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25

STATE LEGISLATIVE
SESSION
FINAL REPORT



FULTON
COUNTY

FULTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

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INTRODUCTION

The 2025 Legislative Session of the Georgia General Assembly marked the 158th in the state's history, convening on Monday, January 13, and adjourning Sine Die on Friday, April 4. As the first year of the biennial legislative cycle, the General Assembly addressed a wide range of significant issues, including tort reform, school safety, religious freedom, hurricane recovery aid for communities impacted by Hurricane Helene and revisions to Georgia's income tax code, including one-time tax refunds.

Fulton County Highlights

The session brought notable successes in advancing Fulton County's top policy priorities. The Fiscal Year 2026 state budget includes \$9.4 million for a new Behavioral Health Crisis Center in North Fulton, representing support for the County's growing mental health infrastructure. Passage of [House Bill 625](#) authorizes two new State Court judges to help address increasing caseloads. While [Senate Bill 10](#), which would authorize up to five new judicial officers for the Superior Court, did not receive final passage, it remains eligible for consideration in 2026 and will continue to be a legislative priority for the County. Additional legislation aligned with Fulton County's 2025 Legislative Agenda is summarized on the following page.

Fulton County Top Policy Priorities	Effective Date
Support for State Funding for Behavioral Health Resources	July 1, 2025
Resources for State Court Judges	July 1, 2025
Resources for Superior Court Judges and Judicial Officers	Pending

The General Assembly also passed [House Bill 92](#), which refines property tax provisions established in 2024 under [House Bill 581](#). A summary of these changes appears on page eight.

This final report provides an overview of newly enacted legislation that will impact county operations and services. Any bills marked with an asterisk (**) throughout the report indicate a budgetary impact. As a reminder, all bills introduced during this first year of the biennium that did not receive final action remain active and will be recommitted to their respective committees for consideration during the 2026 Legislative Session.



**FULTON
COUNTY**

**2025
State Legislative
Agenda**

Resources for Superior Court Judges & Judicial Officers

Resources for State Court Judges

Support for State Funding for Behavioral Health Resources

Online Publication of Legal Notices

Transit Board Representation

Amendment to Fulton County Housing Authority

Resident Commissioner Requirements

Support for Legislative Proposals for Child Attorneys

Clarification of Purchasing Powers for Constitutional Officers

Premises Liability Reform

Next Generation 911

Support for Medicaid Expansion

Change Personal Property and Freeport Return Dates

Authorize Digital Court Reporting

Raise Highschool Dropout Age (Youth Commission)

LEGISLATION RELATED TO 2025 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Adopted

Premises Liability

Senate Bill 68 is a comprehensive revision of civil practice law in Georgia, focusing on evidentiary matters, damages and liability in tort actions. The bill outlines the legal framework for holding property owners or occupiers liable for injuries caused by third parties, requiring proof of specific conditions. Property owners can only be held liable if they had actual knowledge of prior incidents or a particularized warning of imminent wrongful conduct. For invitees, the failure to address known dangerous conditions is necessary to establish liability, while licensees must demonstrate willful and wanton negligence. The bill excludes liability for injuries to trespassers, tenant guests under eviction and crimes committed by individuals engaged in felonious acts. It also revises how damages are calculated, limits arguments around noneconomic damages related to medical expenses, and introduces a bifurcated trial process separating fault from damages determination. Additional provisions address dismissal timelines, restrictions on attorney arguments about noneconomic damages and the use of seatbelt evidence in reducing damages. These tort reforms aim to shield property owners from broader liability in violent crime cases on their premises.

Effective: April 21, 2025; Sections 6 and 7 only apply to causes of action arising on or after that date; Act 9

Next Generation 911

House Bill 423 revises the state's emergency 911 system to integrate Next Generation 911 services. The bill establishes new definitions, enhances the responsibilities of the Georgia Emergency Communications Authority (GECA) and mandates that all new 911 systems conform to Next Generation 911 standards. It also adds new members to GECA's board, requires coordination for implementing Next Generation 911 and aims to improve emergency response efficiency across the state.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 65

Authorize Digital Court Reporting

House Bill 179 authorizes the use of digital recording instead of requiring a court reporter for appellate transcripts, permitting certain trial proceedings including felony, all misdemeanor, and civil cases to be digitally recorded. This decision is left to the judge's discretion, following uniform court rules adopted by the Supreme Court in consultation with trial courts. Additionally, a district attorney may use a digital recording system to record grand jury proceedings. While the digital recording is not considered the official record of the proceedings, it can be transcribed and certified by the court reporter, who will attest to the accuracy of the transcript.

Effective: January 1, 2026; Act 23

Introduced

Online Publication of Legal Notices

[Senate Bill 189](#) requires the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to develop and maintain a publicly accessible online database for legal notices that are currently mandated to be published in newspapers. The database must allow for timely posting, secure and mobile-friendly access, low-cost publication fees not exceeding \$25, certified copies and user alerts. Posting on the database can satisfy legal publication requirements under certain conditions, such as publication errors or lack of a local legal organ office. Implementation is subject to appropriations, and the department is authorized to set rules and fees.

Committee Assignment: Senate Judiciary

Raise High School Dropout Age to 17

[House Resolution 275](#) supports the increase of the minimum school dropout age in the State of Georgia from 16 to 17 years old.

Committee Assignment: House Education

Healthcare Access

[Senate Bill 50](#) expands Medicaid eligibility for individuals earning up to 138% of the federal poverty level. The bill establishes a process for submitting a federal waiver to implement the expansion, with savings being directed to the Indigent Care Trust Fund. It creates the Advisory Commission on the PeachCare Plus Program, which will consist of 11 members: the commissioner or their designee as chairperson, five members from the House of Representatives, and five members from the Senate. The commission will assist in drafting and overseeing the waiver request and advise on program implementation. This program will provide full premium coverage for low-income individuals through state or federal marketplaces.

Committee Assignment: Senate Regulated Industries and Utilities

Cybersecurity and Ransomware Protection

[House Bill 886](#) prohibits use of tax dollars for payment of ransom to cybercriminals.

Committee Assignment: House Governmental Affairs

SUMMARY OF KEY LEGISLATION

Georgia State Budget

Amended Fiscal Year 2025

The Amended Fiscal Year 2025 Budget ([Act 3](#)) is based on a revised revenue estimate of \$40.5 billion. This budget incorporates \$2.7 billion in surplus funds, resulting in a total infusion of \$4.4 billion, a 12.2% increase over the original Fiscal Year 2025 budget. The amended budget prioritizes one-time investments in state infrastructure and Hurricane Helene relief efforts. Highlights include:

- Approximately \$796 million in funding for Hurricane Helene relief and recovery efforts, supporting emergency response, infrastructure repair, disaster assistance for farmers, hospital stabilization, equipment needs and state property restoration.
- \$250 million into the Local Roads Administration (LRA) program, with no local match required, in addition to the mid-year true-up of the Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) program.
- \$1.7 million restored for the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program.

Fiscal Year 2026

The Fiscal Year 2026 Budget ([Act 73](#)) is set with a revenue estimate of \$37.8 billion, representing an increase of \$1.6 billion, or 4.4%, over the Fiscal Year 2025 original budget. In addition to \$9.4 million for a new behavioral health crisis center in North Fulton, the budget includes the following highlights:

- \$1.8 million for the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) homelessness programs, including 100 new housing voucher slots, outreach services for those with severe mental illness and a community action team.
- \$5.8 million to expand forensic services and \$100,000 for a jail diversion program through DBHDD.
- \$9.9 million for county correctional institutions to increase per diem rates by \$6, bringing the total to \$30 per day.
- \$247.6 million for the LMIG program.
- \$16.9 million in reimbursement rate increases for Medicaid providers, including EMS, physicians, dental, behavioral health and care facilities.
- \$1.5 million for the Department of Administrative Services to provide supplemental payments for first responders with occupational PTSD, as authorized in 2024 by [House Bill 451](#) (Act 511).
- \$49.8 million in new funding provided in the Department of Education for mental health, social work, out-of-school care and targeted support for low-income students, including \$19.6 million in school-based mental health grants and new “poverty weight” funding for disadvantaged systems.

Georgia State Property Tax Reform

[House Bill 92](#) is a follow-up to [House Bill 581](#) (Act 379), which established the statewide base year floating homestead exemption in 2024. House Bill 92 refines the property tax system in Georgia by narrowing eligibility, updating opt-in/opt-out procedures for local taxing jurisdictions and improving the accuracy and transparency of rollback rate calculations. The legislation was signed by Governor Brian. P. Kemp on April 1, 2025 as Act 5.

Key Updates

- **Five-Acre Cap and Primary Residence Requirement:** The floating homestead exemption created by House Bill 581 is now limited to the primary residence and up to five acres of surrounding land. Properties under CUVA (Conservation Use Valuation Assessment) or FLPA (Forest Land Protection Act) will only be exempt for the portion of land directly associated with the homestead, limited to two acres or the local zoning minimum, whichever is less.
- **Surviving Spouse:** Surviving spouses are now allowed to continue receiving the exemption without having to reapply.
- **Additional Homestead Exemption Filing Window:** Property owners may now file for a homestead exemption for the current tax year during the 45-day appeal window after receiving a notice of assessment, regardless of whether an appeal is filed.
- **Rollback Rate:** Each taxing jurisdiction must provide the estimated rollback rate to the county board of tax assessors and tax commissioner at least 15 days before mailing annual assessment notices. If this information is not provided, the assessment notice will include an estimate based on the prior year's millage rate.

Opt-In/Opt-Out Procedures for Local Governments

Local taxing jurisdictions had until March 1, 2025, to decide whether to opt out of the floating homestead exemption. Those that opted out must follow a formal process, which includes holding three public hearings, passing a resolution and submitting it to the Secretary of State to remain opted out through 2027. Failure to take action by March 1, 2027, will result in an automatic reentry into the program. Local taxing jurisdictions may also choose to reverse their decision and opt back in by filing a resolution with the Secretary of State by April 30, 2025, or by March 1 of any subsequent year until 2029.

Opt-Out Rescind Procedure

Local taxing jurisdictions that opted out in 2025 can opt back in by filing a resolution with the Secretary of State by April 30, 2025, or by March 1 of any year from 2026–2029.

Disclaimer Requirements

Local taxing jurisdictions that opt out must disclose their reserve fund amounts on property tax bills. If a jurisdiction has opted out and does not have a comparable floating exemption in place, the tax bill must display a disclaimer identifying the authority and provide a contact number. This provision sunsets December 31, 2029. If a school district opts out, its tax bills must disclose the total amount of its reserve funds.

ESPLOST Construction Materials Exemption

A new sales tax exemption applies to construction materials used in ESPLOST-funded projects in districts with a floating homestead exemption or property tax freeze.

Important Notice for Fulton County Taxpayers

To support understanding of these changes and implementation, Fulton County will include educational information sheets in this year's tax assessment notices. These inserts will explain the floating homestead exemption, estimated rollback rates and other relevant updates from House Bill 92. For more details and frequently asked questions, please visit: <https://fultonassessor.org/>.

Georgia State Income Tax Reform

During the 2025 Legislative Session, the General Assembly passed two significant income tax reform bills: House Bill 111, which reduces the state's personal income tax rate, and House Bill 112, authorizing a one-time income tax refund. Both measures were signed into law by Governor Brian P. Kemp on April 15, 2025. These new laws will impact Georgia's taxpayers by providing both immediate and future benefits.

Gradual Income Tax Rate Reduction

[House Bill 111](#) (Act 7) lowers Georgia's individual income tax rate from 5.39% to 5.19% beginning in the 2025 tax year. The legislation also authorizes additional annual reductions of 0.10% until the rate reaches 4.99%, provided the state meets certain financial benchmarks. These benchmarks include:

Tax Year	Rate
2025	5.19%
2026	5.09%
2027	4.99%

If these conditions are not met, the annual rate reductions will be delayed. The Office of Planning and Budget will make an annual determination and report by December 1. The law applies to taxable years beginning January 1, 2025, and the reduced rates will take effect beginning July 1, 2025.

One-Time Income Tax Refund

[House Bill 112](#) (Act 8) provides a one-time income tax refund to Georgia residents who filed tax returns for both the 2023 and 2024 tax years. The refund will be automatically issued once the taxpayer files their 2024 return and will be applied first to any outstanding tax liability. This refund is not available to:

- Nonresident aliens
- Estates or trusts
- Individuals claimed as dependents (unless they had earned income in 2023)

Filing Status	Max Refund
Single	\$250
Head of Household	\$375
Married, Joint	\$500

The refund is not considered taxable income under Georgia law. Refund amounts are based on the taxpayer's filing status, with maximum amounts shown in the table. The state estimates distributing approximately \$1 billion in refunds to taxpayers in 2025.

ADOPTED LEGISLATION IMPACTING FULTON COUNTY SERVICES

General Services

HB 58 Authorizes Local Government Restrictions on Drones Over Public Gatherings – Rep. Gary Richardson

Defines the term “ticketed entertainment event” and makes it illegal to fly an unmanned aircraft or drone over or within 400 feet of a ticketed entertainment event without proper consent. Anyone found guilty of violating the terms of this bill will be punished as if convicted of a misdemeanor.

Effective: April 1, 2025; Act 4

***HB 137* Public Works Bidding Threshold – Rep. Victor Anderson**

Increases the exemption threshold for certain public works contracts from \$150,000 to \$250,000, including retention of payments and bidding requirements. For public school contracts and purchases, the bill increases the threshold for in-state purchasing preferences and competitive bidding from \$100,000 to \$250,000. It also raises the contract limit for state, county and municipal road systems from \$200,000 to \$250,000 before negotiation is prohibited. Additionally, it increases the threshold for public works construction contracts exempt from bidding requirements from \$100,000 to \$250,000 and adjusts other related limits accordingly.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 129

***HB 155* Development Authorities in North Fulton and Annexation Arbitration Process Revisions – Rep. Victor Anderson**

The Fulton County Development Authority will be prohibited from accepting a property tax incentive project within cities located north of Atlanta if those cities adopt a resolution restricting the Authority’s operations within their boundaries (Part I). The bill also updates processes for objecting to annexations, appeals of zoning decisions and arbitration (Parts II and III).

Effective: Part I: January 1, 2026; Part II: July 1, 2025 and applies to all zoning and quasi-judicial decisions made on or after that date, but decisions before December 31, 2026, will not be invalidated if a local government fails to implement Code Section 36-66-5.1; Part IIA and Part III: July 1, 2025; Act 128

***HB 513* Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) Revisions – Rep. John LaHood**

Allows counties, municipalities and consolidated governments to continue enforcing pre-existing ordinances requiring video surveillance at gas stations if enacted before May 6, 2024, but prohibits the adoption of new regulations after that date (Section 1). Additionally, the bill revises the service delivery funding process by ensuring that the cost of county services benefiting unincorporated areas is borne by the residents of those areas, rather than incorporated municipalities. It mandates annual reports on funding sources and service costs, requires periodic reviews and revisions of service delivery strategies and establishes procedures for resolving disputes. The bill also expands the list of unincorporated revenue sources that can be used for unincorporated services, clarifies that all listed sources can be utilized and requires counties to provide an annual report of their unincorporated revenues to SDS participants (Sections 2 and 3).

Effective: Section 1: July 1, 2025; Sections 2 and 3: January 1, 2026; Act 270

HB 516 State government; authorize county and regional library boards to conduct meetings via teleconference – Rep. Kimberly New

Allows county and regional library boards and community service boards to conduct meetings via teleconference.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 271

[HB 614](#) Authorizes Local Ordinances Limiting Firework Usage – Rep. Jan Jones

Authorizes local governments to prohibit the use or ignition of consumer fireworks within 200 yards of facilities that house equines (horses and similar animals). It also allows local governments to issue special event permits for temporary exceptions to this restriction.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 274

[*SB 12*](#) Open Records Exclusions for Private Entities – Sen. Frank Ginn

Records held by private contractors performing services on behalf of government agencies are not directly accessible to the public. Instead, individuals must submit records requests to the respective government agency, which is then responsible for retrieving the records from the private entity.

Effective: May 14, 2025; Act 276

[SB 36](#) Georgia Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) – Sen. Ed Setzler

Prohibits the government from substantially burdening a person's exercise of religion unless it can demonstrate a compelling governmental interest and that the burden is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest.

Effective: April 4, 2025; Act 6

[SB 199](#) State Ethics Commission Revisions to Candidate Qualifying & Disclosures – Sen. Sam Watson

Prohibits the State Ethics Commission from accepting, rejecting or issuing a complaint against a candidate in the 60 days preceding the date of their election. The bill requires local elected officials to file financial disclosures with the State Ethics Commission, rather than locally. The bill provides requirements for certain political action committees. It also changes filing dates for certain financial disclosure reports. Local elected officials are required to acknowledge the requirement for specified training when submitting certain forms. The bill clarifies the information to be included in a candidate's financial statement and revises lobbyist disclosure requirements.

Effective: January 1, 2026; Act 293

Public Health

[HB 268](#) Education; safety, health, and well-being of students and school communities – Rep. Persinger

Enhances student safety and mental health support by requiring every school district to appoint a mental health coordinator, implementing emergency alert systems, mandating the submission of campus maps to local authorities and expediting the transfer of student records. The bill also strengthens threat reporting protocols and allows for adult prosecution of minors who commit certain violent offenses on school property.

Effective: April 28, 2025; The provisions of Sections 2-8, 3-3 and 3-4 of this Act shall be applicable to any offenses committed on or after the effective date of this Act; Act 17

[SB 58](#) Georgia Transporting Life-Saving Organs and Personnel Act – Sen. John Albers

Facilitates the rapid transport of organs and transplant teams to save lives, improving organ transplant logistics and outcomes.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 83

SB 233 Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission; revise the subcommittees – Sen. Matt Brass

Revises the subcommittee organization for the Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission, including adding new subcommittees for children and adolescent behavioral health, involuntary commitment for addictive diseases and workforce development for intellectual and developmental disabilities. The automatic repeal date is extended from June 30, 2025, to December 31, 2026. The bill grants the chairperson of the Commission authority to appoint additional subcommittees and non-commission members as needed.

Effective: May 14, 2025; Act 294

Public Safety, Courts and Justice

HB 85 Superior Court Judicial Compensation Reform Act – Rep. Rob Leverett

Revises the compensation structure for superior court judges by setting each judge's annual salary, which will be determined by the General Assembly. This salary cannot exceed 90% of the annual salary fixed for judges of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. Additionally, the locality pay for each superior court judge will be capped at no more than 10% of the state salary. If the annual salary exceeds \$201,060, the maximum locality pay will be capped at 10% and further reduced by a fixed percentage if the salary surpasses that threshold. The bill does not alter existing retirement benefits for judges. Superior court judges serving as of July 1, 2025, may opt into this new compensation structure by filing written notification with the Council of Superior Court Judges of Georgia and the governing authority of each county in their judicial circuit. Judges who do not opt in will retain their existing compensation structure. Furthermore, all local laws, ordinances, and resolutions that tie state, county, or local salaries to a superior court judge's salary will be suspended until July 1, 2026. During this suspension period, the affected salaries will remain unchanged until the suspension ends, local legislation is enacted or a new local ordinance takes effect.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 112

***HB 86* Public officers and employees; calculating and setting the salaries of certain state officials; revise provisions – Rep. Rob Leverett**

Proposes changes to the salary structure for certain judges, with key provisions focused on aligning their compensation with a percentage of the base salary for U.S. District Court judges in the state. The salary adjustments are as follows: Supreme Court Justices will receive 100% of the base salary for U.S. District Court judges, Court of Appeals Judges will receive 99%, and the Georgia State-wide Business Court Judge and Georgia Tax Court Judge will receive 95%. Additionally, the bill includes provisions for cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) for these officials, based on the average salary increase for government employees across all branches.

Effective: June 1, 2025 or July 1, 2025, contingent upon the necessary appropriations being made for the fiscal year 2024-2025; Section 2: July 1, 2026; Act 113

***HB 199* Protection of Judges' and Spouses' Personal Information – Trey Kelley**

Revises provisions related to the protection of personally identifiable information of judges and judicial spouses. State and local government entities will remove or redact any personally identifiable information from publicly available content that specifically identifies a protected person as a judge, justice, or spouse. Content held by a state or local government entity that includes personally identifiable information of a protected person but does not specifically identify a person as a judge, justice, or spouse will be removed upon request by the protected person through submission of a request in writing. The removing or redacting of information will take place within 30 days of receiving a valid request..

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 308

[HB 392](#) Georgia Tax Court; certain events; revise dates – Rep. Chuck Martin

Revises dates related to the establishment of the Georgia Tax Court, with the initial chief judge serving an initial term beginning on April 1, 2026, and persons able to petition the court for relief beginning on and after July 1, 2026. All contested cases pending before the Georgia Tax Tribunal as of June 30, 2026, will automatically transfer to the court as of July 1, 2026. Any petitioner with a case pending before the tribunal that does not wish for the case to be transferred to the court will make a written demand to the tribunal on or before December 31, 2025, with proceedings to conclude prior to June 30, 2026.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 263

***[HB 406](#)* Judicial Retirement System; increase retirement age of superior court judges first taking office on or after July 1, 2026 – Rep. Rob Leverett**

Raises the retirement age for superior court judges first taking office on or after July 1, 2026 from 60 to 65 years old. The bill also outlines that other retirement requirements and benefits, including those for early retirement, will remain the same.

Effective: July 1, 2026; Act 264

[SB 69](#) Georgia Courts Access and Consumer Protection Act – Sen. John Kennedy

Regulates third-party litigation financing practices, including the registration of litigation financiers with the Georgia Department of Banking and Finance. It would ban hostile foreign adversaries from using Georgia's litigation climate to undermine our vital security and economic interests. A fully completed and signed litigation financing contract would be required, including certain provisions, such as indemnification, as well as disclosures and acknowledgments. These agreements would be discoverable in civil actions. Consumers would also be protected from predatory lenders that take advantage of litigants in vulnerable positions by prohibiting funders from having input into litigation strategy, taking plaintiff's whole recovery and making sure plaintiffs know their rights.

Effective: Sections 3 and 4: April 21, 2025 and apply only to legal actions or contracts initiated on or after that date; All other Sections: January 1, 2026, while Sections 3 and 4 take effect approval; Act 10

[SB 99](#) Updates Definition of Law Enforcement Officer – Sen. Randy Robertson

Establishes the definition of "law enforcement officer" to include a peace officer; any state or federal law enforcement personnel who render assistance to a law enforcement agency of the state or any political subdivision therein; an appointed chief of police or department head of a law enforcement unit while pursuing required training; a federal law enforcement officer employed by the U.S. government as a full-time law enforcement officer; and an individual certified in another state hired in Georgia while pursuing training required by the 'Peace Officer Standards and Training Act.'

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 192

***[SB 132](#)* Insanity and Mental Incapacity; hearing before a court orders an evaluation of the mental competency of an accused person to stand trial; require – Sen. Brian Strickland**

Requires that individuals charged with non-violent misdemeanors receive a mental competency evaluation within 45 days, rather than the standard 90 days. DUI and domestic violence charges are excluded from this accelerated timeline. If a competency evaluation is requested by the defense, the court must first hold a hearing and, if an evaluation is ordered, the judge must document a bona fide doubt about the defendant's competency. If a defendant files a special plea of incompetency, the court must conduct a bench trial unless a jury trial is requested. Courts may also allow outpatient evaluations for non-violent offenses instead of jail-based evaluations.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 288

[SB 147](#) Educational Information for Inmates Upon Release – Sen. Michael ‘Doc’ Rhett

Requires the Department of Corrections to provide, with the person’s consent, certain criminal history, vocational, and educational records upon their release. These documents may include program completion records, high school equivalency diplomas, vocational training and work history, and other relevant institutional information. The bill also directs the Department of Corrections to coordinate with the Department of Driver Services to issue a state identification card to individuals who do not already have one and allows for the issuance of a Program and Treatment Completion Certificate if eligible. Additionally, inmates may receive a certified copy of their birth certificate and Social Security card (if obtainable), a resume listing trades and skills learned, documentation of completed job interview practice, and notice of eligibility for occupational licenses. Certain individuals—including those over 65, those released for medical reasons, or those unlikely to return to the workforce—are exempt from resume and interview preparation requirements.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 312

[*SB 244*](#) The award of reasonable attorney’s fees and costs in a criminal case to the defendant upon such defendant making a successful motion to disqualify the prosecuting attorney for misconduct in connection with the case – Sen. Brandon Beach

Allows defendants in criminal cases to be awarded reasonable attorney’s fees and costs if they successfully motion to disqualify the prosecuting attorney due to improper conduct. If the disqualification results in the dismissal of the case, the defendant is entitled to an award for all reasonable costs and fees incurred. The defendant must file a motion for these fees within 45 days after the criminal case concludes, and the judge assigned to the case will consider the motion and grant the fees accordingly. Any awarded fees will be paid from the office budget of the prosecuting attorney as budgeted by the county. This applies to all criminal cases pending on or after the bill becomes law (Part 1). The bill also establishes the “Wrongful Conviction and Incarceration Compensation Act,” which provides a legal framework for compensating individuals who were wrongfully convicted and incarcerated. Eligible claimants can receive \$75,000 per year of wrongful incarceration, additional amounts if they were on death row, reimbursement for legal expenses and refunds for fines or restitution paid. The law also creates a dedicated trust fund for these compensation payments and lays out detailed procedures for filing claims, establishing eligibility and administering compensation. This legislation includes waivers of sovereign immunity for the purpose of awarding compensation, restricts duplicate civil claims and mandates the Georgia Supreme Court and State Board of Pardons and Paroles to provide individuals with copies of the act upon exoneration (Part 2).

Effective: Part 1: May 14, 2025; Part 2: July 1, 2025; Act 361

[*SB 298*](#) Immunities: Right of Direct Appeal from Trial Court Denial – Sen. Randy Robertson

Permits the right of one direct appeal from all judgments, orders or rulings related to the granting or denial of immunity to one or more parties based upon sovereign, municipal, official, qualified or any other immunity. All judgments, orders, or rulings related to one or more parties’ legislative privilege or legislative immunity will have the right of direct of appeal to be exercised within 30 days of any judgment, order or ruling.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 298

Taxation and Certain Exemptions

[HB 90](#) Increases CUVA Acreage Limit to 4,000 Acres – Rep. Chuck Efstrotation

Increases the maximum acreage of property that can qualify for conservation use assessment (CUVA) from 2,000 acres to 4,000 acres for individuals or entities involved in agriculture, forestry, or environmentally sensitive property management. Voters must approve a constitutional amendment in November 2026 via *companion legislation*: [HR 32](#).

Effective: January 1, 2027

[HB 129](#) Ad valorem tax; bona fide conservation use property; remove a limitation on leased property as to certain entities – Rep. Charles H. Cannon

Revises the preferential assessment for bona fide conservation use property by removing a limitation on leased property for certain entities, allowing corporations and partnerships that meet specific conditions to qualify for conservation use assessment. The bill also outlines the requirements for property owners to provide proof of bona fide conservation use and clarifies that no property can qualify for conservation use if it exceeds 2,000 acres under one beneficial interest or if leased to an entity not entitled to conservation use assessment. The bill applies to taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2026.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 251

[HB 153](#) Extend Sales Tax Exemption for Concrete Mixers – Rep. Bath Camp

This legislation extends the sunset date on the sales and use tax exemption for concrete mixers by five years until June 30, 2031.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 80

[HB 360](#) Revenue and taxation; rehabilitation of historic structures; revise tax credit – Rep. Chuck Efstrotation

Amends O.C.G.A. 48-7-29.8, relating to tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic structures, to allow a taxpayer preapproved by the commissioner of the Department of Revenue to claim credits in tax year 2027, 2028, or 2029 for certified structures other than historic homes to receive the credit during tax year 2026. A taxpayer must obtain a certificate of occupancy for the structure by December 31, 2026 to qualify, and eligible properties must be located within a 10-mile radius of the Cabbagetown Historic District.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 262

[HB 416](#) Local government; enterprise zones; revise class of retailer from which fees may be collected – Rep. Chuck Efstrotation

Amends O.C.G.A. 36-88-6, relating to enterprise zone criteria, to restrict annual enterprise zone infrastructure fees assessed by local governing bodies to being assessed only on retailers that are qualifying businesses or service enterprises receiving a sales, and use tax exemption for being located within a designated enterprise zone. The bill amends O.C.G.A. 36-88-10, relating to time limitations for enterprise zones, to change the start of the 30-year duration of an enterprise zone authorized by O.C.G.A. 36-88-6 from beginning at the completion of the redevelopment project and retiring of any revenue bonds related to the project to the first issuance of a bond with a principal amount of at least \$100,000.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 266

[HB 586](#) Intangible Recording Tax Timing Revision – Rep. Bruce Williamson

Revises the application of the intangible recording tax so that it is collected on notes with a maturity of more than 62 months, instead of the previous threshold of more than three years.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 77

[HB 776](#) Fulton County School District Senior Homestead Exemption – Rep. Jan Jones

Provides a homestead exemption from Fulton County school district ad valorem taxes for educational purposes in the amount of 50 percent of the assessed value of the homestead for residents who are 70 years of age or older. Exemption renews automatically if eligibility is maintained.

Effective: January 1, 2026; **Referendum:** November 2025; Act 223

HB 777 Fulton County School District Senior Homestead Exemption – Rep. Jan Jones

Provides a homestead exemption from Fulton County school district ad valorem taxes for educational purposes in the amount of 25 percent of the assessed value of the homestead for residents who are 65 years of age or older. Exemption renews automatically if eligibility is maintained.

Effective: January 1, 2026; **Referendum:** November 2025.

SB 141 Extend Appeals for Tax Assessments; Extend Preferential Period for Historic Properties – Sen. Bo Hatchett

Extends the appeal or protest date for tax assessments, the denial claim for certain refunds, proposed assessment or license fees imposed by the Department of Revenue, erroneous payment of intangible taxes and petition to provide information related to allocations and apportionments for their business activity, from 30 days to 45 days. Additionally, the commissioner of the Department of Revenue is able to reinstate a canceled license within 45 days, rather than 30 days. The bill also extends the due date of any licenses or taxes, excluding ad valorem or income tax, from 30 days to 45 days after notice. The bill further amends both O.C.G.A. 48-5-7.2 and 48-5-7.3, relating to preferential assessment for rehabilitated historic property and landmark historic property, to allow for a classification and assessment approved by a county to continue for up to an additional 12 years for income-producing property.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 290

SB 330 APS School District Senior Homestead Exemption – Sen. Jason Esteves

Provides a homestead exemption for City of Atlanta school district taxes for seniors who are 65 years of age or older. The exemption covers up to \$50,000 of the homestead's assessed value, with an annual aggregate cap of \$487,804,878. If the total exemptions exceed the cap, individual amounts will be reduced proportionally. Exemption renews automatically if eligibility is maintained.

Effective: January 1, 2026; **Referendum:** November 2025; Act 358

Transportation

HB 156 Transportation, Department of; authority over vertiports; provide – Rep. Todd Jones

Grants the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) authority over vertiports. A “vertiport” is defined as a designated area specifically designed for the landing, takeoff and servicing of aircraft capable of vertical takeoff and landing. The bill also includes vertiports within the term “landing field.” It outlines GDOT's responsibilities for planning, establishing and maintaining aviation facilities, including airports and landing fields and encourages cooperation with local and federal entities for coordinated development of aviation infrastructure.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 172

HB 164 Repeal Sunset on Increased Truck Weight Limits – Rep. Steven Meeks

Repeals the automatic sunset provision related to the 10% weight variance allowed for vehicles hauling certain agricultural products, recovered materials and finished goods within a 150-mile radius and outside designated nonattainment areas. The bill also enhances enforcement by authorizing local law enforcement officers, in addition to the Department of Public Safety, to cite violations of local truck route and bridge weight limits. It provides guidance on signage requirements, enforcement procedures, and penalties, including warnings and citations depending on whether proper signage is present. Additionally, the bill updates various code sections to reflect these changes and clarifies the authority and responsibilities of the Departments of Transportation, Public Safety and Revenue.

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 174

2025 STUDY COMMITTEES IMPACTING FULTON COUNTY SERVICES

[House Study Committee on Funding for Next Generation 9-1-1](#) – Rep. Chuck Martin

Evaluate and recommend improvements to Georgia’s 9-1-1 funding model, with a focus on transitioning to Next Generation 9-1-1 services.

Sunset Date: December 1, 2025

[House Study Committee on Mental Health Workforce Development](#) – Rep. Steven Sainz

Examine the critical shortage of mental health professionals across the state, particularly in rural areas. Focus will include expanding access to licensure or certification at the bachelor’s level, assess workforce needs and development strategies to increase the number of qualified professionals.

Sunset Date: December 1, 2025

[House Study Committee on Evaluating Funding for Public Health](#) – Rep. Darlene Taylor

Review current public health services, identify long-standing funding challenges and explore options for sustainable infrastructure and program support.

Sunset Date: December 1, 2025

[House Study Committee on Election Procedures](#) – Rep. Victor Anderson

Evaluate Georgia’s election laws, policies, and procedures with a focus on improving election integrity, efficiency and public confidence.

Sunset Date: December 1, 2025

[Senate Study Committee on Height Restrictions Surrounding Georgia Airports](#) – Sen. Brandon Beach

Evaluate the need for building height regulations near airports to ensure aviation safety, infrastructure integrity and economic impact considerations.

Sunset Date: December 1, 2025

[Senate Study Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Digital Currency](#) – Sen. John Albers

Explore the impact of artificial intelligence and digital currency on Georgia’s economy, public safety, financial regulation and consumer privacy.

Sunset Date: December 1, 2025

GOVERNOR BRIAN P. KEMP'S VETO AND SIGNING STATEMENTS

Fiscal Year 2026 Budget ([Act 73](#)) Non-Binding Information Language to Disregard

Disregard Letter and Statements can be found [here](#).

VETO 1

[House Bill 308](#) would, among other things, empower trial courts to order the installation of an “intelligent speed assistance device” when the registered owner of a vehicle used that vehicle to commit the offense of reckless stunt driving. While this provision is well-intentioned, as such devices could be a valuable tool for preventing street racers from becoming repeat offenders, the bill does not provide the necessary infrastructure to ensure this punishment would be consistently and effectively applied.

For the foregoing reasons, I **VETO HOUSE BILL 308**.

VETO 2

[House Bill 380](#) would dissolve the Lower Chattahoochee Regional Airport Authority.

At the request of the sponsor, I **VETO HOUSE BILL 380**.

VETO 3

[House Bill 433](#) would allow the Department of Human Services (“DHS”) to access the full criminal history file maintained by the Georgia Criminal Information Center (“GCIC”)—including cases resulting in acquittals, sealed files, dismissed charges, and arrests that never resulted in charges—of any prospective or existing employee or contractor of DHS, any prospective or existing foster parent, or any adult in the home of such foster parent. Separate statutes limit the information on which DHS can base any adverse employment or application decision to criminal convictions, nolo contendere pleas, and pending charges. See, e.g., Code Section 49-2-14.1. These limitations protect such individuals from being adversely treated based on charges that were dropped or never brought. There may be some circumstances in which DHS’s interest in protecting the vulnerable populations it cares for outweighs the privacy interest of the individuals on whom DHS conducts records checks. Because DHS could not take any action based on this restricted information, however, this bill would only create unnecessary invasions of privacy and risks of litigation.

For the foregoing reasons, I **VETO HOUSE BILL 433**.

VETO 4

[House Bill 532](#) would allow counties with 20,000 acres or more of unimproved land owned by the Department of Natural Resources, with such land constituting ten percent or more of the taxable real property in the county, to draw on multiple grant programs concurrently. Current law allows counties to access only one grant program, as each program independently compensates the affected counties for lost property tax revenue. The state's budget for fiscal year 2026 provides appropriations for the full value of lost property tax revenue for eligible counties without requiring any eligible county to draw on both programs. There is no reason, therefore, to allow duplicative grant payments to counties under both programs.

For the foregoing reasons, I **VETO HOUSE BILL 532**.

VETO 5

[House Bill 846](#) would create a homestead exemption from Cherokee County ad valorem taxes in an amount dependent on revenue collected from a retail homestead option sales and use tax, contingent on the passage of legislation authorizing such a tax. Such legislation did not pass the General Assembly.

At the request of the sponsor, I **VETO HOUSE BILL 846**.

VETO 6

[Senate Bill 46](#) would, among other things, require every state "department, agency, division, board, bureau, commission, authority, entity, or instrumentality" outside the University System of Georgia to designate a "lead agency service delivery official" who would report to a new "State of Georgia Government Service Delivery Lead" within the Georgia Technology Authority. The bill would also create annual reporting requirements. Such positions and requirements, even if fulfilled by existing employees, would undoubtedly create additional costs that the General Assembly failed to fund.

For the foregoing reasons, I **VETO SENATE BILL 46**.

VETO 7

[Senate Bill 238](#) changes the composition of the Rockdale County Board of Commissioners from a county-wide elected chairperson and two commissioners to five commissioners elected on an at-large basis with the chairperson selected among the commission members. Rockdale County voters elected a new chairperson to serve their county commission for a four-year term on November 5, 2024. Senate Bill 238 would circumvent the will of the voters by cutting the chairperson's four-year term short and reassigning the chair to a newly created commission seat. Such a significant overhaul of the county's government structure deserves more thorough consideration by the Rockdale County government and the local delegation than is possible before this year's general election.

For the foregoing reasons, I **VETO SENATE BILL 238**.

SIGNING STATEMENT 1

[Senate Bill 255](#) codifies the procedure by which committees of either chamber of the General Assembly issue subpoenas in furtherance of the General Assembly's inherent oversight function. Senate Bill 255 was vigorously debated throughout the legislative session. After careful analysis, **I SIGNED SENATE BILL 255.**

Senate Bill 255 neither creates nor limits the power of the General Assembly to issue subpoenas; it merely provides a procedure for the issuance and enforcement of such subpoenas. Other statutes already affirm the General Assembly's power to conduct investigations and compel testimony, and "[n]o law enacted by the General Assembly shall be construed to limit its powers." GA. CONST. ART. III, § 6, ¶ III. Even if Senate Bill 255 was not signed into law, the General Assembly's authority would remain unchanged. Senate Bill 255 provides needed clarity on the procedural elements of legislative subpoenas.

I caution the General Assembly, however, that the procedures set forth in Senate Bill 255 should be used judiciously and sparingly. The General Assembly has a well-earned reputation for putting the business of legislating—and the people of Georgia—first. Americans of all political leanings have lamented the ineffectiveness of the United States Congress, in no small part due to the abundance of politically motivated "investigations" which only generate sound bites and distract from important legislation. I sincerely hope that in the future, Georgians do not similarly lament the General Assembly.

2025 BILLS PENDING ACTION

All bills that did not receive final action remain active and will be recommitted to their respective committees for consideration during the 2026 Legislative Session.

BILL #	BILL SPONSOR	BILL TITLE
<u>HB 61</u>	Rep. Devan Seabaugh	Georgia Anti-Squatting Act of 2025
<u>HB 62</u>	Rep. Sandra Scott	Georgia HOA Accountability and Community Empowerment Act
<u>HB 75</u>	Rep. Jordan Ridley	Justice for Peanut and Fred Act
<u>HB 244</u>	Rep. Charles Cannon	Local governments; request due date extensions for annual audits
<u>HB 397</u>	Rep. Tim Fleming	Elections; allow Saturday advance voting for municipalities
<u>HB 414</u>	Rep. Todd Jones	Elections; revise definition of "person" to include nonresidents
<u>HB 445</u>	Rep. Chuck Martin	Ad valorem tax; revise language in assessment notices
<u>HB 463</u>	Rep. Shaw Blackmon	Ad valorem tax; senior citizens volunteering with local governments; home-stead exemption
<u>HB 483</u>	Rep. Brian Prince	Harmful Materials to Minors; exemption for libraries and librarians from the provisions of Code Section 16-12-103; repeal
<u>HB 521</u>	Rep. Victor Anderson	Local government; deannexation of properties
<u>HB 531</u>	Rep. Rob Leverett	Appeal and error; appellate procedures on sovereign immunity
<u>HB 549</u>	Rep. Devan Seabaugh	Extend Reimbursement Period for Peace Officer Training Expenses
<u>HB 638</u>	Rep. Deborah Silcox	MARTA; restrict parking in transit vehicle lanes in Atlanta
<u>HB 862</u>	Rep. Derrick Jackson	Fulton County; set sheriff salary
<u>SB 7</u>	Sen. John Albers	Jails; municipal detention facilities for sheriff use
<u>SB 9</u>	Sen. John Albers	Ensuring Accountability for Illegal AI Activities Act
<u>SB 14</u>	Sen. Ed Setzler	Elections; nonpartisan election of district attorneys and solicitors-general
<u>SB 15</u>	Sen. Ed Setzler	Elections; nonpartisan elections for county authorities
<u>SB 21</u>	Sen. Blake Tillery	Local governments; waive immunities for sanctuary policy violations
<u>SB 51</u>	Sen. Ed Setzler	Road systems; revise contracting procedures for professional services
<u>SB 175</u>	Sen. Randy Robertson	Elections; prohibit ranked-choice voting
<u>SB 204</u>	Sen. Harold Jones	Regulation of firearms; enhance penalties against local governments
<u>SB 214</u>	Sen. Max Burns	Elections; physical absentee on-request ballots

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**FULTON
COUNTY**