



Changes in Health Care and Policy in the 2016 Georgia Legislative Session

Laura Colbert, MPH, CHES

Meredith Gonsahn, MPH

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Webinar objectives

- At the end of this presentation, you should:
 - Be familiar with bills and resolutions considered by the General Assembly that affect health care and health policy in Georgia
 - Understand themes and issues related to health care that arose during the legislative session
 - Be prepared to take action on health care policy in Georgia

Outline

- Budget
- Passed bills
- Study committees
- Bills that did not pass
- Missed opportunities
- Resources



Georgians for a Healthy Future



GHF's 2016 policy priorities

- Close Georgia's coverage gap
- Set and enforce network adequacy standards for all health plans in Georgia
- End surprise out-of-network bills
- Ensure provider directory accuracy and usability
- Remove unnecessary restrictions on consumer education and assistance
- Ensure access to quality health care services for Medicaid and PeachCare beneficiaries
- Prevent youth substance use disorders through the utilization of SBIRT in Medicaid
- Increase Georgia's tobacco tax

Archived webinar:

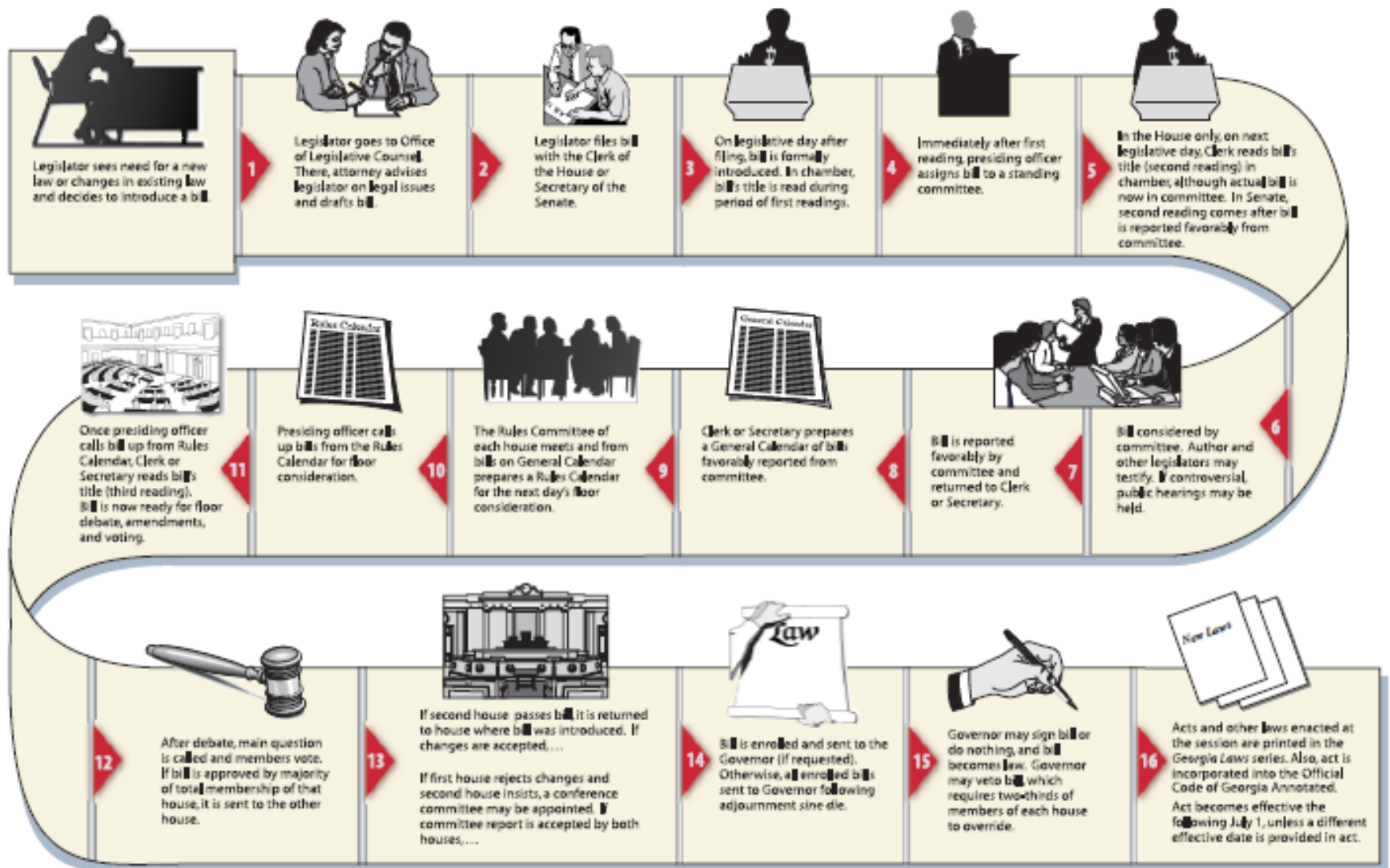
<http://www.healthtecdl.org/events/details/A-Look-Ahead-at-Health-Care-Policy-in-the-2016-Georgia-Legislative-Session.cfm>

Georgia's health care policy environment



- Republican Governor
- Republican Senate and House
 - ~30 health, insurance professionals
- Evolving ACA sentiment
- Struggling rural hospital system
- Poor state health outcomes
 - America's Health Rankings=40

How a Bill is Passed in the Georgia Legislature

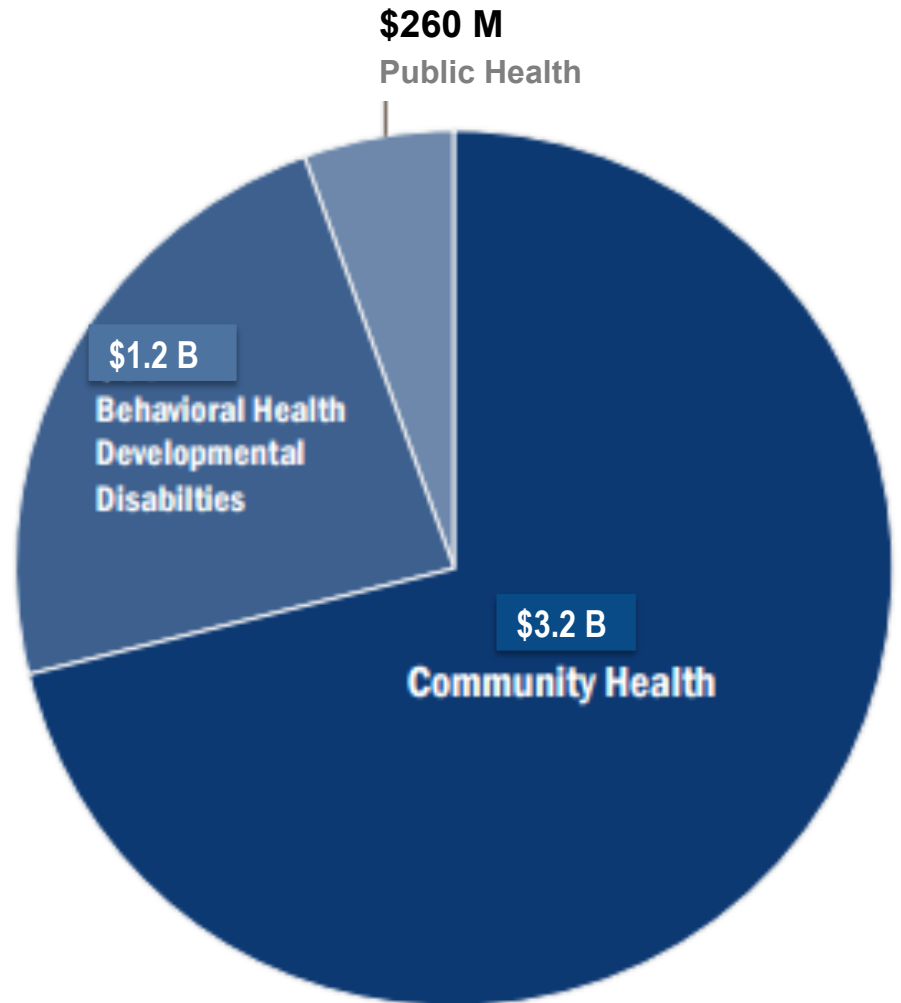
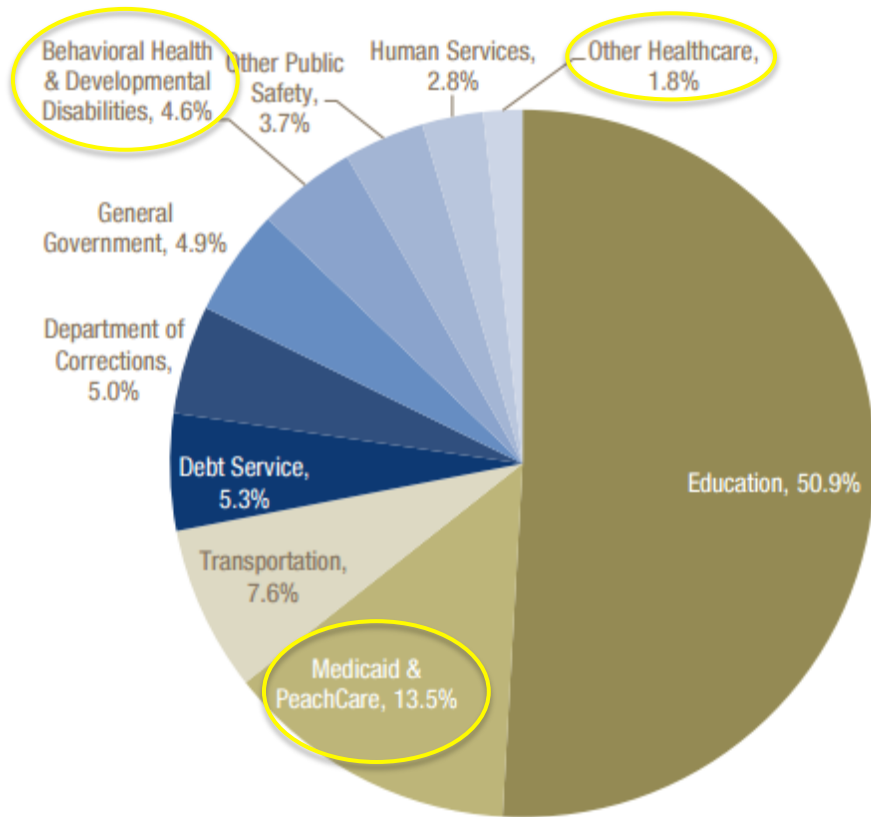


FY2017 Budget



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FY 2017 budget



State budget: Dept. of Community Health

FY2017

- Operates Medicaid, PeachCare, State Health Benefit Plan, & other health regulatory and planning programs
- \$69 M in new federal money saves state dollars
 - \$22 M—↑ federal match rate for PeachCare
 - \$38.4 M—Medicaid annual adjustment
- \$128 M for projected Medicaid, PeachCare growth due to new enrollments & health care inflation
- \$24 M for ↑ costs of Hep C and cystic fibrosis drugs
- Increased reimbursement rates:
 - \$26 M for partial Medicaid payment parity
 - \$2 M for ↑ reimbursement rates for OT, PT within CIS program

State budget: Notable changes

FY2017

- Department of Community Health—\$3.2 B total
 - \$16 M ↑ from FY 2016
 - \$300k for add-on payment (\$250/birth) for newborn delivery in rural counties
 - \$3.7 M for pay increase for Direct Support Professionals (ICWP waiver)
 - \$500k—start-up grants for 2 FQHCs in Jackson, Jenkins Counties
 - \$250k—Champions for Children program
 - \$860k—health care workforce residency programs
 - \$600k—loan repayment programs for health care workers
-

State budget: Notable changes

FY2017

- Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities—
\$1.2 B total
 - \$43 M ↑ from FY 2016
 - \$1.2 M for 100 new NOW waivers
 - \$5.7 M for new Behavioral Health Crisis Center

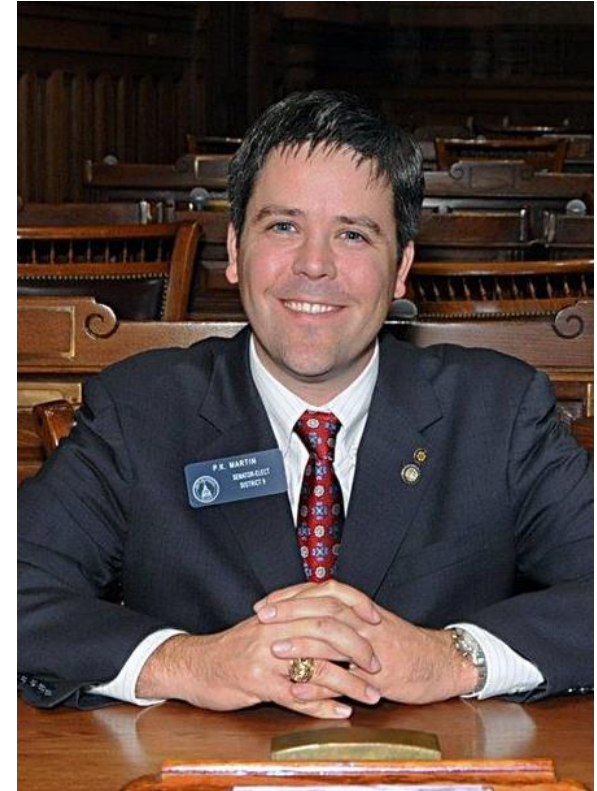
- Department of Public Health—\$260 M total
 - \$19M ↑ from FY 2016
 - \$4 M for 9% pay increases for PH nurses
 - \$2 M for new Positive Alternatives for Pregnancy and Parenting Grant Program
 - \$824k—Gov.’s Office of Children & Families moves to DPH
 - Year 6 (of 7) of phase in for revised county funding formula

Bills that passed



SB 302: Provider Directory Improvement Act

- Background
- GHF Policy and Advocacy Work
- Multi-stakeholder process to draft legislation



SB 302: Provider Directory Improvement Act

Accuracy provisions include requirements for:

- Regular updating of directories every 30 days
 - Available in electronic (and in print upon request) to all
 - A dedicated email address, telephone number, and electronic link that consumers can use to report inaccuracies
 - Audits of all provider directories with a protocol in place for health plans to follow up with providers
 - Health plans to contact providers participating in networks who have not submitted claims within 12 months to determine their network participation status
 - Honoring provider directory information if it is inaccurate and a consumer ends up out-of-network based on that information
 - Health plans to report periodically to the Department of Insurance
-

SB 302: Provider Directory Improvement Act (Cont.)

Usability provisions include requirements for:

- Plain language information about what provider directory applies to which plan and the criteria used by plans to build the provider network and to tier providers
 - All pertinent information about participating providers and facilities
 - Search functionality that allows consumers to search by health care professional, whether a provider is accepting new patients, participating office locations, participating hospitals, and other key pieces of information
 - Accommodations for the needs of individuals with disabilities and people with limited English proficiency
-

Passed bills

Bill #	Common name/purpose	Result
SB 158	Consumer and Provider Protection Act—Est. definition, registration process and regulatory oversight of rental networks	Passed
SB 258/HB 919	Rural Hospital Tax Credits—Offers tax credits for donations to rural health organizations	HB 919 amended to SB 258 & passed
SB 302	Provider Directory Improvement Act—Improve accuracy and usability of directories	Passed

Passed bills

Bill #	Common name/purpose	Result
HB 34	Right to Try Act—Terminally ill may access treatments not yet approved by FDA	Passed
HB 509	Georgia Palliative Care and Quality of Life Advisory Council—Est. council to advise DCH	Passed
HB 649	Lactation Consultant Practice Act—Establish licensing process and regulation	Passed
HB 768	ABLE Act—Est. tax-exempt accounts for approved expenses	Passed
HB 882/SB 265	Eliminate certain deposit requirements and define physician agreements as non-insurance	SB 265 amended to HB 882 and passed

Passed bills

Bill #	Common name/purpose	Result
HB 885	Repeals law that allows certain counties run independent boards of health	Passed
HB 897	Drug Repository Bill—Establish program to collect and dispense unused drugs to indigent	Passed
HB 965	The Honorable Jimmy Carter Cancer Treatment Act—Decreases barriers to treatment for stage IV cancer patients	Passed
HB 1037	Nurse Aid Registry bill—Add in-home nurse aides to registry	Passed
HB 1058	Changes notifications, consumer rights and other regulatory provisions around STD and HIV	Passed

Study Committees

Study Committees

Resolution #	Name, purpose	Chamber
SR 974	Study Committee on Surprise Billing Practices	Senate only
SR 1056	Study Committee on the Premium Assistance Program as an Alternate to Medicaid Expansion	Senate only
SR 1165	Study Committee on Opioid Abuse	Senate only

Bills that did not pass

Bills that did not pass: Senate

Bill #	Common name/purpose	Result
SB 299	Health Care Transparency Initiative—Est. an All Payer Claims Database	Referred to Senate Insurance and Labor, did not receive a hearing
SB 368	Premium Assistance Program—Est. a premium assistance program to cover low-income uninsured Georgians	Hearing in Senate HHS, did not receive a vote
SB 382	Surprise Billing and Consumer Protection Act—Est. consumer protections and other provisions to address surprise bills	Hearings in Senate HHS, did not receive a vote

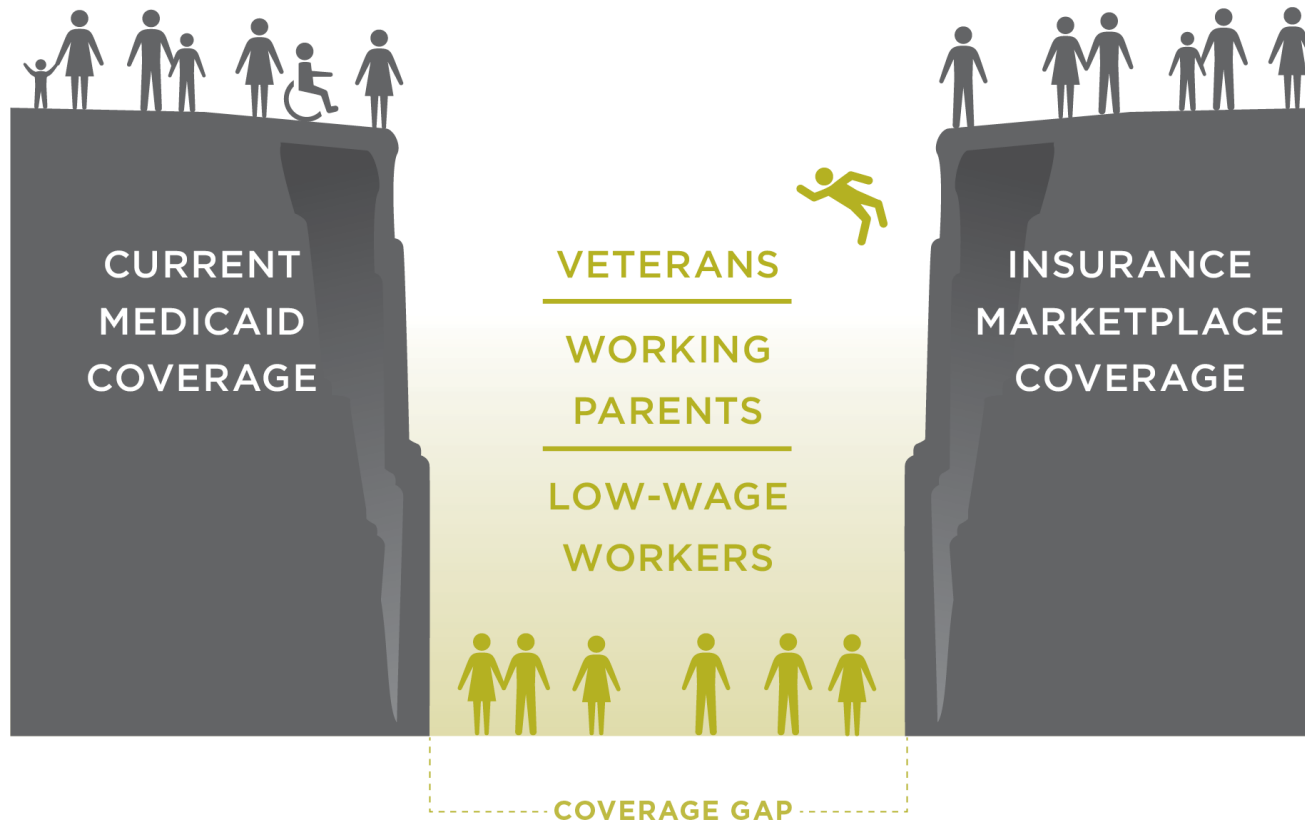
Bills that did not pass: House

Bill #	Common name/purpose	Result
HB 349/SB 1115	Allows physicians to delegate authority to PAs to prescribe Schedule II controlled substances	Stalled in House HHS
HB 722	Medical Marijuana bill—Create new regulatory system and expand access for patients	Referred to Senate HHS, did not receive a hearing
HB 684	Dental Hygienists bill—Allows dental hygienists to provide cleanings in certain settings without a dentist being present	House HHS favorably reported by substitute
HB 823	Expand Medicaid Now Act	Stalled in in House Appropriations
HB 838	Insurers must pay agents a min. of five percent of premiums	Tabled in Senate Insurance and Labor
HB 1055	CON Repeal bill—Eliminate the state’s Certificate of Need program	Stalled in House Governmental Affairs

Missed opportunities

- Closing the coverage gap
- Network Adequacy
- Activating Medicaid codes for SBIRT

Close Georgia's coverage gap



- 300,000 uninsured Georgians
- 37% white, 36% black, 22% Hispanic
- 60% ages 18 to 39
- Working in construction & trucking, food service, grocery stores, retail, education & child care

When Georgia closes its coverage gap

Everyone benefits

Economy

- \$8 billion per year in new economic activity
- \$220 million per year in new tax revenue

Workforce

- 56,000 new jobs created

People

- Affordable health care access for 300,000 Georgians
- Financial, health peace of mind

Health Care Industry

- \$3 billion in federal money annually
- Reduce uncompensated care costs for all hospitals
- Help struggling rural hospitals

Close Georgia's coverage gap



- Legislative activity
 - HB 823
 - SB 368—Georgia's first ever hearing on proposal to close the gap
 - SR 1056
- Opportunity remains

Missed Opportunities: Network Adequacy

Background

- An old issue with a new urgency
- Federal standards and the NAIC Model Act
- SB 158- The Consumer and Provider Protection Act Study Committee

Opportunity

- Multi-stakeholder study committee
- Adopt NAIC 2016 Model Act provisions with GA-specific modifications to improve the state's outdated and insufficient standards

Missed Opportunities: Activate Medicaid Codes for SBIRT

Background

- Youth substance use can be reduced or prevented through a public health approach
 - 1 in 5 high schoolers in GA reported drinking before they were 13 years old
- SBIRT
- SR 487

Opportunity

- Fiscal analysis to support recommendations
- Activation of Medicaid codes to encourage greater use of SBIRT
 - More than half of GA's youth enrolled in Medicaid and PeachCare
 - GA is one of only 12 states without Medicaid codes for SBIRT

Resources

Advocacy opportunities



PROTECT MY HEALTHCARE.
PROTECT THE LAW.
#protectthelaw

Join a coalition

Share your story at healthyfuturega.org, “Get Involved” section

Sign the petition at Coverga.org

Invite us to present in your community



Advocacy Resources

- Georgians for a Healthy Future— healthyfuturega.org
 - Georgia Health Action Network
 - Consumer Health Advocates Guide
 - Publications on closing the coverage gap, network adequacy, provider directories, & SBIRT
 - FB & Twitter: @healthyfuturega
 - Events— healthyfuturega.org/events
 - Georgia Health News— georgiahealthnews.com
 - Georgia General Assembly— legis.ga.gov
 - Families USA— familiesusa.org
 - Community Catalyst— communitycatalyst.org
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Thank you!

Laura Colbert

Director of Outreach & Partnerships

lcolbert@healthyfuturega.org

Meredith Gonsahn

Health Policy Analyst

mgonsahn@healthyfuturega.org



GEORGIANS FOR A
HEALTHY FUTURE

100 Edgewood Avenue, Suite 1015

Atlanta, GA 30303

Phone: 404-567-5016

Fax: 404-935-9885

info@healthyfuturega.org

healthyfuturega.org

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