A CONSUMER HEALTH ADVOCATE’S GUIDE TO THE 2014 GEORGIA LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Information for Action
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ABOUT GEORGIANS FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE

Georgians for a Healthy Future (GHF) is a nonprofit health policy and advocacy organization that provides a voice for Georgia consumers on vital and timely health care issues. Our mission is to build and mobilize a unified voice, vision and leadership to achieve a healthy future for all Georgians.

Georgians for a Healthy Future approaches our vision of ensuring access to quality, affordable health care for all Georgians in three major ways

1) outreach and public education,
2) building, managing, and mobilizing coalitions, and
3) public policy advocacy.

Georgians for a Healthy Future’s 2014 policy priorities include:

» Extend health insurance coverage to a substantial portion of Georgia’s uninsured by expanding Medicaid
» Preserve and strengthen consumer protections for Georgians in private health insurance plans through both federal and state advocacy
» Ensure access to quality health care for Medicaid and PeachCare beneficiaries
» Strengthen Georgia’s public health system
» Increase the tobacco tax
» Support policies and practices that advance health equity

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Legislative Process Overview

I. HISTORY AND OVERVIEW
The Georgia General Assembly has operated continuously since 1777, when Georgia became one of the thirteen original states. In 1868 the state capital (and with it, the general assembly) settled permanently in Atlanta. The General Assembly consists of two chambers, the House of Representatives and the Senate, each elected by Georgia voters every two years. Elections occur in even-numbered years (e.g., 2008, 2010, 2012). The Georgia Constitution sets the Senate membership at “not more” than 56 senators, and the House membership at “not fewer” than 180 representatives. With a total membership of 236, Georgia’s General Assembly ranks as the third largest in the United States. The Georgia Constitution also provides that the General Assembly shall commence session on the second Monday in January of each year, for a period of no longer than 40 days in the aggregate. Typically session runs into late March or early April because of formal adjournments that make 40 “session days” non-consecutive.

II. HOW DOES THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS WORK?
The legislative process begins with an idea – conceived by a legislator, legislative committee, citizen or group of citizens, advocacy organization, etc. – that addresses a particular need or interest. A legislator decides to sponsor a bill addressing this need, either with a new law or a bill that will change an existing law. A non-partisan attorney in the Office of Legislative Counsel advises the legislator on legal issues and drafts the bill.

A) INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING:
Once the bill has been drafted, the legislator files the bill with the Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate, who then assigns it a number. On the next legislative day after filing, the bill is formally introduced. In chamber, the bill’s title is read during the period of 1st readings. Immediately after 1st reading the chamber’s presiding officer assigns the bill to a standing committee. Bills are routinely assigned to committees based on subject matter, but the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House retain discretion over a bill’s assignment.
B) SECOND READINGS (HOUSE):
In the House only, on the next legislative day, the House Clerk reads the bill’s title in chamber, although the actual bill is now assigned to a committee. In the Senate, the 2nd reading before the entire chamber comes after a bill receives a favorable report from the committee to which it has been assigned.

C) COMMITTEE:
A committee is tasked with considering and studying the bill, and typically solicits expert testimony, relevant information concerning the bill, and comment from all interested parties. During the Committee meeting, the bill’s author and other legislators may also testify. After considering a bill, committees may:

(1) Recommend Bill or Resolution Do Pass; or
(2) Recommend Do Not Pass; or
(3) Recommend Do Pass with changes (amendments or substitutes); 
(4) Report without recommendation (in House); or
(5) Hold Bill.

Often, a bill will be referred to a subcommittee — again, based on subject matter — then the full committee can hold hearings and make revisions. If the full committee approves the bill, it is “reported” to the full house. If the committee takes no action on the bill, it “dies.” Final Committee action is reported to the chamber in a written report.

D) SECOND READING (SENATE):
Bill read second time on legislative day following Committee report.
E) THIRD READING AND PASSAGE:
A bill is reported favorably by committee, it is returned to the Clerk or Secretary who prepares a General Calendar of bills that have been favorably reported from committee. For the first ten days of session, the chamber’s presiding officer will call up bills from this calendar for floor action. Beginning the 10th day of session, the Rules Committee meets and, choosing from bills placed on the General Calendar, prepares a Rules Calendar for the next day’s floor consideration. During the last 30 days of session, the chamber’s presiding officer calls up bills from the Rules Calendar for consideration by the entire membership. Once the presiding officer calls up a bill from the Rules Calendar, the Clerk reads bill’s title (3rd reading). At this point, the bill is now ready for floor debates, amendments, and for voting.

F) TRANSMISSION:
If the bill is approved by a majority of the voting membership of that house, it is signed by the Clerk or the Secretary and transmitted to the other house for its consideration. The process described above then begins anew. If the second house passes the bill, it is returned to the house where it originated. With rare exception, any important bill passed in one house will be amended by the other. If those changes are accepted by a majority of the voting membership in the originating house, this bill is approved and ready to be submitted to the Governor.

G) CONFERENCE COMMITTEE:
However, if the originating house rejects the changes, a conference committee may be formed. A conference committee is comprised of three members from each House, appointed by the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate. Both versions of the bill will go before the conference committee to be reconciled. In this situation, a bill’s passage requires both Houses to agree to the Conference Committee’s final report. If both houses accept the Conference Committee report, the bill is approved and may be sent to the Governor.
H) Governor’s Signature/Veto:
If requested, a bill may be sent to the Governor immediately after passage, or otherwise following adjournment sine die, the final day of the legislative session. The Governor may approve or veto a Bill within six days after receipt while the General Assembly is in session. After adjournment sine die, the final day of the legislative session, he has 40 days to approve or veto a bill. If the Governor takes no action within the prescribed time, the Bill becomes a Law – also called a ‘pocket veto’. If the Governor vetoes the Bill, the General Assembly may override the veto with a two-thirds vote by each House during the next Session. An Act becomes effective the following July 1, unless a different effective date is provided in the language of the Act.

After a bill has become law, it is assigned to the appropriate state or federal agency for implementation. At this point, additional opportunities to shape an Act’s effect are available to advocacy organizations, interest groups, and the public, during the agency rule promulgation and/or policy development process.

III. Public Information
The Georgia Constitution requires that both the House of Representatives and Senate maintain a journal of their proceedings; the Clerk of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate are tasked with keeping legislative records.

The Clerk of the House of Representatives is an officer of the House, elected by a majority of the members of the House for a term concurrent with the members of the body. The Secretary of the Senate is elected by a vote of the Senators for a two-year term concurrent with the members of the body. Each Office serves as the custodian for all bills, resolutions, substitutions, amendments, records, papers and official documents filed with their respective chamber. Other responsibilities include keeping record of the daily proceedings of the chamber, tallying votes, and certifying all engrossed and enrolled copies of bills.
The Office of the Clerk of the House makes copies of bills available to the public. For official records of the House or the Clerk of the House, please call (404) 656-5015 or write to: Clerk of the House, 309 State Capitol Building, Atlanta, GA 30334.

The Office of the Secretary of the Senate provides legislation, applicable votes, and other documents online at http://www.legis.ga.gov, or in Room 353 of the State Capitol. These documents include: Senate First Readers (a brief summary of all bills and resolutions read the first time and referred to committee) (http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/FirstRead.aspx); Senate Daily Status (details actions taken by the Senate on all bills and resolutions during the legislative day) (http://www.senate.ga.gov/sos/en-US/SenateStatusReports.aspx); Senate Rules Calendar (set by the Committee on Rules, lists bills and resolutions to be read the third time and acted upon by the Senate) (http://www.legis.ga.gov/legis/2011_12/calendars/sr/index.htm); Composite Status shows the bill number, title, committee referral and actions on Senate and House legislation in both chambers. (http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/Composite.aspx?CompType=S)
How a Bill is Passed in the Georgia Legislature

1. Legislator sees need for a new law or changes in existing law and decides to introduce a bill.

2. Legislator goes to Office of Legislative Counsel. There, attorney advises legislator on legal issues and drafts bill.

3. Legislator files bill with the Clerk of the House or Secretary of the Senate.

4. Once presiding officer calls bill up from Rules Calendar, Clerk reads bill’s title (3rd reading). Bill is now ready for floor debate, amendments, and voting.

5. For the last 30 days of session, presiding officer calls up bills from the Rules Calendar for floor consideration.

6. Starting with 10th day of session, the Rules Committee meets and from bills on General Calendar prepares a Rules Calendar for the next day’s floor consideration.

7. If second house passes bill, it is returned to house where bill was introduced. If changes are accepted...

8. If first house rejects changes and second house insists, a conference committee may be appointed. If committee report is accepted by both houses...
Bill considered by committee. Author and other legislators may testify. If controversial, public hearings may be held.

On legislative day after filing, bill is formally introduced. In chamber, bill’s title is read during period of 1st readings.

Immediately after 1st reading, presiding officer assigns bill to a standing committee.

In the House only, on next legislative day, Clerk reads bill’s title (2nd reading) in chamber, although actual bill is now in committee. In Senate, 2nd reading comes after bill is reported favorably from committee.

Clerk or Secretary prepares a General Calendar of bills favorably reported from committee. For first 10 days of session, presiding officer calls up bills from this calendar for floor action.

Bill is reported favorably by committee and returned to Clerk or Secretary.

Bill considered by committee. Author and other legislators may testify. If controversial, public hearings may be held.

Bill is enrolled and sent to the Governor (if requested). Otherwise, all enrolled bills sent to Governor following adjournment sine die.

Governor may sign bill or do nothing, and bill becomes law. Governor may veto bill, which requires two-thirds of members of each house to override.

Act and other laws enacted at the session are printed in the *Georgia Laws* series. Also, act is incorporated into the Official Code of Georgia Annotated. Act becomes effective the following July 1, unless a different effective date is provided in act.
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<th>Representative Karla Drenner (D-85)</th>
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<tr>
<td>507-H CLOB</td>
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<td>404-656-0202 (office)</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:dren16999@aol.com">dren16999@aol.com</a></td>
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<th>Representative Mike Dudgeon (R-25)</th>
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<tr>
<td>608-C CLOB</td>
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<tr>
<td>404-656-0298 (office)</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:mike.dudgeon@house.ga.gov">mike.dudgeon@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<td>411-H CLOB</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:wdukes_2000@yahoo.com">wdukes_2000@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<td>401-D CLOB</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:emory.dunahoo@house.ga.gov">emory.dunahoo@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<td>512-B CLOB</td>
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<tr>
<td>404-656-7859 (office)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:geoff.duncan@house.ga.gov">geoff.duncan@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<td>504-F CLOB</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:delvis.dutton@house.ga.gov">delvis.dutton@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>245 CAP</td>
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<tr>
<td>404-463-2247 (office)</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:earl@ehrhart.4emm.com">earl@ehrhart.4emm.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>245 CAP</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:englandhomeport2@windstream.net">englandhomeport2@windstream.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative Bubber Epps (R-144)</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<th>Representative Carl Von Epps (D-132)</th>
<th>Representative Dan Gasaway (R-28)</th>
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<td>512-A CLOB</td>
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<td>404-656-0325 (office)</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:carl.epps@house.ga.gov">carl.epps@house.ga.gov</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:dan.gasaway@house.ga.gov">dan.gasaway@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<th>Representative Stacey Evans (D-42)</th>
<th>Representative Harry Geisinger (R-48)</th>
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<td>511-C CLOB</td>
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<tr>
<td>404-656-6372 (office)</td>
<td>404-656-0254 (office)</td>
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<tr>
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<td><a href="mailto:harry.geisinger@house.ga.gov">harry.geisinger@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<th>Representative Mike Glanton (D-75)</th>
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<tr>
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<th>Representative Hugh Floyd (D-99)</th>
<th>Representative Rich Golick (R-40)</th>
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<td>611-H CLOB</td>
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<tr>
<td>404-656-0314 (office)</td>
<td>404-656-5943 (office)</td>
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<th>Representative Virgil Fludd (D-64)</th>
<th>Representative Craig Gordon (D-163)</th>
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<td>409-A CLOB</td>
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<tr>
<td>404-656-0116 (office)</td>
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<td>j CRAIG. <a href="mailto:GORDON@HOUSE.GA.GOV">GORDON@HOUSE.GA.GOV</a></td>
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<th>Representative Gloria Frazier (D-126)</th>
<th>Representative Micah Gravley (R-67)</th>
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<td>604-C CLOB</td>
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<tr>
<td>404-656-0265 (office)</td>
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<tr>
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<th>Representative Spencer Frye (D-118)</th>
<th>Representative Gerald Greene (R-151)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>404-656-0202 (office)</td>
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<tr>
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<th>Representative Carol Fullerton (D-153)</th>
<th>Representative Charles Gregory (R-34)</th>
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<tr>
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<td><a href="mailto:charles.gregory@house.ga.gov">charles.gregory@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<tr>
<th>Representative</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Office Address</th>
<th>Office Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<td>Representative Jan Jones (R-47)</td>
<td>Speaker Pro Tempore</td>
<td>340 CAP</td>
<td>404-656-5072 (office)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jan.jones@house.ga.gov">jan.jones@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Representative LaDawn Jones (D-62)</td>
<td></td>
<td>512-B CLOB</td>
<td>404-656-7859 (office)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ladawn.jones@house.ga.gov">ladawn.jones@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<td>Representative Sheila Jones (D-53)</td>
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<td>411-D CLOB</td>
<td>404-656-0126 (office)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sheila.jones@house.ga.gov">sheila.jones@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Representative Darryl Jordan (D-77)</td>
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<td>409-E CLOB</td>
<td>404-656-0116 (office)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:darryl.jordan@house.ga.gov">darryl.jordan@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<td>Representative Margaret Kaiser (D-59)</td>
<td></td>
<td>604-D CLOB</td>
<td>404-656-0265 (office)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:margaret.kaiser@house.ga.gov">margaret.kaiser@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<td>Representative Trey Kelley (R-16)</td>
<td></td>
<td>607-E CLOB</td>
<td>404-656-0287 (office)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:trey.kelley@house.ga.gov">trey.kelley@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<td>Representative Dar’shun Kendrick (D-93)</td>
<td></td>
<td>404-E CLOB</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:dkendrick@kendrickforgeorgia.com">dkendrick@kendrickforgeorgia.com</a></td>
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<td>Representative Culver “Rusty” Kidd (I-145)</td>
<td></td>
<td>507-A CLOB</td>
<td>404-656-0202 (office)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rusty.kidd@house.ga.gov">rusty.kidd@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<td>Representative Tom Kirby (R-114)</td>
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<td>501-C CLOB</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:tom.kirby@house.ga.gov">tom.kirby@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<td>Representative David Knight (R-130)</td>
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<td>404-656-7857 (office)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:david.knight@house.ga.gov">david.knight@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<td>Representative Edward Lindsey (R-54)</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:edward.lindsey@house.ga.gov">edward.lindsey@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<td>Representative Eddie Lumsden (R-12)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>404-656-0325 (office)</td>
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<td>Representative Ronnie Mabra (D-63)</td>
<td></td>
<td>512-G CLOB</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:ronnie.mabra@house.ga.gov">ronnie.mabra@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<td>Representative Pedro “Pete” Marin (D-96)</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:marinstatehouse@aol.com">marinstatehouse@aol.com</a></td>
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<td>Representative Chuck Martin (R-49)</td>
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<td>Representative Howard Maxwell (R-17)</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:howard.maxwell@house.ga.gov">howard.maxwell@house.ga.gov</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Representative Rahn Mayo (D-84)</td>
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<td>Representative Tom McCall (R-33)</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:tommccall@bellsouth.net">tommccall@bellsouth.net</a></td>
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* Special elections for House Districts 2 and 22 were held after this publication went to print.
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Representative Terry England, Chairman
Representative Katie Dempsey, Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Tom Dickson, Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Earl Ehrhart, Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Penny Houston, Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Butch Parrish, Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Jay Powell, Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Amy Carter, Secretary
Representative Mickey Channell, Ex-Officio
Representative Ed Rynders, Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Allen Peake, Ex-Officio

Health Subcommittee Members:
Representative Butch Parrish, Chairman
Representative Ben Harbin, Vice-Chairman
Representative Mickey Channell, Ex-Officio
Representative Matt Dollar
Representative Pat Gardner
Representative Carolyn Hugley
Representative Barbara Sims
Representative Ron Stephens
Representative Darlene Taylor
Representative Ben Watson

This committee is responsible for legislation that affects the conditions of safety regulations and social services for the citizens of Georgia. This Committee also addresses the legal areas surrounding medical professionals as well as medicinal provisions.

Committee Members:
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Representative Ben Watson, Vice-Chairman
Representative Ed Rynders, Secretary
Representative Timothy Barr
Representative James Beverly
Representative Bruce Broadrick
Representative Mickey Channell
Representative Mike Cheokas
Representative Josh Clark
Representative Valerie Clark
Representative Katie Dempsey
Representative Karla Drenner
Representative Carol Fullerton
Representative Craig Gordon
Representative Buddy Harden
Representative Matt Hatchett
Representative Lee Hawkins
Representative Michele Henson
Representative Doug Holt
Representative Henry “Wayne” Howard
Representative Rick Jasperse
Representative Sheila Jones
Representative Margaret Kaiser
Representative Culver “Rusty” Kidd
Representative Billy Mitchell
Representative Alisha Thomas Morgan
Representative Howard Mosby
Representative B.J. Pak
Representative Don Parsons
Representative Allen Peake
Representative Jimmy Pruet
Representative Nikki Randall
Representative Carl Rogers
Representative Dexter Sharper
Representative Barbara Sims
Representative Mickey Stephens
Representative Pam Stephenson
Representative Joe Wilkinson
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- Representative Doug Holt, Secretary
- Representative Alex Atwood
- Representative Buzz Brockway
- Representative John Carson
- Representative Mike Cheokas
- Representative Matt Dollar
- Representative Carl Von Epps
- Representative Bubber Epps
- Representative Dan Gasaway
- Representative Richard Golick
- Representative Ben Harbin
- Representative Lee Hawkins
- Representative Carolyn Hugley
- Representative Mike Jacobs
- Representative Eddie Lumsden
- Representative Howard Maxwell
- Representative Rahn Mayo
- Representative John Meadows
- Representative Carl Rogers
- Representative Mickey Stephens
- Representative Darlene Taylor
- Representative Sam Teasley
- Representative Joe Wilkinson
- Representative Bruce Williamson

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- Representative Mickey Channell
- Representative Sharon Cooper
- Representative Katie Dempsey
- Representative Karla Drenner
- Representative Earl Ehrhart
- Representative Gerald Greene
- Representative Mark Hamilton
- Representative Carolyn Hugley
- Representative Mack Jackson
- Representative Jan Jones
- Representative Edward Lindsey
- Representative Greg Morris
- Representative Larry O’Neal
- Representative Butch Parrish
- Representative Allen Peake
- Representative Alan Powell
- Representative Matt Ramsey
- Representative Tom Rice
- Representative Jay Roberts
- Representative Edward Setzler
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**Committee Members:**

- Senator Jack Hill, *Chairman*
- Senator Renee Unterman, *Vice Chairman*
- Senator Tim Golden, *Secretary*
- Senator Don Balfour
- Senator Buddy Carter
- Senator Ronnie Chance
- Senator Bill Cowsert
- Senator John Crosby
- Senator Gail Davenport
- Senator Vincent Fort
- Senator Steve Gooch
- Senator Bill Heath
- Senator Judson Hill
- Senator Bill Jackson
- Senator Butch Miller
- Senator Jeff Mullis
- Senator Jack Murphy
- Senator Valencia Seay
- Senator David Shafer
- Senator Freddie Powell Sims
- Senator Cecil Staton
- Senator Heracena Tate
- Senator Curt Thompson
- Senator Steve Thompson
- Senator Lindsey Tippins
- Senator Ross Tolleson
- Senator John Wilkinson
- Senator Tommie Williams

**Appropriations Subcommittee, Community Health**

- Senator Tim Golden
- Senator Valencia Seay
- Senator Cecil Staton
- Senator Renee Unterman
- Senator Freddie Powell Sims
- Senator Don Balfour
- Senator Fran Millar
- Senator Judson Hill
- Senator Bill Cowsert
- Senator Buddy Carter
- Senator Ronnie Chance
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- Senator Judson Hill
- Senator Bill Jackson
- Senator Butch Miller
- Senator Jeff Mullis
- Senator Jack Murphy
- Senator Valencia Seay
- Senator David Shafer
- Senator Tommie Williams

The Health and Human Services Committee considers legislation that affects the conditions of safety regulations and social services for the citizens of Georgia. This Committee also addresses the legal areas surrounding medical professionals as well as medicinal provisions.

**Committee Members:**

- Senator Renee Unterman, *Chairman*
- Senator Don Balfour, *Vice Chairman*
- Senator Fran Millar, *Secretary*
- Senator Judson Hill, *Ex-Officio*
- Senator Dean Burke
- Senator Gloria Butler
- Senator Buddy Carter
- Senator Steve Henson
- Senator Chuck Hufstedler
- Senator Lester Jackson
- Senator William Ligon, Jr.
- Senator Nan Orrock
- Senator David Shafer
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- Senator Fran Millar
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- Senator John Crosby
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- Senator Vincent Fort
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- Senator Judson Hill
- Senator Bill Jackson
- Senator Butch Miller
- Senator Jeff Mullis
- Senator Jack Murphy
- Senator Valencia Seay
- Senator David Shafer
- Senator Tommie Williams

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**Senate Committees**

*with Jurisdiction over Health Care Issues*
Primary jurisdictions are insurance, workers’ compensation, and unemployment compensation. Committee jurisdiction also includes child labor, convict labor, labor standards and disputes.

Committee Members:

Senior Tim Golden, Chairman
Senior David Shafer, Vice Chairman
Senior Judson Hill, Secretary
Senior Charlie Bethel
Senior Ed Harbison
Senior Burt Jones
Senior Joshua McKoon
Senior Ronald Ramsey, Sr.
Senior Renee Unterman

The Rules Committee establishes the rules for the orderly procedure and placement of bills on the legislative calendar.

Committee Members:

Senior Jeff Mullis, Chairman
Senior Ross Tolleson, Vice Chairman
Senior Bill Jackson, Secretary
Senior Ronnie Chance, Ex-Officio
Senior Steve Gooch, Ex-Officio
Senior Judson Hill, Ex-Officio
Senior Butch Miller, Ex-Officio
Senior David Shafer, Ex-Officio
Senior Cecil Staton, Ex-Officio
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ADVOCACY DEMYSTIFIED: Tools and Strategies

**AD-VO-CATE (n. AD-VOH-KIT): ONE THAT DEFENDS OR MAINTAINS A CAUSE OR PROPOSAL**

Advocacy may seem overwhelming, but it’s a lot easier—and can have a bigger impact—than you might imagine. You already have the knowledge, passion, and commitment to be a successful and effective health care advocate. *All you need are the right tools.*

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### THE THREE TENETS OF ADVOCACY:

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<tr>
<th>HOOK</th>
<th>LINE</th>
<th>SINKER</th>
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<td><strong>THE HOOK IS THE START OF ANY CONVERSATION.</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE LINE IS WHY THIS ISSUE IS IMPORTANT TO YOU.</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE SINKER IS WHERE YOU TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE “THE ASK.”</strong></td>
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<td>Make sure to tell the legislator (or whoever your audience is) who you are, where you live and why you are contacting them. Legislators hear from lobbyists all day long but they don’t always hear from their constituents, whom they have a duty to represent.</td>
<td>Is it because of a personal experience? Do you know someone who is affected by a lack of access to care? In your professional capacity, is this an issue that you deal with often? Why do you care and more importantly, why should they? The line is the opportunity to make this a personal issue and not a vague, anonymous one.</td>
<td>Do you want your legislators to support a public policy measure that will improve access to health care in Georgia? Do you want to encourage other partners in your local community to support a cause? Make sure to ask, “Can I count on your support?” He or she may not immediately have a firm answer, but this is an opportunity to spur your target audience to think about the issue more deeply and come up with a reason to support or oppose a solution. It is also a great opportunity to follow up with useful information that can help you make your case. What would you like to see done to make a change?</td>
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Tools and Strategies for Effective Consumer Health Advocacy

YOU KNOW WHY YOU’RE SPEAKING OUT...NOW HERE’S HOW:

MAKE A CALL, SEND A LETTER, SEND AN EMAIL
Whenever you reach out to a legislator or key decision-maker, make sure to include your name, address, why you care about the issue and ask for a concrete deliverable.

“Hello, my name is X and I am a constituent of Legislator Y. I want to encourage my legislator to support Issue Z because it will improve my community’s access to affordable, quality health care. Can I count on Y’s support?”

SOCIAL MEDIA
The power of social networking is that it is a simple way to share your opinions and proposed solutions to basic health care problems with friends and family and in turn get them thinking about the issues most important to them.

Like it, Tweet it, Share it

TELEVISION / RADIO / NEWSPAPER RELATIONSHIPS
See an article about health care that you agree with or disagree with? Writing a letter-to-the-editor to share your opinion and proposed solutions is a great way to maximize exposure for some of the most pressing health care issues across the state.

Take opportunities to meet with your local Editorial Board to inform them of key health care issues facing your community.

COMMUNITY-LEVEL ORGANIZATIONS
Are you a part of the local PTA? Do you attend Neighborhood Planning meetings or City Council Hearings? Do you volunteer with your church or other religious institutions?

Bringing the challenges and opportunities of the future of our health and health care to these groups and partners brings the people who have the most to gain from a local perspective into the problem solving process, helping ensure its success.