

Welcome to the Georgia Bio Legislative Watch, a weekly update on the 2013 legislative session of the Georgia General Assembly provided by Brock Clay Attorneys exclusively for Georgia Bio members.

[Venture Capital Legislation](#)

In an effort to stimulate investment in high tech jobs, Lt. Governor Casey Cagle is pushing for legislation to stimulate over \$100 million in investment incentives over the next five years in Georgia. Expected to be filed in the House within the next ten days, the legislation would draw on OneGeorgia funds and tax credits to create a venture capital fund overseen by an independent state Board. The Board would also recruit private money to be thrown into the pot. The fund would, after an initial investment, recoup its original investment plus 80% of the profits.

Hospital Bed Tax

The controversial measure called alternatively the “bed tax” and “Medicaid provider fee” pass out of the House Governmental Affairs Committee on Tuesday. [SB 24](#) proposes a system whereby the Board of Community Health will continue the fee for another four years, helping to fill Georgia’s \$700 million Medicaid hole. The previous bed tax is set to expire on June 30th. Georgia’s Medicaid roles have grown by over 100,000 as a result of the Affordable Care Act. Rep. Barry Fleming (R - Augusta) was the lone “no” vote. The legislation was debated on the House floor today, and after eight speakers in favor of the legislation, passed by a vote of 147-18.

Ethics Reform

On Tuesday, Speaker David Ralston (R - Blue Ridge) [released his widely discussed ethics reform package](#). In short, [HB 142](#) and [HB 143](#) would ban most individual “gifts” from lobbyists, while broadening requirements for lobbyist registration and granted expanded authority to the State Ethics Commission. Three years ago, Speaker Ralston led the charge for ethics reform, but has recently come under fire for his verbal opposition to a “total gift ban,” arguing that it’s insolvent. However, he recently accepted the results of a 2012 non-binding referendum in which Georgia voters indicated support for the proposal. The legislation does, however, exempt legislative committees, sub-committees, and caucuses. In an important development, House Minority Leader Stacey Abrams (D - Atlanta) stated that, at first blush, she was not opposed to the language.

The legislation was heard for the first time in a House Rules subcommittee on Thursday. The legislation as currently drafted is being [strongly opposed by members of Common Cause and the Tea Party](#). They say that the legislation would restrict their ability to petition their government. A new draft of the legislation to clarify some of the concerns is expected next week.

BioSimilar Legislation

Advocates of biosimilar legislation are working closely with various members of the General Assembly and getting close to having their draft legislation ready to file. Brock Clay is interfacing closely with these members and will keep GABIO apprised of any developments.

Georgia Bio Day at the Capitol

As has previously been the case, the Georgia Bio Day was very successful this year, despite it taking place on a Monday morning. Over 40 legislators attended, including but not limited to: Representatives Tom Kirby, Chuck Martin, Howard Maxwell, Dar’shun Kendrick, Mike Dugan, Pamela Lewis, Barry Fleming, Howard Parrott, and Tom Rice; and Senators Tyler Harper, Brandon Beach, Hunter Hill, Gail Davenport, Emanuel Jones, Jason Carter, Donzella James, Hardie Davis, Chuck Hufstetler, and Ed Harbison. 95 sets of Georgia Bio collaterals were distributed.

[The Newnan Times Herald covered the event.](#)

[The Florida Times Union also covered the event \(via Morris News\).](#)

Senate Health and Human Services Subcommittees

The Senate Health and Human Services committee met for its first meeting this week. Chairman Unterman appointed the following subcommittees:

<u>Pharmacology</u>	<u>Health Care Delivery</u>	<u>Technology</u>	<u>Professional Issues</u>
Balfour, Chair Henson Hufstetler	Carter, Chair Shafer Millar	Shafer, Chair Jackson Butler	Millar, Chair Orrock Ligon

Legislative Schedule

Monday, January 28	Legislative day 5
Tuesday, January 29	Legislative day 6
Wednesday, January 30	Legislative day 7
Thursday, January 31	Legislative day 8
Friday, February 1	Legislative day 9
Saturday - Sunday, February 2-3	In adjournment
Monday, February 4	Legislative day 10
Tuesday, February 5	Legislative day 11
Wednesday, February 6	Legislative day 12
Thursday, February 7	Legislative day 13
Friday, February 8	Legislative day 14
Saturday - Sunday February 9-10	In adjournment
Monday, February 11	Legislative day 15
Tuesday, February 12	Legislative day 16
Wednesday, February 13	Legislative day 17
Thursday, February 14	Legislative day 18
Friday - Monday February 15-18	In adjournment
Tuesday, February 19	Legislative day 19
Wednesday, February 20	Legislative day 20
Thursday, February 21	Legislative day 21
Friday, February 22	Legislative day 22
Saturday-Sunday, February 23-24	In adjournment
Monday, February 25	Legislative day 23
Tuesday, February 26	Legislative day 24
Wednesday, February 27	Legislative day 25
Thursday, February 28	Legislative day 26
Friday, March 1	Legislative day 27
Saturday-Sunday March 2-3	In adjournment
Monday, March 4	Legislative day 28
Tuesday, March 5	Legislative day 29

Legislation Georgia Bio is Tracking

HB57	A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Code Section 16-13-25 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to Schedule I controlled substances, so as to expand the definition of Schedule I controlled substances; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.	(1) Ramsey, Matt 72nd (2) Golick, Rich 40th (3) Cooke, Kevin 18th (4) Hightower, Dustin 68th (5) Gravley, Micah 67th (6) Cooper, Sharon 43rd	HC: Judiciary Non-Civil SC:	Summary Jan/31/2013 - House Passed/Adopted	(Monitor) Sponsored by Rep. Matt Ramsey, this legislation expands the definition of Schedule I controlled substances.
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HB81	A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Code Section 48-7-40.30 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to an income tax credit for certain qualified investments for a limited period of time, so as to extend such income tax credit; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.	(1) Dudgeon, Mike 25th (2) Williamson, Bruce 115th (3) Peake, Allen 141st (4) Lindsey, Edward 54th (5) Abrams, Stacey 89th (6) Stephens, Ron 164th	HC: Ways & Means SC:	Summary Jan/28/2013 - House Second Readers	(Support) Sponsored by Rep. Mike Dudgeon (R - Johns Creek), this legislation authorizes an extension of the popular angel tax credit passed several years ago.
SB37	A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Article 5 of Chapter 12 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to abortion, so as to change certain provisions relating to criminal abortion; to change certain provisions relating to when abortion is legal; to amend Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to health, so as to repeal provisions relating to a physician's obligation in the performance of abortions; to change certain provisions relating to civil and professional penalties for violations of the "Woman's Right to Know Act"; to change certain provisions relating to definitions relative to the "Woman's Right to Know Act"; to provide for other related matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.	(1) Orrock, Nan 36th (2) Tate, Horacena 38th (3) Davenport, Gail 44th (4) Sims, Freddie Powell 12th (5) Butler, Gloria 55th (6) Thompson, Curt 5th	HC: SC: Health and Human Services	Summary Jan/15/2013 - Senate Read and Referred	(Monitor) This legislation repeals the mandates of 2012's fetal pain legislation.