

DATE: January 31, 2014
SUBJECT: Week Three of the 2014 Legislative Session



Both chambers adjourned this afternoon on day 14 of the legislative session after a slow, but interesting week. The ‘snowpocalypse’ may have shut Atlanta down the past few days, but the Georgia General Assembly made it through week three of the 2014 legislative session without missing a beat- sort of. While the area was in a state of emergency, the Senate was able to gavel in on Wednesday, the House on Thursday, allowing the General Assembly to stay true to their proposed deadline of an early-ending session. All committee meetings were canceled on those days and no business was transacted. Here are some additional highlights:

Gov. Deal’s response to epic traffic jam: The Governor is calling for a review of the government’s response to the ‘epic traffic jam’ and is not taking full responsibility for the event. “We did not have adequate preparation, and I do accept responsibility for that,” [said Deal](#).

AFY 2014 Supplemental Budget: The supplemental budget was expected to be ready by Wednesday of next week, but this weeks’ hiccup could prolong it a few more days. There have been no changes since our last update.

Changes to the SHBP: After much [uproar](#) from educators and other state employees, the Georgia Department of Community Health called for a special meeting on Monday to discuss the State Health Benefit Plan and insurance coverage. Changes were made to co-pays and apply to all tiers of coverage (bronze, silver, and gold). These changes will go into effect in March an estimated \$114 million will be taken from the Plans reserve to fund these changes. A press release from DCH with specifics can be found [here](#).

Guns: Last week we announced that HB 512, which would allow Georgians with a weapons permit to carry guns into churches, parts of college campuses and bars, was expected to be revised by another gun bill that would be introduced soon. Today, [HB 875](#) was dropped by Representative Rick Jasperse (R – Jasper). The 26-page bill includes the opportunity for individual schools to arm their personnel. We are currently analyzing the bill and will be monitoring its progress closely.

Medical Marijuana: [HB 885](#) by Representative Peake (R – Macon) is known as "Haliegh's Hope Act." It would allow the General Assembly to permit research on the therapeutic and treatment applications of cannabis with regards to seizure disorder patients (the current law allows research for cancer and glaucoma). The cannabis would be delivered in a nonsmoking, oil-based form, such as a liquid, pill, vaporization, or injection. The bill states that it does not encourage or sanction the recreational use of marijuana. The Medical Association of Georgia supports such legislation, as does Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta. It has been referred to the Health and Human Services Committee. For more information on this piece of legislation click [here](#).

Upcoming Meetings:

- Monday, February 3 at 11:00 in 417 Capitol- Georgia Bio Government Affairs Committee will meet.
- Monday, February 3 at 1:00 in 133 Capitol- The House Judiciary will meet to discuss HB 707, the Georgia Health Care Freedom and ACA Noncompliance Act.
- Monday, February 3 at 3:00 in 606 CLOB- The House Health and Human Services will meet to discuss HB 721 (Georgia Composite Medical Board) and HB 853 (Mental health facilities certificate of need).

- Monday, February 3 at 4:00 in 506 CLOB- The House Science and Technology Committee will meet. Mr. Terry N.



Hilderbrand, Senior Research Engineer with the Georgia Tech Research Institute will be doing a presentation titled “Self-Driving Vehicle Technology and Policy Review.”

- Wednesday, February 5 at 2:00 in 450 Capitol- The Health and Human Services Committee will meet. The agenda has yet to be released

Schedule:

- The House and Senate are adjourned until 10:00 Monday morning for day 15 of the legislative session.
- The General Assembly will be adjourned on Friday, February 14 through Monday, February 17. They will begin the 24th day of the 2014 Legislative Session on Tuesday, February 18th.

Legislative Tracking Sheet

Bill	Sponsor	Committees	Current Status	Analysis
HB481	(1) Neal, Jay 2nd (2) Kirby, Tom 114th (3) Taylor, Darlene 173rd (4) England, Terry 116th (5) Sheldon, Donna 104th (6) Nix, Randy 69th	HC: Judiciary SC:	Summary Feb/27/2013 - House Second Readers	H.B. 481, sponsored by state Rep. Jay Neal, (R - LaFayette), is titled the “Ethical Treatment of Human Embryos Act.” SB 481 would make it illegal to: -- “Create or attempt to create a human-animal hybrid;” - - “Transfer or attempt to transfer a human embryo into a nonhuman womb;” -- “Transfer or attempt to transfer a nonhuman embryo into a human womb” -- Transport or receive for any purpose a human-animal hybrid or any product “derived from such a hybrid.” Nothing in the bill would prohibit: -- “Research involving the use of transgenic animal models containing human genes; -- “Xenotransplantation of human organs, tissues or cells into recipient animals; -- “An individual from receiving nonhybrid organs, tissues or cells delivered from outside of this state....” The legislation also states that: “In disputes arising between any parties regarding the in vitro human embryo, the judicial standard for resolving such disputes shall be in the best interest of the in vitro human embryo.”
HB644	(1) Taylor, Tom 79th (2) Brockway, Buzz 102nd	HC: Insurance SC:	Summary Mar/22/2013 3 - House Second Readers	(Support) HB 644, sponsored by Representative Tom Taylor of the 79th, would require insurance carriers to disclose any changes to drug formularies as well as notify the enrollee if there is a change to drug coverage. In addition, the insurer would not be able to increase the copayment or cost-sharing amount during the enrollee's

				contract period, about one year.
HB676	(1) Kidd, E. Culver "Rusty" 145th (2) Sharper, Dexter 177th (3) Kaiser, Margaret 59th (4) Clark, Valerie 101st (5) Jasperse, Rick 11th (6) Spencer, Jason 180th	HC: Health & Human Services SC:	Summary Jan/13/2014 - House Second Readers	This proposed bill, sponsored by Representative Kidd, proposes to authorize a physician to delegate to a physicians assistant the authority to prescribe Schedule II controlled substances. It will be required that physicians assistant's name be recorded for purposes of documenting care and treatment provided to a patient.
HB885	(1) Peake, Allen 141st (2) Watson, Ben 166th (3) Channell, Mickey 120th (4) Kaiser, Margaret 59th (5) Gravley, Micah 67th (6) McCall, Tom 33rd	HC: SC:	Summary Jan/28/2014 - House Hopper	Sponsored by Representative Peak (R - Macon), HB 885 is known as "Haliagh's Hope Act." It would allow the General Assembly to permit research on the therapeutic and treatment applications of cannabis with regards to such disorders as cancer, glaucoma and seizure disorder patients. The cannabis would be delivered in a nonsmoking form, such as a liquid, pill, vaporization, or injection. This bill does not encourage or sanction the recreational use of marijuana.
SB224	(1) Golden, Tim 8th (2) Shafer, David	HC: Ways & Means SC: Insurance and Labor	Summary Mar/28/201 3 - House Withdrawn, Recommitte	(Support) Invest Georgia will be overseen by a five-member appointed board. Through a competitive bid process the board will select a third-party fund administrator, which will then competitively select venture

	48th (3) Chance, Ronnie 16th		d	capital funds to manage investment activities focused on both Georgia early or seed stage and growth stage companies. The venture capital funds must have or establish a physical presence in Georgia in order to ensure that the investments are Georgia-focused. The State will contribute \$95 million over a five-year period into the Fund to serve as principal. The returns from the investments by the venture funds would be distributed in the following manner: the principal amounts of the investment will be retained by the Invest Georgia Fund as well as 80 percent of the profit, while the remaining 20 percent will be retained by the venture fund as profit. The Invest Georgia Fund is created as a separate fund maintained by the board and will be capitalized through grants from the existing Seed-Capital Fund, designated State appropriations to ATDC, and private contributions to the board. The capital raised will be periodically distributed to the venture capital funds selected by the fund administrator. State funding will be dispersed annually over a five-year period in the following amounts: \$10 million; \$10 million; \$15 million; \$25 million; and \$35 million.
SB85	(1) Bethel, Charlie 54th (2) Mullis, Jeff 53rd (3) Golden, Tim 8th (4) Carter, Buddy 1st (5) Loudermilk, Barry 14th (6) Chance, Ronnie 16th	HC: Health & Human Services SC: Health and Human Services	Summary Mar/12/2013 - House Second Readers	Allows pharmacists and nurses to give vaccinations to adults.
HB310	(1)	HC: Ethics	Summary	HB 310 would move state and partisan

	Wilkinson, Joe 52nd	SC: Ethics	Jan/21/2014 - Act 343	county primaries to the same day, from July to May 20. That complies with a federal judge's order so that ballots from overseas members of the military have time to be counted in any runoff. The bill would also require all candidates to file a campaign finance report on March 31. That date, however, would appear to be mostly aimed at unelected challengers because incumbent state officials cannot raise money during the 40-day legislative session, according to the AJC. With little or no fundraising to report, incumbents would have little to disclose by March 31. This bill was the first bill to be passed and signed by the Governor in the 2014 legislative session.
HB688	(1) Kirby, Tom 114th (2) Lindsey, Edward 54th (3) Sheldon, Donna 104th (4) Williamson, Bruce 115th (5) Ballinger, Mandi 23rd (6) Gravley, Micah 67th	HC: Ways & Means SC:	Summary Jan/13/2014 - House Second Readers	HB 688, sponsored by Rep. Kirby, proposes to eliminate income taxes collected by the state, taking effect January 2015. The imposed tax will remain in retail purchases, retail sale, rental, storage, use or consumption on tangible personal property, among others. The percentage of tax will be determined by the General Assembly
HB707	(1) Spencer, Jason 180th (2) Stover, David 71st (3) Turner,	HC: Judiciary SC:	Summary Jan/15/2014 - House Second Readers	HB 707 is to be known as "The Georgia Health Care Freedom and ACA Noncompliance Act." This bill proposes to prohibit the implementation of the Affordable Care Act by any local municipality, State Agency or political subdivision of the State of Georgia. It has been referred to the Committee on Judiciary. For more information, refer to

	Scot 21st (4) Caldwell, Michael 20th (5) Cooke, Kevin 18th (6) Lindsey, Edward 54th			this recent article from the AJC: http://www.ajc.com/weblogs/political-insider/2013/dec/18/dialing-rhetoric-obamacare-georgia/
HB729	(1) Rice, Tom 95th (2) Geisinger, Harry 48th (3) Oliver, Mary Margaret 82nd	HC: Ways & Means SC:	Summary Jan/15/2014 - House Second Readers	Sponsored by Representative Rice (R - Norcross), HB 729 would change the way in which the fair market value of motor vehicles subject to the tax are determined. It has been referred to the Ways and Means Committee.
HR1038	(1) Stephens, Ron 164th	HC: Economic Development & Tourism SC:	Summary Jan/14/2014 - House Second Readers	HR 1038, sponsored by Representative Stephens of the 164th, proposes to encourage the Georgia Deptment of Education, the Technical College System of Georgia, the University System of Georgia, the Governor's Office of Workforce Development, the Department of Community Affairs, and the private sector to work together and collaborate to assist in the return of manufacturing to the United States. These groups are key in continuing to develop and train our current and future workforce to meet the challenges of an ever-changing manufacturing environment. Ultimately, this collaboration and continued innovation will increase the economic stability of our state and strengthen the global economy.
SB308	(1) Fort, Vincent 39th (2) Jones, Emanuel 10th (3) Tate,	HC: SC: Appropriations	Summary Jan/24/2014 - Senate Read and Referred	This bill, SB 308, would allow for appropriations to be used for Medicaid under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. It was referred to the Appropriations Committee.

	Horacena 38th (4) Henson, Steve 41st (5) Seay, Valencia 34th (6) Thompson, Curt 5th			
SB316	(1) Henson, Steve 41st (2) Ramsey, Sr., Ronald 43rd (3) James, Donzella 35th (4) Butler, Gloria 55th (5) Davenport, Gail 44th (6) Carter, Jason 42nd	HC: SC: Government Oversight	Summary Jan/24/2014 - Senate Read and Referred	SB 316 would create a Whistleblower hotline for people to call and report abuse of funds by public officers and employees. It was referred to the Committee on Government Oversight.
SB328	(1) Fort, Vincent 39th (2) Henson, Steve 41st (3) Tate, Horacena 38th (4) Davenport, Gail 44th (5) Sims, Freddie Powell 12th (6) Butler,	HC: SC: Insurance and Labor	Summary Jan/27/2014 - Senate Read and Referred	SB 328 refers to state employees' health insurance plans. It would require the board to contract with at least two health provider vendors. It was referred to Insurance and Labor Committee.

	Gloria 55th			
SB334	(1) Carter, Buddy 1st	HC: SC:	Summary Jan/28/2014 - Senate Hopper	SB 334, sponsored by Senator Buddy Carter, is the Senate's version of HB 707 or "The Georgia Health Care Freedom and ACA Noncompliance Act." It proposes to prohibit the implementation of the Affordable Care Act by any local municipality, State Agency or political subdivision of the State of Georgia.
SR734	(1) Dugan, Mike 30th	HC: SC: Ethics	Summary Jan/14/2014 - Senate Read and Referred	Sponsored by Senator Dugan of the 30th, this resolution proposes to amend the Constitution to allow members of the Senate to serve four-year terms of office.

Notes

