



FULTON COUNTY 2019 PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE AGENDA
Department of External Affairs - December 19, 2018

Item #18-0890



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REPRESENTATION & AUTHORITY**

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DESIGNATION &
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**ELECTIONS CODE
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**REPEAL OF CERTAIN POPULATION LAWS
ONLY IMPACTING FULTON COUNTY**



2019 Proposed State Legislative Agenda

TRANSIT REPRESENTATION & AUTHORITY

- Fulton County supports designated elective representation and appointment authority for transit boards, as applicable, to ensure the interests of the citizens and businesses in Fulton County. Fulton County continues its support for long-term financing tools to help local governments address their transit capital and operational needs to ensure appropriate integration and equitable connectivity.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DESIGNATION & FUNDING

- Introduce legislation to establish Fulton County as the Behavioral Health safety-net provider.
- Increase state funding to Fulton County for core Behavioral Health services.
- Allocate funding for a Fulton County Behavioral Health Crisis Service Center/Diversion Center.
- Support GA Department of Community Health's planned Medicaid Plan amendment to allow coverage of inmate hospitalizations over 24 hours, and the move to authorize the "suspension" (rather than termination) of Medicaid benefits for incarcerated individuals.
- Prioritize Fulton in the awarding and allocation of opioid grant funding.

MEDICAID 1115 WAIVERS

- Fulton County supports access to quality medical care for all persons regardless of income and insured status, and urges the State of Georgia to support 1115 waivers to improve and expand access to high-quality, person-centered services that produce positive health outcomes for all residents of Georgia.

PROHIBIT PUPPY MILLS RETAIL SALES

- Fulton County discourages the use of “puppy mills” and requests the General Assembly to prohibit the retail sale of puppies from high-volume breeders as a matter of good faith in commerce and for the ethical treatment of animals.

ANTI-SEX TRAFFICKING POLICY EXPANSION AND ENFORCEMENT

- Fulton County Government requests that the anti-sex trafficking posting requirement be expanded and that appropriation inspections be conducted for enforcement of this law. Current law requires posting in government buildings, truck stops, bus stations and bars but does not require such action for restaurants, convenience stores and gas stations.

RECORDS RESTRICTIONS FOR CERTAIN NON-VIOLENT OFFENSES

- Fulton County supports expanding record restriction laws to include convictions of certain non-violent misdemeanor offenses to remove barriers to self-sufficiency including employment and housing for thousands of Georgians. Currently, only certain misdemeanor convictions of “youthful offenders” (*below the age of 21*) are eligible for sealing in Georgia.

PROPERTY AND SALES TAX REFORMS AND REVIEW

- Fulton County continues to seek remedies to address the reform and streamlining of the property assessment system, including simplification of the homestead exemption process. Fulton County further urges the creation of a study committee to review the use of Tax Allocation Districts.

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION APPEALS PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS

- Fulton County supports an efficient, fair and timely appeals process for tax payers. Pursuant to OCGA Title 48 regarding county boards of equalization, review of assessments and citizen appeals, Fulton County proposes an opt-in opportunity for e-notification to tax payers appealing their hearings.
- If the taxpayer chooses to exercise the one-time change of date/time of their scheduled hearing as allowed under statute, Fulton County requests that the rescheduled hearing be held in a time period that does not exceed 90 days beyond the initial appeals hearing date unless there are other extenuating circumstances including military service.
- Fulton County further supports convenient public access for its Board of Equalization so that meeting locations are held in northern, central and southern sections of the County.

ELECTIONS CODE CLARIFICATION & VOTER ACCESS

- Fulton County supports changes to the Georgia Elections Code to provide greater clarity for Georgia citizens. Specifically, Fulton County requests that language be amended in Title 21 of the OCGA to change all references for “Absentee In Person” to “Early Voting” to reduce confusion among voters, and Fulton County supports the countywide-precinct voting model.

ELECTIONS FUNDING

- Fulton County Government supports a modernized and secure elections system with equipment and program funding to counties that match local needs and compliance requirements to implement the full rollout of the new voting system for Georgia counties.

REPEAL OF CERTAIN POPULATION/LOCAL LAWS RELATED TO FULTON COUNTY

- Fulton County Government requests that certain population statutes, local laws & amendments that preempt local home rule related to Fulton County be repealed and removed from the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

KEY POLICY POSITIONS

- **HARM REDUCTION PROGRAMS**

Fulton County supports legislative changes to allow harm comprehensive reduction programs that provide mental health counseling and treatment options including syringe case management services to reduce transmission of HIV, Hepatitis and other communicable diseases.

- **AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES PROGRAM RESEARCH**

Fulton County supports funding for advanced testing for emerging transportation technologies including autonomous vehicles and for the collection of relevant data for demonstration projects.

KEY POLICY POSITIONS

- **DISABILITY AFFAIRS FUNDING ENHANCEMENTS**

Fulton County seeks increased state funding for disability affairs, including physical and mental health integration services. People with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty, endure material hardships, and experience food insecurity. Inadequate state funding of health services for persons with disabilities places the burden of caring for these individuals on county and local governments, often through the criminal justice system.

- **COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS TRANSPARENCY AND PROTECTIONS**

Fulton County seeks to advocate for greater transparency and stronger protections for all residential community associations and individual property owners.



2018 SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE SESSION

- A Special Session of the General Assembly convened November 13 - November 17.
- The legislature approved an emergency funding package of \$270 million in grants-in-aid and \$200 million in tax credits to remediate hurricane storm damage.
- Lawmakers also ratified Governor Deal's executive order temporarily halting jet fuel sales and use taxes through June 2019.
- Pre-filing of legislation for the 2019 legislative session began November 15, 2018.
- The 2019 Regular Session begins January 14, 2019.