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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.



OUTREACH, EDUCATION
& ENGAGEMENT
WITH CONSUMERS &
COMMUNITIES



COALITION BUILDING
& MOBILIZATION WITH
PATIENT & CONSUMER
ADVOCACY GROUPS



ENGAGEMENT WITH
POLICYMAKERS &
PUBLIC POLICY
ADVOCACY



DEMONSTRATING
IMPACT

GEORGIANS FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE'S 2019 POLICY PRIORITIES INCLUDE:

1. Increase the number of Georgians with health insurance
2. Stabilize Georgia's health insurance Marketplace
3. Ensure access to care and financial protections for consumers purchasing private health insurance.
4. Set and enforce standards that provide for equitable coverage of mental health and substance use treatment services by health plans.
5. Prevent nicotine use and addiction by young Georgians
6. Support partners in integrating health and equity in the policies across every sector to address social determinants of health that prevent equitable access to care and equitable health status.

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Legislative Process Overview

I. HISTORY AND OVERVIEW

The Georgia General Assembly has operated since 1777, when Georgia became one of the thirteen original states. The General Assembly consists of two chambers, the House of Representatives and the Senate. Each chamber is elected by Georgia voters every two years. Elections occur in even-numbered years (e.g., 2016, 2018, and 2020). The Georgia Constitution sets the Senate membership at "not more" than 56 senators. The House membership is set at "not fewer" than 180 representatives. With a total membership of 236, Georgia's General Assembly is the third largest in the United States. The Georgia Constitution also states that the General Assembly begin its session on the second Monday in January of each year, for no longer than 40 total days. Typically, the session runs into late March or early April because the 40 official session days are often not consecutive.

II. HOW DOES A BILL BECOME A LAW?

The way a bill becomes a law is called the legislative process. The legislative process begins with an idea that addresses a need or interest in the state. The idea can begin with a legislator, legislative committee, citizen or group of citizens, an advocacy organization, or other group. A legislator decides to sponsor (or own) a bill addressing this need, either with a new law or a bill that will change an existing law. A nonpartisan lawyer in the Office of Legislative Counsel advises the legislator on legal issues and drafts (or writes) the bill.

A) INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING: Once the bill has been drafted, the legislator files the bill with the Clerk of the House if the legislator is a Representative or the Secretary of the Senate if s/he is a Senator. The Clerk or the Secretary then assigns the bill a number. On the next legislative day after filing, the bill is formally introduced in its assigned chamber (e.g. the House or the Senate). 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 committee. Bills are usually sent to committees based on subject matter, but the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House have the choice about where a bill is assigned.

B) SECOND READINGS (HOUSE):

In the House only, on the next legislative day, the House Clerk reads the bill's title in chamber again. The actual bill is already assigned to a committee. (In the Senate, the 2nd reading comes after a bill receives a favorable report from the committee to which it has been assigned.)

C) COMMITTEE:

A committee is responsible for studying the bill. The committee often asks for advice and testimony from experts, and relevant data and information. The committee may take comments from those who are interested in or affected by the bill. During the committee meetings, the bill's author and other legislators may testify. After considering a bill, committees may:

- **Recommend Bill or Resolution Do Pass**—this means that the committee suggests the bill be passed by the full chamber; or
- **Recommend Do Not Pass**—this means the committee suggests the bill should be rejected by the full chamber; or
- **Recommend Do Pass with changes (amendments or substitutes)**—this means the committee suggests that the bill be changed or edited in some specific ways before the full chamber votes to pass it;
- **Report without recommendation (in House);** or
- **Hold Bill**—the committee does not allow the bill to move to the full chamber for a vote.

Often, a bill will be sent to a subcommittee, based on subject area. Then the full committee can hold hearings and make revisions. If the full committee approves the bill, it is "reported" to the full chamber. 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 is read for the second time on the legislative day following Committee report.

E) THIRD READING AND PASSAGE:

If a bill is reported favorably by committee, it is returned to the Clerk of the House or Secretary of the Senate. They prepare a General Calendar of bills that have been favorably reported from committees. For the first ten days of session, the chamber's presiding officer will call up bills from this calendar for floor action. This means the chamber can debate the bill, add amendments, or vote on the bill. Beginning the 10th day of session, the Rules Committee meets, chooses bills from the General Calendar, and creates 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 House or Senate. When the presiding officer calls up a bill from the Rules Calendar, the Clerk reads the bill's title (3rd reading). 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 chamber, it is signed by the Clerk or the Secretary and sent—or "transmitted"—to the other chamber for its consideration. The process described above is then repeated. If the second chamber passes the bill, it is returned to the chamber where it started. Most of the time, any important bill passed in one chamber will be changed by the other. If those changes are accepted by a majority of the voting membership in the originating chamber, this bill is approved and ready to be submitted to the Governor.

G) CONFERENCE COMMITTEE:

However, if the originating chamber rejects the changes, a conference committee may be formed. A conference committee is comprised of three members from each chamber, appointed by the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate. Both versions of the bill will go before the conference committee so that differences can be worked out. In this situation, a bill's passage requires both chambers to agree to the Conference Committee's final report. If both chambers 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. Most of the time, bills go to the Governor following the last day of the legislative session. The Governor may approve or veto (reject) a bill within six days of receiving it while the General Assembly is in session. After the final day of the legislative session, he has 40 days to approve or veto a bill. If the Governor takes no action within that time, the bill becomes a law. If the Governor vetoes the bill, the General Assembly may override the veto with a two-thirds vote by each chamber during the next session. A law becomes effective July 1 of the same year, unless a different date is written in the language of the law.

After a bill has become law, it is assigned to the appropriate state or federal agency to be carried out. At this point, the agency develops rules and policies related to the new law. This provides advocacy organizations, interest groups, and the public with additional opportunities to shape a law's effect.

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 keep the 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 the same two-year term as the Representatives serve. The Secretary of the Senate is elected by a vote of the Senators for the same two-year term as the Senators serve. Each Office serves as the keeper 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, visit house.ga.gov/, call (404) 656-5015, or go to Room 309 in the Capitol. Helpful links include:

- **House First Readers**—resolutions read the first time and referred to committee. Available at house.ga.gov/clerk/en-US/FirstReaders.aspx
- **House Daily Status**—describes actions taken by the House on all bills and resolutions during the legislative day. Available at www.house.ga.gov/CLERK/en-US/DailyStatusSheets.aspx
- **House Rules Calendar**—set by the Committee on Rules, lists bills and resolutions to be read the third time and acted upon by the House. Available at house.ga.gov/clerk/en-US/HouseCalendars.aspx

Like the Clerk of the House, the Office of the Secretary of the Senate provides legislation, applicable votes, and other documents online at senate.ga.gov/sos/, 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. Available at senate.ga.gov/sos/en-US/FirstReaders.aspx
- **Senate Daily Status**—describes actions taken by the Senate on all bills and resolutions during the legislative day. Available at <http://www.senate.ga.gov/sos/en-US/SenateCalendars.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. Available at senate.ga.gov/sos/en-US/SenateCalendars.aspx
- **Composite Status** shows the bill number, title, committee referral and actions on Senate and House legislation in both chambers. Available at <http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/Composite.aspx?CompType=S>

How a Bill is Passed in the Georgia Legislature



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

1



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

2



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

3



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

4



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

5



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.



11

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.



10

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



9

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.



8

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.



7

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

6

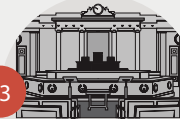
Bill considered by committee. Author and other legislators may testify. If controversial, public hearings may be held.

12



After debate, main question is called and members vote. If bill is approved by majority of total membership of that house, it is sent to the other house.

13



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

If first house rejects changes and second house insists, a conference committee may be appointed. If committee report is accepted by both houses...

14



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

15



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.

16



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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House Committees

with Jurisdiction over Health Care Issues

House Appropriations

245 State Capitol
404-463-2247

The main focus of the committee is the writing of the state's amended and general fiscal year budgets for Georgia's state agencies and departments. The committee also hears legislation that has considerable impact on state revenue and expenditures.

Committee Members:

Representative Terry England, *Chairman*
Representative Clay Pirkle, *Vice Chairman*
Representative Shaw Blackmon,
Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Katie M. Dempsey,
Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Robert Dickey,
Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Earl Ehrhart,
Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Penny Houston,
Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative David Knight,
Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Butch Parrish,
Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Sam Watson,
Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Andrew J. Welch,
Chairman of Subcommittee
Representative Ed Rynders, *Secretary*

Appropriations Health, Subcommittee:

Representative Butch Parrish, *Chairman*
Representative Darlene K. Taylor, *Vice-Chairman*
Representative Matt Dollar
Representative Pat Gardner
Representative Carolyn Hugley
Representative Jesse Petrea
Representative Ron Stephens

House Health & Human Services Committee

436 State Capitol
404-656-5069

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:

Representative Sharon Cooper, *Chairman*
Representative Mark Newton, *Vice Chairman*
Representative Ed Rynders, *Secretary*
Representative Timothy Barr
Representative Karen Bennett
Representative James Beverly
Representative Mike Cheokas
Representative Katie M. Dempsey
Representative Demetrius Douglas
Representative Karla Drenner
Representative Spencer Frye
Representative Houston Gaines
Representative Craig J. Gordon
Representative Matt Hatchett
Representative Lee Hawkins
Representative Michele Henson
Representative Don Hogan
Representative Henry "Wayne" Howard
Representative Shelly Hutchinson
Representative Rick Jasperse
Representative Sheila Jones
Representative Trey Kelley
Representative John LaHood
Representative Jodi Lott
Representative Karen Mathiak
Representative Billy Mitchell
Representative Don Parsons
Representative Jesse Petrea
Representative Jimmy Pruett
Representative Kim Schofield
Representative Dexter Sharper
Representative Deborah Silcox
Representative Mickey Stephens
Representative Pam Stephenson
Representative Jan Tankersley

House Insurance Committee

220 State Capitol
404-656-6831

This committee deals with legislation concerning all aspects of insurance and the insurance industry.

Committee Members:

Representative Richard H. Smith, *Chairman*
Representative Steve Tarvin, *Vice Chairman*
Representative John Carson, *Secretary*
Representative Shaw Blackmon
Representative Park Cannon
Representative Heath Clark
Representative Viola Davis
Representative Matt Dollar
Representative Chuck Efstrotation
Representative Chuck Erwin
Representative Houston Gaines
Representative Mathew Gambill
Representative Carl Wayne Gilliard
Representative Joseph Gullett
Representative Lee Hawkins
Representative Carolyn Hugley
Representative Jeff Jones
Representative Eddie Lumsden
Representative Karen Mathiak
Representative Bert Reeves
Representative Renitta Shannon
Representative Mickey Stephens
Representative Darlene K. Taylor
Representative Noel Williams, Jr.
Representative Bruce Williamson

House Rules Committee

HM-1 State Capitol
404-656-5141

This committee oversees the flow of legislation from passage in committee and making the determination of what bills should be debated and voted on the House floor. Also included in that task is the approval of guests who are invited into the chambers of the House of Representatives to be recognized.

Committee Members:

Representative Jay Powell, *Chairman*
Representative Matt Hatchett, *Vice Chairman*
Representative Richard H. Smith, *Secretary*
Representative Mandi L. Ballinger
Representative Tommy Benton
Representative James Beverly
Representative Shaw Blackmon
Representative John Carson
Representative Sharon Cooper
Representative Katie M. Dempsey
Representative Karla Drenner
Representative Chuck Efstrotation
Representative Barry Fleming
Representative Gerald E. Greene
Representative Brett Harrell
Representative Lee Hawkins
Representative Carolyn Hugley
Representative Mack Jackson
Representative Jan Jones
Representative David Knight
Representative Eddie Lumsden
Representative Chuck Martin
Representative Greg Morris
Representative Butch Parrish
Representative Alan Powell
Representative Terry Rogers
Representative Ed Setzler
Representative Lynn Smith
Representative Calvin Smyre
Representative Ron Stephens
Representative Jan Tankersley
Representative Kevin Tanner
Representative Darlene K. Taylor
Representative Al Williams
Representative Bruce Williamson
Representative William Bodie, *Ex-Officio*
Representative Jon G. Burns, *Ex-Officio*
Representative Trey Kelley, *Ex-Officio*
Representative Robert Trammell, *Ex-Officio*

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Senate Committees

with Jurisdiction over Health Care Issues

Senate Appropriations

234 State Capitol
404-656-5038

The Appropriations Committee is responsible for proposing legislation that allocates funds to the numerous government agencies, departments, and organizations on an annual basis. With its fourteen sub-committees, Appropriations is responsible for holding hearings as well as approving legislation for the state's balanced budget.

Committee Members:

Senator Jack Hill, *Chairman*
Senator Blake Tillery,
Vice Chairman
Senator Steve Gooch, *Secretary*
Senator Mike Dugan, *Ex-Officio*
Senator Chuck Hufstetler,
Ex-Officio
Senator John Albers
Senator Ellis Black
Senator Dean Burke
Senator Gail Davenport
Senator Frank Ginn

Senator Marty Harbin
Senator Tyler Harper
Senator Burt Jones
Senator Emanuel Jones
Senator Jennifer Jordan
Senator John F. Kennedy
Senator Greg Kirk
Senator William T. Ligon, Jr.
Senator David Lucas
Senator Butch Miller
Senator Jeff Mullis
Senator Nan Orrock

Senator Valencia Seay
Senator Freddie Powell Sims
Senator Jesse Stone
Senator Brian Strickland
Senator Horacena Tate
Senator Bruce Thompson
Senator Lindsey Tippins
Senator Renee S. Unterman
Senator Larry Walker III
Senator Ben Watson
Senator John Wilkinson

Appropriations Subcommittee, Community Health

Committee Members:

Senator Dean Burke, *Chair*
Senator Renee S. Unterman,
Vice-chair

Senator John Albers
Senator Nan Orrock
Senator Valencia Seay

Senator Ben Watson

Subcommittee scope includes:

- Department of Community Health
 - Georgia Composite Medical Board
 - Georgia Board for Physician Workforce
 - Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency
- Attached to the Department of Administrative Services:
 - Certificate of Need Appeal Panel

Senate Committees

with Jurisdiction over Health Care Issues

Appropriations Subcommittee, Human Development and Public Health

Committee Members:

Senator Renee S. Unterman, <i>Chair</i>	Senator Chuck Hufstetler Senator Greg Kirk	Senator Horacena Tate Senator Ben Watson
Senator Dean Burke, <i>Vice-chair</i>	Senator Butch Miller	

Subcommittee scope includes:

- Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities
 - Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Department of Human Services
 - Council on Aging
 - Family Connection
 - Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency
- Department of Public Health
 - Brain and Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission
 - Georgia Trauma Care Network Commission

Senate Health and Human Services

320-B Coverdell Legislative Office Building
404-656-7880

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 Ben Watson, <i>Chairman</i>	Senator Bill Cowsert	Senator Kay Kirkpatrick
Senator Dean Burke, <i>Vice Chairman</i>	Senator Greg Dolezal	Senator William Ligon, Jr.
Senator Greg Kirk, <i>Secretary</i>	Senator Steve Henson	Senator Nan Orrock
Senator Gloria Butler	Senator Chuck Hufstetler	Senator Renee Unterman
	Senator Lester Jackson	Senator Larry Walker III

Senate Insurance and Labor

327-A Coverdell Legislative Office Building
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Primary jurisdictions are insurance, workers' compensation, and unemployment compensation. Committee jurisdiction also includes child labor, convict labor, labor standards and disputes.

Committee Members:

Senator Burt Jones, <i>Chairman</i>	Senator Renee Unterman, <i>Ex-Officio</i>	Senator Kay Kirkpatrick
Senator P.K. Martin IV, <i>Vice Chairman</i>	Senator Ben Watson, <i>Ex-Officio</i>	Senator David Lucas
Senator Marty Harbin, <i>Secretary</i>	Senator Ed Harbison	Senator Randy Robertson
	Senator Greg Kirk	Senator Larry Walker III

Senate Rules

453 State Capitol
404-656-0057

The Committee on Rules has jurisdiction over the Rules of the senate and its order of business, including the setting of Senate calendars for consideration of bills and resolutions on the floor of the Senate.

Committee Members:

Senator Jeff Mullis, <i>Chairman</i>	Senator John F. Kennedy, <i>Ex-Officio</i>	Senator Bill Cowsert
Senator Jack Hill, <i>Vice Chairman</i>	Senator Butch Miller, <i>Ex-Officio</i>	Senator Tyler Harper
Senator Burt Jones, <i>Secretary</i>	Senator Brandon Beach	Senator Steve Henson
Senator Mike Dugan, <i>Ex-Officio</i>	Senator Dean Burke	Senator Harold V. Jones II
Senator Steve Gooch, <i>Ex-Officio</i>	Senator Gloria S. Butler	Senator Horacena Tate
		Senator Renee S. Unterman

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ADVOCACY DEMYSTIFIED: Tools and Strategies

for Effective Consumer Health Advocacy



AD-VO-CATE (N. AD-VUH-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.

THE THREE TENETS OF ADVOCACY:

HOOK

THE HOOK IS THE START OF ANY CONVERSATION.

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.

LINE

THE LINE IS WHY THIS ISSUE IS IMPORTANT TO YOU.

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.

SINKER

THE SINKER IS WHERE YOU TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE "THE ASK."

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?

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.

Glossary of Terms

Adjournment

suspension of formal business until a set date or time in the future

Appropriation

money allocated in the state budget to various governmental departments and agencies for their operation

Bill

a draft of a proposed law presented for discussion and debate

Calendar

an organized list of legislation which has been reported out of committees and is ready for floor action

Caucus

a meeting of the members of a legislative body who are members of a particular political party or align based on shared values (e.g. the Rural Caucus or the Working Families Caucus)

Chamber

a hall for the meetings of a legislative body (e.g. the Senate Chamber)

CLOB

Coverdell Legislative Office Building, located across Mitchell Street from the Capital

Code

A systematic and comprehensive compilation of laws, rules, or regulations that are consolidated and classified according to subject matter

Committee

a group of legislators appointed to consider and make recommendations concerning disposition of bills, resolutions and other related matters

Conference committee

a committee composed of members from the two chambers specifically appointed to reconcile the differences between House and Senate versions of a bill

Study committee

a committee charged with examining a specific matter or proposal outside of the legislative session

Constituent

a citizen who resides within the district of a legislator

Constitutional majority

when one party makes up more than two-thirds of the membership of a legislative body

Cross-over Day

the final day for a bill to move from one chamber to the other. Bills that do not cross over cannot be passed during that session. Georgia's Cross-over Day is Day 30 of the legislative calendar.

General Assembly

the legislative body, encompassing both the House and the Senate

Law

the system of rules that regulate the actions of citizens and may be enforced by government entities

Legislative Counsel

serves as legal counsel for the General Assembly and provides services to all members in their official capacities on a confidential, nonpartisan, and impartial basis. Primary responsibilities include drafting legislation, counseling legislators and legislative committees, and issuing legal opinions to legislators on statutory interpretation and constitutionality

Legislative session

period of time in which the legislature is convened for purpose of lawmaking. The Georgia legislative session lasts 40 legislative days

Legislator

a member of a legislative body elected by constituents within a legislative district

Legislature

the legislative body of a state. Georgia's legislature is also referred to as the Georgia General Assembly

Lobbying

seeking to influence a politician or public official on an issue

Motion

a proposal made to the presiding officer calling for a specific action

Quorum

the minimum number of persons who must be present to conduct business either on the floor of the chamber or in a committee. A quorum usually is one more than half of the membership.

Resolution

a legislative proposal that does not require action by the governor if adopted by the Legislature. Resolutions are used to recognize accomplished citizens, express an opinion held by the legislature, and establish study committees

Sine Die

the last day of the legislative session after which legislative business will be finished. In Georgia, Legislative Day 40 is referred to as "Sine Die".

Sponsor

the legislator(s) introducing a bill. The bill sponsor(s) is "in charge" of the bill and may testify in support of the bill, make changes to reflect stakeholder input, and help to move the bill through the legislative process in each chamber

Statute

a written law

Testimony

formal comments made to a committee or chamber concerning a bill, resolution, or other matter. Testimony may be made by subject-matter experts, people who will be impacted by a legislative action, industry stakeholders, the bill/resolution sponsors, and others.

Veto

the action of the governor to disapprove a legislative measure

Well, taking of

comments made by legislators in support or opposition to a bill on the floor of a legislative chamber

