, Blue Ridge); Rep. Oliver (82nd, Decatur); Rep. Jones (25th, South Forsyth)	This bipartisan, omnibus bill incorporates recommendations from the Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission that was comprised of mental health, substance abuse and criminal justice experts. The Commission's 2021 report can be found here : Bill proposes to: Require parity for mental health insurance coverage; Increase the number of mental health professionals in the state; Provide help to first responders help on mental health crisis calls; Improve data and transparency including enforcement of the Federal Parity Act of 2008 by requiring public reports	House Hopper
HB 15 — Preventing Tragedies Between Police and Communities Act; Rep. Scott (76th, Rex)	This bill would require de-escalation training for law enforcement.	Second Readers: Public Safety and Homeland Security
HB 49: Mental Health Parity Act	Bill requires that insurer treatment of claims concerning mental and substance use disorders are treated equally with other health insurance claims.	House Second Readers: Insurance

Expand Access to Behavioral Health Services

Bill Caption/Author	Bill Description	Status
HB 239 — DBHDD conduct or coordinate all audits of behavioral health providers; Rep. Hutchinson (107th, Snellville)	Bill provides that the DBHDD conduct or coordinate all audits of behavioral health providers to prevent duplication with other agencies.	House Second Readers: Health & Human Services
HB 570 — Georgia Public Safety Training Center; training requirements for mental health operatives; Neal (74th, Jonesboro)	This legislation adds “mental health operatives,” and would establish mental health training requirements through the Georgia Public Safety Training Center.	House Second Readers: Public Safety and Homeland Security
HB 571 — Law enforcement officers; mental health operatives; provide training; Neal (74th, Jonesboro)	Establish requirements for law enforcement to include a course consisting of 40 hours of mental health training.	House Second Readers: Public Safety and Homeland Security
HB 590 — Provide for a grant program to establish assisted outpatient treatment programs for people with mental illness; Rep. Hogan (179th, St. Simon's Island); Rep. Oliver (82nd, Decatur)	Bill establishes a three-year assisted outpatient treatment pilot grant to fulfill Georgia's outpatient civil commitment law in order to establish the efficacy of the assisted outpatient treatment model in Georgia.	House Health and Human Services

Expand Access to Behavioral Health Services

Bill Caption/Author	Bill Description	Status
HB 713 - Reducing Street Homelessness Act of 2021; Rep. Dempsey (13th, Rome)	Bill mandates, unless otherwise prohibited by federal requirements, all state funds received by the Dept. of Community Affairs to address homelessness that are allocated to municipalities, continuums of care, or nonprofits for the construction of short-term housing or sheltering of the homeless shall be redirected by the department for use on the following: safe “parking” lots for structured camping facilities.	House Second Readers: Public Safety and Homeland Security
HB 717 — Mental Health; authorization of peace officers to take a person to a physician or emergency receiving facility; Rep. Cooper (43rd, Marietta)	The bill would provide authorization to law enforcement to take a person to a physician, or emergency facility for emergency mental health evaluation; officer need not formally file charges prior to transporting the individual.	House Second Readers: Health & Human Services
HB 853 - Mental Health treatment alternatives to imprisonment; Rep. Sandra Scott (76th, Rex)	Bill would address defendants with mental health issues who plead guilty or nolo contendere. It would provide for mental health treatment options during imprisonment.	House Second Readers; Judiciary Non-Civil

Expand Access to Behavioral Health Services

Bill Caption/Author	Bill Description	Status
HB 855 - Workers' compensation, expanded coverage for first responders; Rep. Kennard (102nd, Lawrenceville)	Bill provides workers' compensation coverage for first responders for post-traumatic stress disorder arising in the course and scope of employment. (Behavioral Health policy support also.)	House Second Readers: Industry & Labor
SB 208 — DBHDD fully funded list; Sen. Harrell (40th, Atlanta)	To require the DBHDD to fully provide funded services over a five-year period to those with intellectual or developmental disabilities who are on the New Options Waiver (NOW) or Comprehensive Supports Waiver (COMP) waiting list. This would also prohibit the department from capping or limiting community living support services under the COMP waiver.	Referred to Senate Appropriations
SB 342: Mental Health Parity Reporting ; Sen. Kirkpatrick (32nd, Sandy Springs)	Bill requires insurance companies to provide annual reports proving equality in coverage for mental health and to establish penalties for failure to comply.	Referred to Senate Insurance and Labor

Health & Human Services: COVID Impact

Bill Caption/Author	Bill Description	Status
HB 856 –Establishment of Commission on the Disparate Impact of COVID-19; Rep. Schofield (60th, Atlanta)	A 20-member Commission comprised of professionals in the fields of public health, infectious diseases, education, housing, small businesses, and aging services. Appointees are to be made by House and Senate majority and minority leadership. Commission would convene no later than January 1, 2023, and sunset June 30, 2024.	House Second Readers; Rules

Firearms

Bill Caption/Author	Bill Description	Status
HB 903 - “Second Amendment Restoration and Protection Act,” Rep. Gullett (19th, Dallas)	Bill allows persons to carry weapons without obtaining a Georgia weapons carry license so long as they are legally eligible to carry a weapon in Georgia. Local governments are prohibited from enforcing any anti-firearms policies, meaning any regulation, rule, policy, or practice which prohibits or restricts the possession, use, sale or transfer of firearms above provisions of state or federal law.	Second Readers: Public Safety & Homeland Security
HB 917 - Firearms; lifetime weapons carry licenses; Rep. Cameron (1st, Rossville)	Bill allows Georgians, for a cost of either \$200 or \$100 (depending on certain status), to obtain a lifetime weapons carry license. Applicants must undergo a background check every five years, at cost to the state, to maintain lifetime license and pay processing fee to Probate Judge.	Second Readers: Public Safety & Homeland Sec.
SB 319 – "Georgia Constitutional Carry Act of 2021"; Sen. Jason Anavitarte (31st, Dallas)	Bill would eliminate gun permit requirement in order to carry a gun in public if the individual is a lawful weapons carrier. Lawful weapons carrier means any person who is not prohibited by law from possessing a weapon or long gun, any person who is licensed pursuant to Code Section 16-11-129, or any person licensed to carry a weapon in any other state whose laws recognize and give effect to a license issued pursuant to this part. Weapon means a knife or handgun.	Referred to Senate Judiciary Committee

Business, Consumers & Taxation

Bill Caption/Author	Bill Description	Status
<u>SB 0323</u> – State income tax; Sen. Butch Miller (49th, Gainesville)	Bill would eliminate the State income tax.	Senate Read & Referred: Finance
<u>SB 0331</u> - "Protecting Georgia Businesses and Workers Act"; Sen. John Albers (56th, Roswell)	Bill prohibits local governments from regulating the hours or scheduling that an employer is required to provide employees or otherwise regulate employee output during work hours, with the exception of regulating business operating hours.	Senate Read & Referred: Industry & Labor
<u>SB 0332</u> - "Inform Consumers Act"; John Albers (56th, Roswell)	Bill regulates third-party, high-volume sellers operating on online platforms requiring certain business or tax identification, financial and related registration information within 10 days of beginning operations. Failure to comply will cause suspension on online marketplace platform. Marketplace must provide for electronic or telephonic consumer reporting of suspected suspicious activity. Effective: January 2023.	Senate Judiciary Favorably reported; Read Second Time

Homestead Exemptions

Bill Caption/Author	Bill Description	Status
<u>HB 1029</u> - Milton, senior homestead exemption; modify maximum income; Rep. Jones (47th, Milton), Rep. Cantrell (22nd, Milton)	Bill calls for a referendum for a local homestead exemption: "Shall the Act be approved which modifies the maximum income for a homestead exemption for individuals age 70 or older to be the greater of \$100,000.00 or the maximum amount which may be received by an individual and an individual's spouse under the federal Social Security Act for the immediately preceding year?"	House First Readers: Intragovernmental Coordination Effective tax year January 1, 2023.
<u>HB 1030</u> – Milton; repeal homestead exemption; Rep. Jan Jones (47th, Milton), Rep. Cantrell (22nd, Milton)	Bill calls for a referendum: "Shall the Act be approved which repeals the homestead exemption for citizens of the City of Milton age 65 years or older meeting certain income requirements as found in Section 6.34 of the city charter?" Effective tax year January 1, 2023.	House First Readers: Intragovernmental Coordination
<u>HB 1031</u> - Milton; increase amount of a senior homestead exemption; Rep. Jan Jones (47th, Milton), Rep. Cantrell (22nd, Milton)	Shall the Act be approved which increases the general homestead exemption for individuals age 65 or older from City of Milton ad valorem taxes for municipal purposes from \$15,000.00 to \$25,000.00?" Effective tax year January 1, 2023.	House First Readers: Intragovernmental Coordination

Development Authorities

Bill Caption/Author	Bill Description	Status
<u>HB 1044</u> - Creation of regional development authorities; Rep. Pirkle (155th, Ashburn)	Bill provides for the creation of regional development authorities and an enhancement for the jobs tax credit for such authorities. A county shall not belong to more than one regional development authority.	House First Readers: Economic Development & Tourism

TSPLOST

Bill Caption/Author	Bill Description	Status
<u>House Bill 934</u> Sales and use tax; special district mass transportation; local government; Rep. Leverett (33rd, Elberton)	This bill is an ACCG legislative priority that amends the GA Code to allow a Single County Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (TSPLOST) to be collected for the full amount of time (five years), as opposed to terminating once the estimated amount is collected. In order to collect for the maximum amount of time, an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) would have to be in place between the county and cities, and all proceeds would be spent according to the IGA - on transportation purposes. NOTE: This bill is not retroactive but will apply to TSPLOST referendums once enacted.	House Second Readers: Ways & Means



Special Days at the State Capitol

- **February 1:** [2022 Girl Scout Day at the Capitol](#) – Girl Scouts of Greater Atlanta
- **February 28:** [Dyslexia Day at the Capitol](#) – International Dyslexia Association Georgia
- **March 1:** [2022 Legislative Advocacy Webinar](#) – The Georgia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
- **March 9:** [2022 Clark Atlanta University Day at the Georgia State Capitol](#) – Clark Atlanta University