



2024

STATE LEGISLATIVE SESSION
FINAL REPORT

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Introduction

The 157th Georgia General Assembly convened its second regular session from Monday, January 8, 2024, to Thursday, March 28, 2024.

During this session, the General Assembly addressed a diverse range of significant issues and advanced several key legislative priorities for Fulton County. Notably, funding crucial for the operational launch of the Fulton County Behavioral Health Crisis Center at 2805 Metropolitan Parkway, scheduled to open in Summer 2024, was adopted. Details underscoring the urgent need for these behavioral health crisis services in Fulton County can be found on page six of this report.

Additionally, legislation was enacted to establish an equitable property tax appeals process, introducing a new local option sales tax aimed at property tax relief for local governments with floating homestead exemptions, as outlined on page seven.

Further legislative priority achievements include:

- Equal retirement benefits eligibility for Fulton County State Court Judges.
- Streamlined evictions process improvements benefiting tenants and landlords alike.
- Healthcare access enhancements, particularly in mental health and substance abuse treatment through expanded Certificate of Need (CON) exemptions.
- Salary adjustments for Fulton County Board of Commissioners.
- Inclusion of a definition of anti-Semitism in the Georgia Hate Crimes law to address rising concerns.
- Expanded access to senior homestead exemptions for residents of Atlanta Public Schools (APS), providing crucial financial relief to vulnerable citizens.
- Implementation of jail-based competency restoration programs to facilitate mental competency restoration for individuals awaiting trial.

This report summarizes adopted legislation that will impact Fulton County programs and services.

State Legislative Agenda

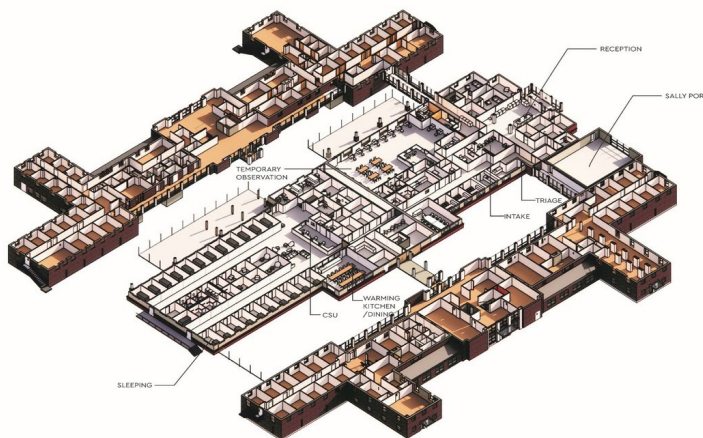
Fulton County seeks passage that will address the priorities below.

| PRIMARY POLICY PRIORITIES | |
|--|--|
| OPERATIONAL FUNDING FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS CENTER | <p>Fulton County seeks continued partnership with GA DBHDD to address the behavioral health needs of our constituents. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annualized funding for the Fulton County Behavioral Health Crisis Center, which will open in the first quarter of calendar year 2024. • Resources to address unmet needs for youth behavioral health crisis services • Resources to address the mental health needs of justice-involved persons in Fulton County, including detainees in the Fulton County Jail with persistent mental illness. |
| JAIL REPLACEMENT FUNDING | <p>Fulton County seeks legislation that would enable funding sources to finance a replacement Jail facility such as a phased sales tax and fees.</p> |
| EQUITABLE PROPERTY TAX APPEALS PROCESS | <p>Fulton County supports property tax appeal reform that would ensure a more equitable tax burden for homeowners. Fulton County is collaborating with the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia and the Georgia Association of Assessing Officials, as well as the Georgia Institute of Technology School of Public Policy in developing appropriate policy solutions with careful review of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional income data from large commercial properties • Changes in the 299(c) freeze |
| OTHER FULTON COUNTY POLICY PRIORITIES | |
| EQUAL ACCESS TO JUDICIAL PERSONNEL BENEFITS | <p>Fulton County seeks the repeal of legislation that prohibits the equitable participation of Judges in the Fulton County and Georgia Judicial Retirement System programs with passage of House Bill 643.</p> |
| ELECTIONS | <p>Fulton County supports adjustments in the Election Day equipment allocation formula, recognizing that analysis of current data and voting trends demonstrate that more than half of Fulton County voters choose to participate in Early Voting.</p> |
| EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT JUSTICE SYSTEM | <p>Fulton County supports legislation that creates a more efficient and effective justice system and improves outcomes for victims, defendants and taxpayers including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional judgeships within the Fulton County Superior Court. • Fulton County supports justice system changes to improve efficiency, including an elected Chief Judge position. • Clarification of the purchasing powers of constitutional officers. • Expedited local legislation by the Georgia General Assembly to authorize Fulton County Superior Court judicial officers to handle felony criminal matters for the Fulton County Superior Court, by designation. |

| | |
|---|--|
| DEFINITION OF ANTI-SEMITISM / ANTI-ISLAMIC HATRED | In 2023, Fulton County Board of Commissioners voted to support legislation that would provide a definition of Antisemitism for Georgia Hate Crimes laws. Fulton County opposes hatred in all forms and also supports the definition of Anti-Islamic hatred (Islamophobia). |
| HEALTHCARE ACCESS | <p>Fulton County supports policy changes that would increase access to healthcare and strengthen the network of healthcare providers within our community, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for updates to the Certificate of Need implementation to ensure that approved beds stay within the community for which they are approved. • Expansion of Medicaid. • Resources to address the healthcare desert within Fulton County. |
| HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS PROTECTIONS & TRANSPARENCY | Fulton County supports statutory changes that will provide for homeowner protections and transparency to include equitable best practice requirements for governance and financial management for homeowner associations. Specifically, homeowner associations must, under law, provide meeting minutes and all other legal documents to sworn successors. |
| EVICCTIONS PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS | <p>After an eviction case has been fully adjudicated in court, the Sheriff or Marshal will proceed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sheriff or Marshal will generally provide a 1 to 2-day notice of the date and time when they intend to evict the resident and supervise padlocking the property. • All occupants of the rental property will be asked to leave the property. • After the unit is vacated, no one may access the unit without the landlord's consent. <p>If personal possessions remain in the rental property after the Sheriff or Marshal have removed the resident: Residents will have 5 to 7 days from the date of padlocking to remove their possessions. The 5-day period applies if the possessions left in the rental home are worth less than \$500.</p> |
| 2023 CARRYOVER POLICY PRIORITIES | |
| SENIOR HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION SIMPLIFICATION | <p>Fulton County supports equitable homeowner property tax relief through administration of homestead exemptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request elimination of the two-year renewal requirement for the very low income senior homestead exemption. • Equitable administration of floating homestead exemptions and senior homestead exemptions throughout Fulton County. |
| MARTA BOARD APPOINTMENT PARITY | Fulton County seeks to reestablish parity with other MARTA signatory agencies in making direct appointments to the MARTA Board. |
| NATIONAL USE OF FORCE DATA COLLECTION PARTICIPATION | Fulton County requests the General Assembly require law enforcement agencies in Georgia to participate in the FBI's Use-of-Force Data Collection program and enact laws to establish decertification registries and practices or enhance existing ones. |
| <u>Senate Bill 19</u> | Monitor and report on passage of the passage of legislation limiting Clerk of Superior Court Passport Fees |
| <u>Senate Bill 82</u> | Monitor and report on passage of the "Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair" (CROWN) Act |

2024 Primary Policy Priority: Operational funding for Fulton County Behavioral Health Crisis Center

For several years, the Fulton County Behavioral Health Crisis Center (BHCC) has been a primary policy priority in the annual legislative agenda adopted by the Board of Commissioners and an essential initiative under the Fulton County Strategic Plan's Health & Human Services Priority. Fulton County committed a \$15 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to cover capital costs of the renovation of an existing facility to establish the BHCC. Working in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (GA DBHDD), Fulton County successfully advocated for operational funding from the Georgia General Assembly, demonstrating the critical need for crisis services. These efforts have culminated in the upcoming opening of the first Fulton County BHCC at the Fulton County Health & Human Services Campus at Oak Hill in Summer 2024. The BHCC will offer crisis services, peer support, and referrals to community-based mental health resources.



Fulton County Behavioral Health Crisis Center



In the past two state budget cycles, the GA DBHDD has included operational funding requests for the Fulton County BHCC that were supported by the Governor and Georgia General Assembly. The Fiscal Year 2024 budget allocated an initial \$5.6 million for operations, and the Fiscal Year 2025 budget includes \$3.7 million for ongoing operations. Additionally, the Fiscal Year 2025 budget earmarks \$500,000 for planning, design, and land acquisition for a new behavioral health crisis center in North Metropolitan Atlanta. We are committed to continuing our partnership with GA DBHDD to secure supplemental annual operational funding to further enhance crisis services in Fulton County.



Renovation designs adhere to state and national facility standards, with plans to include a dedicated wing for youth services in future expansions. In a testament to our ongoing collaboration, Grady Health System has been selected to operate the Fulton County BHCC.

The Need for Crisis Services in Fulton County

GA DBHDD's bed study released in Fall 2023 identifies a need for a total of three additional BHCCs in this region of the state. Although Fulton County is home to 10% of the population of Georgia, it has never had a dedicated, public BHCC. The opening of the first Fulton County BHCC this year will offer hope to hundreds of residents and provide relief to other BHCCs across the state. Currently, more than 500 Fulton County residents receive care at other state-funded crisis centers in other parts of Georgia each year. This project aligns with GA DBHDD's goals to increase access to crisis services, especially with the rollout of the 988 Crisis hotline.

2024 Primary Policy Priority: Operational Funding for Equitable Property Tax Appeals Process

Fulton County collaborated with the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) to support policy reforms found in **Act 379** ([House Bill 581](#)).



Act 379 revises several ad valorem tax provisions and authorizes a new local option sales tax for property tax relief. Highlights:

- Implementation of a statewide floating homestead exemption for counties, cities, and schools with capped increases in value for homesteaded property at no more than 3% per year. For jurisdictions with existing floating homestead exemptions, the taxpayer will receive whichever exemption is the largest: the floating homestead exemption under this Act or the local floating homestead exemption. Existing state and local (non-floating) homestead exemptions will still apply after the floating homestead exemption has been calculated.
- Adjusts the three-year lock statute so that it only applies when the taxpayer receives a reduction in value on appeal.
- Removes the tax estimate from the notice of current assessment and requires exemptions to be shown.
- Closes a loophole for settlement conferences by requiring the taxpayer to participate and advance their appeal in good faith.
- Addresses concerns with the DOAA sales ratio study to avoid potential penalties.
- Requires property to be reappraised no less than every three years.
- Creates an estimated roll-back rate. If a local government exceeds the estimated roll-back rate, it must include language on the tax bill indicating a tax increase.

[House Resolution 1022](#) is the companion constitutional amendment authorizing local governments to opt-out of the statewide floating homestead exemption. Passage of this statewide November 2024 referendum is required for Act 379 to become effective on January 1, 2025.

- Procedures for a governing authority to opt-out of the floating homestead exemption must be completed by March 1, 2025. The details regarding how the tax will be used and shared between the county and cities must be included in an intergovernmental agreement (IGA). The first usage of the tax requires only an IGA and resolution, but renewals will require a local act and referendum.

Adopted Legislation Related to Legislative Priorities and Policy Positions

Equal Access to Judicial Personnel Benefits ✓

[House Bill 825](#) authorizes the state court judges of Fulton County to participate in the County public retirement plan.

Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 396

Elections ✓

[House Bill 1207](#) allows election superintendents to determine the number of election booths used in each election based on factors such as advance voting turnout. The bill also reopens qualifying if no one qualifies during the qualifying period; requires election superintendents to electronically send a ballot proof to candidates appearing on the ballot for the candidates to verify information within 24 hours of receipt; requires county elections employees to be US citizens; clarifies that state-wide poll watchers are entitled to observe the conduct of elections at any location in the state; and provides that intimidation of poll officers and other election officials is a criminal interference.

Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 599

Evictions Process Improvements ✓

[House Bill 404](#) requires rental properties, relating to landlords and tenants, to be fit for human habitation. Landlords are prohibited from requiring a security deposit that exceeds two months' rent. In all cases when a tenant fails to pay rent and other charges owed to a landlord, they are afforded a three-business day written notice period before an eviction proceeding is filed. The eviction notice will be placed in a sealed envelope conspicuously on the door of the property and delivered via any additional method or methods agreed upon in the rental agreement.

Effective: April 22, 2024; Act 392

[House Bill 1017](#) criminalizes squatting; authorizes every peace officer of the county where the real property is located to exhibit the affidavit in a proceeding against an intruder; and transfers responsibility for the trial against intruders from Superior Court to Magistrate Court.

Effective: April 24, 2024; Act 483

[House Bill 1203](#) entitles a landlord to use an off-duty sheriff, sheriff's deputy, marshal, or Peace Officer Standards & Training Council (POST) certified officer with jurisdiction to execute a writ of possession at the landlord's sole cost and expense when an on-duty official is unable to execute the writ within 14 days of the landlord's application or request for execution. The landlord will have access to a list of authorized off-duty personnel, and provide written notice to the sheriff, constable, or marshal of the time of execution of the writ at least five calendar days in advance of the execution.

Effective: April 24, 2024; Act 484

Healthcare Access ✓

[House Bill 1339](#) includes several provisions relating to Certificate of Need (CON) exemption expansions. The following exemption will allow Morehouse School of Medicine to open a hospital in Fulton County: New short-stay general hospitals are exempt if the new facility is replacing a closed facility within a 48-month timeframe and within five miles of the main campus of a medical school. Transfers of existing beds and services are exempt when they occur within the same hospital system and are within a 15-mile radius of the original campus. The bill also establishes a nine-member Comprehensive Health Coverage Commission to advise the General Assembly, governor, and DCH on matters related to the quality of and

access to healthcare by low-income and uninsured populations, including reimbursement, funding, quality improvement, and service delivery enhancement opportunities. The initial report will be submitted no later than December 1, 2024, and the commission will be abolished on December 3, 2026.

Effective: Sections 2, 9, 12, 13, 14: April 19, 2024; Sections 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10: July 1, 2024; Section 11: January 1, 2025; Act 384

Homeowners Associations Protections & Transparency ✓

Senate Resolution 37 creates the Senate Property Owners' Associations, Homeowners' Associations, and Condominium Associations Study Committee to study fees for property transfers, certification letters, initiation, and similar actions by owners subject to the authority of such associations; harassment or discrimination against property owners or prospective property owners; and owner appeal process of violations of associations' rules.

Effective: Pending

Salary Adjustments for Fulton County Board of Commissioners ✓

House Bill 1454 adjusts the base salary of the full-time chairperson and members of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners.

Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 671

Definition of Anti-Semitism/Anti-Islamic Hatred ✓

House Bill 30 includes the definition of antisemitism in the Georgia Hate Crimes law adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). IHRA defines antisemitism as a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews, and includes rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions, and religious facilities. Nothing in the bill will be construed to infringe upon First Amendment rights or an individual's right to engage in legally protected conduct or activity pertaining to U.S. foreign policy or international affairs.

Effective: January 31, 2024; Act 356

Clerk of Superior Court Passport Fees ✓

Senate Bill 19 requires clerks of court and probate judges to provide a quarterly written report to county governing authorities that discloses the amount of all passport application or processing fees, sums, or other remuneration received during the previous quarter.

Effective: January 1, 2025; Act 603

APS Senior Homestead Exemption ✓

Senate Bill 439 provides a homestead exemption from City of Atlanta independent school district ad valorem taxes for educational purposes in the amount of \$100,000.00 of the assessed value of the homestead for residents of that school district who are 65 years of age or older and whose income does not exceed \$100,000.00 following November 2024 ballot referendum passage.

Effective: January 1, 2025; Act 624

Jail-based Competency Restoration Programs ✓

Senate Bill 533 allows the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) to restore an accused person to mental competency so that they can stand trial in an appropriate facility within a jail. To use these facilities, DBHDD must have a mutual agreement with the local sheriff's office.

Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 621

Georgia State Budget

AMENDED FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET

The Amended Fiscal Year 2024 Budget ([Act 366](#)), is set by a revised revenue estimate of \$37.9 billion. In addition to revenue growth, the governor's revenue estimate for the Amended FY 2024 budget includes \$2 billion in surplus funds for a total infusion of \$5.4 billion or an increase of 16.9% over the original FY 2024 budget. Highlights:

- \$250 million is added to the Local Road Assistance Administration Program as a one-time infusion to support local transportation infrastructure projects across the state.
- Within the Secretary of State's budget, \$1.7 million to account for increased postage expenses when mailing new precinct cards and \$110,000 to improve election security by adding watermarks to all ballot paper. Additionally, \$3 million to replace the Uninterruptible Power Supplies (UPS) for 8,000 voting machines statewide.
- \$29.2 million to the Georgia World Congress Center Authority for public safety, security, and infrastructure costs related to hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2025 College Playoff National Championship.
- \$887,773 to fund a \$2 per diem increase for county correctional institutions beginning April 1, 2024.

FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET

The Fiscal Year 2025 budget ([Act 709](#)), is set by a revised revenue estimate of \$36.1 billion, an increase of \$3.7 billion or 11.4% over the FY 2024 original budget. Highlights:

- \$3.7 million for the State Housing Trust Fund to improve homelessness services through new federal grant opportunities.
- Within the Department of Community Affairs budget, \$1 million to create the accountable housing initiative. The initiative, under the State Housing Trust Fund, provides funds for organizations that help homeless individuals obtain stable, immediate housing in the short-term and achieve affordable housing in the long-term.
- Within the Secretary of State's budget, \$405,434 for four criminal investigators to address an increase in the volume of complaints received by the Elections and Professional Licensing Boards Divisions and \$146,212 to support investigative operations under the State Elections Board. The budget also provides \$5 million for third-party ballot-text auditing technology to allow the Secretary of State's Office to audit and verify the validity of any election in the state without the use of QR codes.
- \$500,000 for infant mortality research as part of Morehouse School of Medicine's Center for Maternal Health Equity.
- \$2.5 million to expand jail-based competency restoration programs.
- \$3.5 million to fund a \$2 per diem increase for county correctional institutions.

Adopted Legislation Impacting Fulton County Services

*In addition to Fulton County's legislative priorities, numerous bills were adopted that may affect Fulton County programs and services. Note: Asterisks (**) indicate budget impact.*

GENERAL SERVICES

***[HB 206](#)* Local government; creation of Commercial Property Assessed Conservation, Energy, and Resiliency Development Authorities – Rep. Steven Sainz R-180**

Effective: April 25, 2024; Act 494

HB 206 authorizes the creation of a financing mechanism called Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE). This concept allows a local development authority to finance energy efficiency, water conservation, renewable energy, and resilience improvements on private commercial property.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: *Develop Fulton*

***[HB 974](#)* Secretary of State; establish and maintain a state-wide system for the posting of scanned paper ballots – Rep. John LaHood R-175**

Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 589

HB 974 is an omnibus bill that requires ballots to be printed on security paper that includes a visible watermark; requires the secretary of state to maintain a statewide program for the posting of scanned ballots; provides for the scanning of tabulated absentee ballots; requires additional risk-limiting audits and new selection process; provides for percentage changes of risk limits over time; and provides for a pilot program to audit paper ballots using optical character recognitions.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: *Board of Registration & Elections; Finance*

[HB 1016](#) City of South Fulton Public Facilities Authority Act – Rep. Roger Bruce D-61

Effective: May 6, 2024; Act 637

HB 1016 bill creates the City of South Fulton Public Facilities Authority.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: *Public Works*

[HB 1073](#) Local government; zoning; repeal additional hearing and notice provisions regarding halfway houses, drug rehabilitation centers, or other facilities for treatment of drug dependency – Rep. Dale Washburn R-144

Effective: May 6, 2024; Act 594

HB 1073 repeals local government authorization of additional zoning hearing and notice provisions regarding locations of halfway houses, drug rehabilitation centers or other facilities for the treatment of drug dependency. HB 1073 also provides for Sunday sales of alcoholic beverages for consumption on the premises in locally designated special entertainment districts and prohibits local governments from requiring the placement of video surveillance equipment at locations where the retail sale of automotive gasoline occurs.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: *Board of Commissioners, Clerk to the Commission, County Attorney*

***[HB 1105](#)* The Georgia Criminal Alien Track and Report Act of 2024 – Rep. Jesse Petrea R-166**

Effective: Section 10: December 31, 2024; All other sections: May 1, 2024; Act 505

HB 1105 requires Georgia law enforcement officials to work in conjunction with federal immigration authorities and to send, receive, and maintain information relating to the immigration status of any individual as reasonably needed for public safety purposes. Any sheriff's office or law enforcement agency of a local

governing body that acts in violation is subject to the withholding of state funding or state administered federal funding other than to provide services required in subsection (d) of O.C.G.A. 50-36-1. As a condition of funding, the Department of Community Affairs, the Department of Transportation, or any other state agency that provides funding to local governing bodies shall require certification of compliance with requirements in Code Section 50-36-4 for submission of annual immigration compliance reports. Any funding withheld from a sheriff's office is remitted to the county. HB 1105 provides standard procedures for the booking of aliens and foreign nationals and requires jailers to prepare quarterly reports outlining several categories of information for each jail jurisdiction. The bill provides that a first violation of the requirements in this Code section is a misdemeanor. Any second or subsequent violation is a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: *Finance; Marshal; Police; Sheriff*

HB 1146 Private Water Permits Without County Approval – Rep. Ron Stephens R-164

Effective: *May 6, 2024; Act 595*

HB 1146 allows private water systems to apply directly to EPD for a permit without the consent of the county if the county cannot provide the requested service within 18 months. The sunset date for this legislation is January 1, 2029.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: *Board of Commissioners; County Attorney; Public Works*

HB 1149 Local government; require local constitutional officers to annually report audits of discretionary funds to the General Assembly – Rep. Mesha Mainor R-56

Effective: *July 1, 2024; Act 596*

HB 1149 requires the annual audit reports of counties to include the financial condition of the discretionary funds of each county officer listed in Article IX, Section I, Paragraph III(a) of the Constitution under the county governing authority.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: *Clerk of Superior and Magistrate Courts; District Attorney; Probate Court Judge; Sheriff; Tax Commissioner*

***HB 1312* Public Service Commission Special Elections – Rep. Rick Jasperse R-11**

Effective: *April 18, 2024; Act 380*

HB 1312 staggers elections and terms for Georgia's Public Service Commission. Special elections for District 2 will occur during municipal elections in 2025, while general elections for Districts 3 and 5 will take place in 2026. Districts 1 and 4 will have elections in 2028.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: *Board of Registration & Elections; Finance*

***HB 1407* Service delivery strategies; revise provisions – Rep. John LaHood R-175**

Effective: *January 1, 2026; Act 698*

HB 1407 makes several procedural changes to the service delivery strategy (SDS) law and authorizes counties to use additional unincorporated revenues to fund unincorporated services. Current law only allows counties to use special district taxes, insurance premium taxes, assessments, or user fees for unincorporated services. HB 1407 specifically authorizes counties to utilize the following unincorporated revenues to pay for unincorporated services: special service districts' ad valorem taxes, assessments or user fees; grants; cable franchise fees; alcohol excise taxes; financial institution taxes; hotel-motel taxes; occupation taxes; railroad equipment taxes; insurance premium taxes; rental car excise taxes; impact fees; stormwater fees; title ad valorem taxes; revenues apportioned to the county as part of an intergovernmental agreement; or by other revenues approved by all parties participating in an SDS negotiation.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: *Board of Commissioners; County Attorney; County Manager; External Affairs; Finance*

HB 1410 State Housing Trust Fund for the Homeless Act – Rep. Chuck Efstration R-104**Effective:** April 22, 2024; Act 413

HB 1410 establishes a separate classification in the State Housing Trust Fund and all funds appropriated, donated, or received for the specific purpose of state housing accountability programs must be used exclusively for those programs; updates appointments to the State Housing Trust Fund for the Homeless Commission; and requires the state auditor to conduct a performance audit of spending on homeless programs in the state, including expenditures by the state, expenditures by municipalities and counties with substantial homeless populations, and the expenditure of federal funds allocated to the state on homelessness by December 31, 2024.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Commissioners; Community Development**HB 1462 City of Chattahoochee Hills; mayor pro tempore; revise term – Rep. Mandisha Thomas D-65****Effective:** July 1, 2024; Act 676

HB 1462 revises the term for the mayor pro tempore of the City of Chattahoochee Hills from four years to two years.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Commissioners; Board of Registration & Elections**HB 1501 City of Roswell Public Facilities Authority Act – Rep. Deborah Silcox R-53****Effective:** May 6, 2024; Act 692

HB 1501 creates the City of Roswell Public Facilities Authority.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Public Works**SB 171 Development Authorities; limit the length of a director's hold-over period following expiration of term of office – Sen. Max Burns R-23****Effective:** July 1, 2024; Act 417

SB 171 limits the length of a member's hold-over period following the expiration of the term of office and requires development authority members to complete at least two hours of continuing education annually. Failure to complete continuing education training for two consecutive years results in the member losing voting rights and is required to receive funding from the OneGeorgia Authority.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Develop Fulton***SB 189* Elections; text portions of ballots shall be counted for vote tabulation and recounts purposes – Sen. Max Burns R-23****Effective:** Sections 12, 14: May 7, 2024; Sections 1, 2, 3, 3.1, 5, 8, 10, 11: July 1, 2024; Sections 4, 6, 9: January 1, 2025; Section 7: July 1, 2026; Act 697

SB 189 is an omnibus bill that removes the Secretary of State from the State Election Board; authorizes election superintendents, in any election with less than 5,000 registered voters, to provide paper ballots, to be marked by pen, pencil, or similar non-electronic device; requires all absentee ballots that have been accepted by the Monday prior to an election to be tabulated and the results reported by no later than 8:00 p.m. on the day of the election, or by one hour of the closing of all polls, whichever is later. Additional provisions include: the mailing address for election purposes of any homeless person is the registrar's office of the county in which the person resides; defines who is eligible to vote based on their residency; outlines standards on challenging electors' right to vote; adds chain of custody process for election workers in sealing, storing, transporting and maintaining documented custody of ballots; and requires election superintendents, after certification, to unseal and scan ballot images and other materials, at a specified resolution, for those who request them. The same procedures and requirements for local governments meeting open records requests in O.C.G.A. 50-18-71, apply here.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Registration & Elections

[SB 351](#) Protecting Georgia's Children on Social Media Act of 2024 – Sen. Jason Anavitarte R-31*Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 463*

SB 351 addresses online internet safety for minors including age verification on social media platforms and promotion of safe and appropriate use of technology and responsible digital citizenship in public schools. The bill also requires local governing bodies to adopt a social media policy by April 1, 2026.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Commissioners; County Attorney; Community Development; External Affairs

PUBLIC HEALTH**[SB 293](#) County Boards of Health; operational policies and procedures of the Department of Public Health apply to local personnel – Sen. Ben Watson R-1***Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 383*

SB 293 revises the selection and qualifications of district health directors. The commissioner of the Department of Public Health will appoint district health directors to serve as chief executive officers of each local health department in the respective district. The director must be licensed to practice medicine or have a master's degree in public health or a related field. If the director is not licensed to practice medicine, then a licensed physician must serve as the chief medical officer. If a position for district health director becomes vacant, the commissioner can appoint an interim without board approval until a permanent director is appointed and approved by the county boards of health.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Health

[SB 395](#)* Authorize possession of opioid antagonists – Sen. Clint Dixon R-45Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 462*

SB 395 is an omnibus bill that amends O.C.G.A. 16-13-71 by making any opioid antagonist exempt from classification as a dangerous drug when used for overdose prevention. [Section 2](#) creates O.C.G.A. 20-2-776.5, known as 'Wesley's Law', allows for visitors and school employees to possess and administer an opioid antagonist if the person believes someone is suffering from a drug overdose on school property or at a school-sponsored activity. No cause of action can be brought whether a school personnel administers or chooses not to administer an opioid antagonist when this decision is brought in good faith. [Section 3](#) clarifies that prescription drugs may not be dispensed by a vending machine in O.C.G.A. 26-4-89. [Section 4](#) allows for the sale and supply of opioid antagonists in vending machines. Additionally, persons and harm reduction organizations that dispense, supply, and administer opioid antagonists are immune from liability when acting in good faith. [Section 5](#) requires that government buildings, courthouses, and schools with automated external defibrillators provide opioid antagonists to assist in the event of an opioid overdose.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Courts; Emergency Services; Police; Real Estate and Asset Management

[SB 480](#) Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce; student loan repayment for mental health and substance use professionals serving in certain capacities – Sen. Mike Hodges R-3*Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 381*

SB 480 repays student loans for mental health and substance use professionals serving in certain capacities. Eligibility requirements: 1) Is a mental health or substance use professional licensed in this state; and Provides services to underserved youth in this state; or Practices in unserved geographic areas or communities in this state that are disproportionately impacted by social determinants of health, as determined by the board. 2) Mental health or substance use professional' means a psychiatrist, psychologist, professional counselor, social worker, marriage and family therapist, clinical nurse specialist in psychiatric/

mental health, or other licensed mental or behavioral health clinician or specialist.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities, Human Resources

PUBLIC SAFETY, COURTS AND JUSTICE

***HB 451* Public officers and employees; supplemental, illness-specific insurance for certain first responders with occupational post-traumatic stress disorder; require provision – Rep. Devan Seabaugh R-34**

Effective: January 1, 2025; Act 511

HB 451 requires a public entity to provide supplemental, illness-specific insurance to certain first responders diagnosed with occupational post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Coverage will be available once per one's lifetime and include a \$3,000 cash benefit and an income replacement disability benefit provided 90 days after diagnosis if needed.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Finance; Human Resources; Marshal; Police; Sheriff

HB 500 Crimes and offenses; offense of arson of law enforcement vehicle – Rep. Deborah Silcox R-53

Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 547

HB 500 creates the offense of arson of a law enforcement vehicle. Any person convicted of the offense is punished by a fine up to \$100,000 or by imprisonment for a minimum of five years with a maximum of 20 years, or both.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Courts; Marshal; Police; Sheriff

***HB 873* Courts; juvenile treatment court divisions; create – Rep. Stan Gunter R-8**

Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 576

HB 873 allows a juvenile court to create a juvenile treatment court division for certain juvenile offenders in the justice system. Each juvenile treatment court division shall establish a planning group to develop a work plan. The planning group shall include the judges, prosecuting attorneys, sheriffs or their designees, public defenders, community supervision officers, and probation officers. The work plan shall address the operations, coordination, resource management, information management, and evaluation need of the juvenile treatment court division. The Council of Accountability Court Judges of Georgia will provide technical assistance to the juvenile courts as they develop their Juvenile treatment court division. Expenses for salaries, equipment, services, and supplies incurred in implementing a juvenile treatment court division may be paid from state funds, funds of the county, federal grant funds, and funds from private donations.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Finance; Juvenile Court; Sheriff

HB 926 Second Chance Workforce Act – Rep. Matt Reeves R-99

Effective: May 2, 2024; Act 550

HB 926 adds the terms "healthcare worker" and "emergency health worker" to the list of crimes included within the definition of "class B designated felony act" in the Juvenile Code. HB 926 also allows a traffic court judge to reinstate an accused person's license when it was suspended because of a failure to appear, and they subsequently have scheduled a new date to appear before the court; have appeared in court for a hearing, arraignment, or waiver of arraignment and entry of plea; or when the charge has been fully adjudicated.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Courts

HB 935 Back the Blue Fund – Rep. Kenneth Vance R-133**Effective:** May 6, 2024; Act 570

HB 935 creates the Back the Blue Fund of which the revenue commissioner will be the custodian and administer to sheriffs' offices through the Georgia Sheriff's Association to provide bonuses to deputy sheriffs and jailers. An option will be provided to contribute \$5 to the fund upon issuance or renewal of a motor vehicle car tag.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Sheriff**HB 1201 Criminal procedure; vacating of sentences of victims of trafficking – Rep. Houston Gaines R-120****Effective:** April 24, 2024; Act 490

HB 1201 allows a victim of human trafficking to have their sentence vacated when sentenced pursuant to O.C.G.A. 42-8-60, relating to probation, or O.C.G.A. 16-13-2, relating to conditional discharge of possession of controlled substances as a first offense, so long as the crime was a direct result of being a victim of human trafficking. The bill also defines the term "commercial sexual exploitation recovery center" and includes the term within the definition of "child-caring institution" in O.C.G.A. 49-5-3, while specifying that the definition of "maternity home" does not include a commercial sexual exploitation recovery center.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Commissioners; Courts***SB 37* Sheriffs; qualification requirements for the office of sheriff; revise – Sen. Randy Robertson R-29****Effective:** July 1, 2024; Act 506

SB 37 provides for a sheriff who serves in more than one court to receive a salary for up to two courts, and that salary would not be increased by any state cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) or general performance-based increase. SB 37 prohibits the use of flashing or revolving blue lights by emergency vehicles outside of the jurisdiction of their agency, except when responding to an emergency call or when in pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law. SB 37 authorizes jailers who have been certified by the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council as having completed the course of training required by the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Act to arrest any person who violates a criminal law that occurs in the jail or within the perimeter of the guard lines of the jail. The jailer may also arrest anyone who has a complaint or arrest warrant pending and surrender themselves.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Finance; Sheriff***SB 63* Bonds and Recognizances; setting of bonds and schedules of bails – Sen. Randy Robertson R-29****Effective:** July 1, 2024; Act 507

SB 63 adds restrictions on the granting of bonds/bail for persons accused of crimes. Section 1 adds local ordinance violations to the list of offenses for which a court may prescribe a schedule of bail amounts. No such bail schedule (whether for local ordinance or state law violations) can mandate unsecured release of an accused person before a court hearing, except for offenses for which conviction cannot result in jail time. In this code section, "bail" does not include unsecured release but would mean only secured release by posting a cash bond, posting a bond via a bondsman or posting a bond secured by property as approved by the sheriff. Section 2 applies the same prohibition on unsecured releases to persons accused of misdemeanor offenses. Section 3 adds various criminal offenses to the definition of "bail-restricted offenses". Judges would not be authorized to permit the unsecured release of any person charged with a bail-restricted offense; rather, any such pre-trial release would have to be secured by posting a cash bond, posting a bond via a bondsman, or posting a bond secured by property as approved by the sheriff. Additionally, any person previously convicted of 1) a serious violent felony or 2) three or more felonies of any type would be ineligible for unsecured pre-trial release upon arrest for any subsequent crime of any type. Finally, any person who has been arrested on any felony charge within the previous seven years would be ineligible for unsecured pre-trial release upon arrest for any subsequent crime of any type.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Courts; Finance; Sheriff

SB 159 Correctional Institutions of States and Counties; wireless communications and stand-alone electronic devices behind guard lines; prohibit – Sen. Randy Robertson R-29**Effective:** July 1, 2024; Act 508

SB 159 enhances penalties for a person who brings prohibited items beyond a guard line to provide the items to inmates. Any person found guilty of bringing prohibited items into the facility for an inmate is punishable by a 10-year term of imprisonment.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Courts; Sheriff***SB 232* Probate Court Fee Revisions – Sen. John F. Kennedy R-18****Effective:** January 1, 2025; Act 515

SB 232 modifies the fees charged and collected by probate court judges and clerks contained in O.C.G.A. 15-9-60. These fees are charged for filings such as petitions, motions, claims, and certificates, as well as for different applications, licenses, and certified copies. Conforming language in other sections of the Code relating to filing fees, license fees, and fireworks applications are contained in the bill.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Finance; Probate Court**SB 332 Prosecuting Attorneys Qualifications Commission; promulgate standards of conduct and rules for the commission's governance – Sen. Randy Robertson R-29****Effective:** March 13, 2024; Act 368

SB 332 removes the requirement that the rules of the Prosecuting Attorneys Qualifications Commission be approved by the Georgia Supreme Court.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: District Attorney; Solicitor General**SB 348 Notification of Suspicious or Unusual Deaths; individual had not been seen by a physician prior to death; revise the period – Sen. Rick Williams R-25****Effective:** July 1, 2024; Act 477

SB 348 requires that in the instance of a suspicious or unusual death, the law enforcement officer or any other person with knowledge of the death must notify the coroner or county medical examiner immediately.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Marshal; Medical Examiner; Police; Sheriff**SB 421 Obstruction of Public Administration; offense of transmitting a false public alarm; enhance penalties – Sen. Clint Dixon R-45****Effective:** July 1, 2024; Act 512

SB 421 increases the penalties for a third or subsequent conviction of the offense of making an unlawful request for emergency services assistance in O.C.G.A. 16-10-28 to between 10 and 15 years imprisonment, a minimum fine of \$25,000, or both. If the location of response is a person's home or a place of worship, then a first violation is now treated as a felony with imprisonment of between one and 10 years, a minimum fine of \$5,000, or both. A person who is convicted of this crime is now automatically liable for restitution to any affected natural person or public or private entity for reasonable costs or damages associated with the offense, including damage to property and expenses to treat bodily injuries. Part II of SB 421 broadens the crime of aggravated assault to include when someone discharges a firearm, without legal justification, after immediately exiting a vehicle towards another vehicle or an occupied building. The crime of criminal damage to property in the first degree is broadened to include when someone discharges a firearm, without legal justification, while inside a vehicle or after immediately exiting and when that person causes damage to a building. SB 421 also creates a new crime of drive-by shooting when a person who is either in a motor vehicle or is close to a motor vehicle that they used to drive to the location, discharges a firearm at another person, motor vehicle, occupied dwelling, or dwelling that the person should have known to be occupied,

with the intent to injure or damage the property of another. The penalty is imprisonment of between five and 20 years. The crime of drive-by shooting is added to the list of crimes within the definition of “racketeering activity” under the criminal gang statute.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Commissioners; Courts; District Attorney; Marshal; Police; Sheriff

SB 508 Administrative Office of the Courts; accessibility of certain personal information of state and federal judges, justices, and spouses thereof – Sen. Clint Dixon R-45

Effective: July 1, 2025; Act 584

SB 508 directs the Administrative Office of the Courts to provide written notice to each state or local government entity that possesses personally identifiable information of a judge or justice to restrict access to that information within 30 days of written notice. Within 30 days of written notice from a judge or justice that they have left office, the office will notify those entities that the restriction is no longer applicable. The office will develop a process to regularly identify local entities that possess personally identifiable information and will establish a procedure for protected persons to submit information for inclusion in a personally identifiable information database.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Clerk of Superior and Magistrate Courts; County Attorney; Courts

SB 517 Criminal Prosecutions; immunity from certain criminal prosecutions against law enforcement officers whose threat or use of force is justified or otherwise lawful – Sen. Randy Robertson R-29

Effective: May 2, 2026; Act 545

SB 517 expands the immunity protection for certain cases of civilian self-defense or use of force by law enforcement officers.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: County Attorney; Courts; Marshal; Police; Sheriff

TAXATION AND CERTAIN EXEMPTIONS

***HB 516* Georgia Department of Transportation Updates – Rep. Derrick McCollum R-30**

Effective: January 1, 2026; Act 588

HB 516 includes language that changes the date when the Department of Agriculture will begin regulating and taxing the use of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations to January 1, 2026.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Commissioners; Tax Commissioner

***HB 808* Ad valorem tax; increase a statewide exemption for tangible personal property – Rep. Mike Cheokas R-151**

Effective: Section 3: January 1, 2025; All other sections: May 6, 2024; Act 581

HB 808 increases the statewide ad valorem tax exemption for tangible personal property from \$7,500 to \$20,000 if passed in a statewide referendum.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Finance; Tax Commissioner

HB 1015 Income tax; reduce rate of tax – Rep. Lauren McDonald R-26

Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 378

HB 1015 amends O.C.G.A. 48-7-20, relating to individual income tax rates, to lower the individual income tax rate effective on January 1, 2024, from 5.49 percent to 5.39 percent.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Commissioners

[HB 1023](#) Income tax; match tax rate imposed on corporations to that imposed on individual taxpayers – Rep. Bruce Williamson R-112

Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 376

HB 1023 ties the corporate income tax rate to the individual rate, dropping it from 5.75% to 5.39%.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Commissioners; Select Fulton

[HB 1267](#) Georgia Tax Court Act of 2025 – Rep. Chuck Martin R-49

Effective: Sections 1-2: January 1, 2025; Section 3: July 1, 2024; All other sections: July 1, 2026; Act 601

HB 1267 provides enabling legislation for creating the Georgia Tax Court, subject to ratification of a constitutional amendment by voters at the November 2024 general election ([HR 598](#)). The chief judge and clerk will serve five-year terms, appointed by the governor and subject to approval by the Senate and House Judiciary Committees. Actions may be commenced before the court on and after September 1, 2026, with actions requiring the filing of a petition with the court naming the state revenue commissioner as respondent in their official capacity. The 'Georgia Civil Practice Act' will govern proceedings before the Georgia Tax Court, and trials in proceedings before the court will be without a jury. A small claims division of the court will be established, with court judges sitting as judges of that division. A taxpayer may elect to have the small claims division have jurisdiction over their case, provided the amount in controversy is less than a threshold amount determined by court rules. A salary for a judge of the court is provided in the bill. Additional conforming language related to moving from the Georgia Tax Tribunal to the Georgia Tax Court is also included in the bill.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Tax Assessor; Tax Commissioner

[HB 1463](#) City of Chattahoochee Hills; levy an excise tax – Rep. Mandisha Thomas D-65

Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 677

HB 1463 authorizes the governing authority of the City of Chattahoochee Hills to levy hotel/motel taxes.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Tax Commissioner

***[SB 496](#)* Ad Valorem Taxation of Property; extension of preferential assessment periods for certain historic properties – Sen. Max Burns R-23**

Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 375

SB 496 allows county governments the option of extending the preferential assessment on income-producing rehabilitated historic or landmark historic properties for an additional twelve years.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Finance; Select Fulton; Tax Assessor; Tax Commissioner

TRANSPORTATION

[HB 617](#) Highways, bridges, and ferries; development and maintenance of a state-wide freight and logistics implementation plan – Rep. Rick Jasperse R-11

Effective: July 1, 2024; Act 579

HB 617 requires the Georgia Department of Transportation Planning Director to develop a state-wide freight and logistics implementation plan based on a 20-year projection.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Commissioners; Public Works

***[HB 946](#)* Special district mass transportation sales and use tax; intergovernmental agreements; revise requirements – Rep. Lee Hawkins R-27**

Effective: May 6, 2024; Act 578

HB 946 changes the single county TSPLOST law by adding language from the local option sales tax (LOST) law so that once a city or cities making up more than 50% of the municipal population sign an intergovernmental agreement (IGA), the tax may be levied up to the full 1%. The remaining cities that do not sign will be considered absent municipalities. Absent municipalities will receive a share of the tax based on no less than their proportionate share of the total municipal population and total municipal centerline miles in the county. In addition, if all cities agree to sign the IGA, the tax may be levied for up to six years instead of five.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Commissioners; County Attorney; Finance; Tax Commissioner

[SB 353](#) Highways, Bridges, and Ferries; duties when death results from an accident upon a highway in certain instances; allow for delegation – Sen. Greg Dolezal R-27

Effective: March 4, 2024; Act 367

SB 353 amends the weight and dimension requirements for modular unit transporters and delegates power and duties by the coroner or county medical examiner when death results from an accident on a highway in certain cases.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Medical Examiner



2024 Study Committees Impacting Fulton County Services

House Study Committee on Alternatives to Opioids for Pain Management – Rep. Katie Dempsey R-13

Sunset Date: December 1, 2024

HR 1360 creates the House Study Committee on Alternatives to Opioids for Pain Management to study ways to enhance awareness of nonopioid alternatives, including nonopioid pharmacologic treatment options, through educational programs for healthcare providers and to enhance collaboration and integration of care between all healthcare providers who assist in treating pain.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Commissioners; Board of Health; County Manager

Senate Property Owners' Associations, Homeowners' Associations, and Condominium Associations Study Committee – Sen. Donzella James D-35

Sunset Date: Pending

SR 37 creates the Senate Property Owners' Associations, Homeowners' Associations, and Condominium Associations Study Committee to study fees for property transfers, certification letters, initiation, and similar actions by owners subject to the authority of such associations; harassment or discrimination against property owners or prospective property owners; and owner appeal process of violations of the associations' rules.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Board of Commissioners

Senate Study Committee on Artificial Intelligence – Sen. John Albers R-56

Sunset Date: December 1, 2024

SR 476 creates the Senate Study Committee on Artificial Intelligence to examine AI technologies and their current and future use; establish policies and procedures concerning the development, procurement, implementation, utilization and ongoing assessment of systems that employ AI and are in use by state agencies; advances in a way that enforces the existing consumer protection laws and principles for its citizens, while enacting any additional appropriate safeguards against, fraud, unintended bias, discrimination, infringements on privacy and other potential harms from AI.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: County Attorney; External Affairs; Information Technology

Senate Study Committee on Veterans' Mental Health and Housing – Sen. Chuck Payne R-54

Sunset Date: December 1, 2024

SR 527 creates the Senate Study Committee on Veterans' Mental Health and Housing to evaluate the adequacy of public and private programs related to access to specialized housing services available to veterans in Georgia.

Agencies/Departments Impacted: Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities; Community Development; Select Fulton

Governor Brian P. Kemp's Veto Statements

FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET (ACT 709) NON-BINDING INFORMATION LANGUAGE TO DISREGARD

Disregard Letter and Line-Item Vetoes can be found [here](#).

VETO 1

[House Bill 228](#) would expand Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant Program, HOPE Scholarship, and Dual Enrollment Program eligibility for certain private for-profit institutions. Despite each of these programs having finite resources, the General Assembly proposed many *ad hoc* pieces of legislation to expand institution eligibility without additional funding or fiscal analysis addressing the impact of such expansion on current appropriations. While I recognize the utility of tuition equalization grants for particular educational needs, the diversion of taxpayer funds to private institutions should only be sought on a measured and consistent basis.

For the foregoing reasons, I **VETO HOUSE BILL 228**.

VETO 2

[House Bill 441](#) would create a statutory framework to regulate the practice of teledentistry in Georgia. The bill would also mandate that health insurers, including Georgia's State Health Benefit Plan and Medicaid care management organizations, provide coverage for teledentistry by January 1, 2024. Notwithstanding the date error, which mandates coverage for teledentistry before the bill would even take effect, the fiscal impact of this mandate was not analyzed or funded by the General Assembly. Adding teledentistry coverage without a full understanding of the fiscal impact risks financial harm to the State and affected employees. While I support expanding benefits to our state employees and access to dental services, I cannot do so without a clear understanding of the financial implications.

I appreciate that the growing practice of teledentistry in Georgia promotes expanded access to dental care, particularly for rural Georgians who may not have access to a local dentist. House Bill 441, however, may also inadvertently remove access to teledentistry services that are currently available, such as providing emergency advice to a patient. My hope is that we can continue to expand access to safe and affordable dental care through teledentistry, rather than limit its proven utility due to unintended legislative consequences. I look forward to working with the General Assembly next year to revisit this issue.

For the foregoing reasons, I **VETO HOUSE BILL 441**.

VETO 3

[House Bill 866](#) would create the Pike County Public Facilities Authority.

At the request of the sponsor, I **VETO HOUSE BILL 866**.

VETO 4

[House Bill 956](#) would allow the Superior Court judges of the Conasauga Judicial Circuit to vote annually to select their chief judge for a one-year term.

At the request of the sponsor, I **VETO HOUSE BILL 956**.

VETO 5

[House Bill 1019](#), as originally introduced, would have raised the state-wide homestead tax exemption from \$2,000 to \$4,000 upon voter approval through a referendum. After the Senate Finance Committee changed the exemption amount, the Senate adopted a floor amendment late on the final day of the legislative session to return the bill to its original form. This amendment, however, did not change the language of the constitutionally required voter referendum, which references a \$10,000 exemption. Voters would therefore be approving a different exemption which the legislature did not pass, while the statutory language would never receive the voter approval needed for it to take effect. This conflict between the statutory language and the referendum language precludes implementation of House Bill 1019.

For the foregoing reasons, **I VETO HOUSE BILL 1019.**

VETO 6

[House Bill 1123](#) would establish an Adult Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Multidisciplinary (“AANEM”) Coordinator Program within the Prosecuting Attorneys’ Council (“PAC”) to provide a network of regional coordinators. Upon such program being funded by the General Assembly, the district attorney of each judicial circuit would be required to establish an AANEM Team, which would be overseen and managed by one of multiple regional coordinators employed by PAC. This bill would also create an elder justice coalition for various purposes related to elder abuse response and prevention, including creating a law enforcement training for responding to instances of disabled adult and elder abuse to be implemented by the Georgia Public Safety and Training Center (“GPSTC”). The coalition would be operated by a PAC-employed state-wide coordinator.

Fiscal estimates show that the proposals in this bill would require annual funding of at least \$1,658,025 to PAC and \$520,354 to GPSTC. Despite these substantial costs, the General Assembly failed to fund both the AANEM Program and the elder justice coalition.

For the foregoing reasons, **I VETO HOUSE BILL 1123.**

VETO 7

[House Bill 1192](#) would implement a two-year pause on the issuance of sales and use tax exemption certificates to high-technology data centers and data center customers. Only two years ago the legislature extended these tax exemptions for an additional three years, through 2031. The bill’s language would prevent the issuance of exemption certificates after an abrupt July 1, 2024 deadline for many customers of projects that are already in development—undermining the investments made by high-technology data center operators, customers, and other stakeholders in reliance on the recent extension, and inhibiting important infrastructure and job development.

For the foregoing reasons, **I VETO HOUSE BILL 1192.**

VETO 8

[House Bill 1231](#) would expand Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant (“TEG”) Program, HOPE Scholarship, and Dual Enrollment Program eligibility for certain private, nonprofit institutions, allow HOPE Scholarship recipients to utilize unused credit hours to pursue a first professional degree, and remove the initial and first-year achievement standards of the HOPE Scholarship for former foster youths. None of these three proposals were accompanied by additional funding or fiscal analysis.

As addressed in my veto statement for House Bill 228, expansion of TEG, HOPE Scholarship, and Dual Enrollment eligibility should only be sought on a measured and consistent basis with a full understanding of the expansion's financial impact on such programs.

Further, the Georgia Student Finance Commission estimates that there are approximately 108,000 unused HOPE credit hours and, if fully utilized by their recipients to pursue professional degrees, House Bill 1231 could impose a cost in excess of \$25,000,000 on HOPE funding.

I was proud to restore the promise made long ago to Georgia's students by fully funding the HOPE Scholarship in 2023. To maintain that promise, and the financial support upon which it stands, we must only consider expansion with a full understanding of the effect it will have on available funds.

For the foregoing reasons, **I VETO HOUSE BILL 1231.**

VETO 9

[House Bill 1479](#) would allow the Probate Court of Ware County to impose a technology fee of up to \$5.00 on civil action filing fees and outstanding fines.

At the request of the sponsor, **I VETO HOUSE BILL 1479.**

VETO 10

[Senate Bill 198](#) would require the Department of Community Health's State Health Benefit Plan ("SHBP") pharmacy benefits manager(s) ("PBMs") to reimburse independent pharmacies filling plan member prescriptions in an amount not less than the average reimbursement provided to chain retail pharmacies for the same drug. The bill would also require compliance certification, records production, and cooperation from PBM(s). While I support independent pharmacies and the need for PBM transparency, fiscal estimates show the proposals in this bill would cost the Department between \$11,000,000 and \$45,000,000 per plan year and the General Assembly failed to fund this initiative.

Despite the lack of funding for this bill, the State's Fiscal Year 2025 Budget, House Bill 916, directs the Department to use existing funds for an actuarial study on SHBP independent pharmacy prescription drug reimbursements and PBM outpatient pharmacy benefit practices. House Bill 916 also provides SHBP one-time funding for a \$3.00 per prescription dispensing fee for independent pharmacists and provides funds to increase the dispensing fee to \$11.50 for independent low-volume pharmacies filling Medicaid prescriptions. These budget items provide an appropriate, fiscally sound approach to supporting independent pharmacists this year while obtaining necessary information to aid the Department in evaluating current and future management of the State's pharmacy plan and the General Assembly in examining PBM practices in future legislative sessions.

For the foregoing reasons, **I VETO SENATE BILL 198.**

VETO 11

[Senate Bill 203](#) would require the Technical College System of Georgia to offer tuition-free commercial driver's license ("CDL") training programs to veterans, subject to appropriations by the General Assembly. This proposal was previously included in House Bill 249, which I vetoed on the grounds that the General Assembly failed to fund the initiative. The General Assembly also failed to fund Senate Bill 203 this year. I remain in steadfast support of our veterans and would encourage those wishing to pursue CDL training to seek out currently funded resources to cover tuition costs such as the Hope Career Grant.

For the foregoing reasons, **I VETO SENATE BILL 203.**

VETO 12

[Senate Bill 368](#) would prohibit foreign nationals from making political contributions, which is already prohibited by federal law, and impose additional state-level registration requirements on agents of foreign principals, some of which were unintended by the bill's sponsor.

At the request of the sponsor, **I VETO SENATE BILL 368.**



2024 Failed Legislation

| BILL # | BILL SPONSOR | BILL TITLE |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| HB 170 | Rep. Kasey Carpenter R-4 | Annual 5-Day Sales Tax Holiday on Firearms |
| HB 301 | Rep. Jason Ridley R-6 | Local Government: Immigration Sanctuary Penalties |
| HB 871 | Rep. Clay Pirkle R-169 | Expand Qualified Disabled Veterans Homestead Exemption |
| HB 905 | Rep. Matt Reeves R-99 | Zoning Procedures Law Revisions |
| HB 909 | Rep. Leesa Hagan R-156 | GBI: Restriction and Seal of First Offenders |
| HB 912 | Rep. Victor Anderson R-10 | Commercial Side-By-Sides Ad Valorem Exemption |
| HB 925 | Rep. Steven Sainz R-180 | Protecting Religious Assembly in States of Emergency (PRAISE) Act |
| HB 976 | Rep. John LaHood R-175 | Omnibus Elections |
| HB 977 | Rep. John LaHood R-175 | Omnibus Elections |
| HB 986 | Rep. Brad Thomas R-21 | Election Interference with a Deep Fake Criminal Offense |
| HB 988 | Rep. Brad Thomas R-21 | Counties Can Only Use State-Approved Drones |
| HB 1037 | Rep. Lauren Daniel R-117 | Georgia Commission on Maternal and Infant Health |
| HB 1044 | Rep. Victor Anderson R-10 | Public Works Projects: Increase Required Bid Threshold |
| HB 1052 | Rep. Chas Cannon R-172 | CUVA Expansion |
| HB 1099 | Rep. David Huddleston R-72 | Provide for the crime of criminal trespass; purple paint |
| HB 1180 | Rep. Kasey Carpenter R-4 | Income tax credit: film, gaming, or digital production |
| HB 1188 | Rep. Jodi Lott R-131 | Peace Officers Training Reimbursement |
| HB 1233 | Rep. Bill Hitchens R-161 | Fire departments: Authorize Taxes and Fees Collection |
| HB 1255 | Rep. Shelia Jones D-60 | The Terry Act |
| HB 1481 | Rep. Park Cannon D-58 | Atlanta Public Schools Homestead Exemption |
| HB 1443 | Rep. Betsy Holland D-54 | Atlanta Automated Transit Vehicle Lane Monitoring |
| HR 804 | Rep. Chuck Martin R-49 | Tax Anticipation Notice Date Change |
| HR 1021 | Rep. Ron Stephens R-164 | Senior Citizen Volunteer Homestead Exemption |
| HR 1042 | Rep. Rob Leverett R-123 | Joint Study Committee on Judicial System Compensation |
| SB 82 | Sen. Tonya Anderson D-43 | Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair (CROWN) Act |
| SB 349 | Sen. Chuck Hufstetler R-52 | Property Tax Revisions |
| SB 386 | Sen. Clint Dixon R-45 | Regulation and taxation of sports betting |
| SB 390 | Sen. Larry Walker, III R-20 | Certification of Librarians |
| SB 479 | Sen. Bo Hatchett R-50 | Superior Court Judges Compensation |
| SB 583 | Sen. Jason Esteves D-6 | Atlanta Automated Transit Vehicle Lane Monitoring |
| SR 82 | Sen. Carden Summers R-13 | Waive certain delinquent ad valorem property taxes |
| SR 579 | Sen. Bill Cowser R-46 | Sports betting constitutional amendment |
| SR 616 | Sen. Shawn Still R-48 | Victims of Human Trafficking Fund |

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**FULTON
COUNTY**



FULTON COUNTY

2024 STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Fulton County seeks passage of legislation that will address the priorities listed below.

PRIMARY POLICY PRIORITIES

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| OPERATIONAL FUNDING FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS CENTER | <p>Fulton County seeks continued partnership with GA DBHDD to address the behavioral health needs of our constituents. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annualized funding for the Fulton County Behavioral Health Crisis Center, which will open in the first quarter of calendar year 2024.• Resources to address unmet needs for youth behavioral health crisis services• Resources to address the mental health needs of justice-involved persons in Fulton County, including detainees in the Fulton County Jail with persistent mental illness. |
| JAIL REPLACEMENT FUNDING | <p>Fulton County seeks legislation that would enable funding sources to finance a replacement Jail facility such as a phased sales tax and fees.</p> |
| EQUITABLE PROPERTY TAX APPEALS PROCESS | <p>Fulton County supports property tax appeal reform that would ensure a more equitable tax burden for homeowners. Fulton County is collaborating with the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia and the Georgia Association of Assessing Officials, as well as the Georgia Institute of Technology School of Public Policy in developing appropriate policy solutions with careful review of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional income data from large commercial properties• Changes in the 299(c) freeze |

OTHER FULTON COUNTY POLICY PRIORITIES

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| EQUAL ACCESS TO JUDICIAL PERSONNEL BENEFITS | <p>Fulton County seeks the repeal of legislation that prohibits the equitable participation of Judges in the Fulton County and Georgia Judicial Retirement System programs with passage of <u>House Bill 643</u>.</p> |
| ELECTIONS | <p>Fulton County supports adjustments in the Election Day equipment allocation formula, recognizing that analysis of current data and voting trends demonstrate that more than half of Fulton County voters choose to participate in Early Voting.</p> |
| EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT JUSTICE SYSTEM | <p>Fulton County supports legislation that creates a more efficient and effective justice system and improves outcomes for victims, defendants and taxpayers including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional judgeships within the Fulton County Superior Court.• Fulton County supports justice system changes to improve efficiency, including an elected Chief Judge position.• Clarification of the purchasing powers of constitutional officers.• Expedited local legislation by the Georgia General Assembly to authorize Fulton County Superior Court judicial officers to handle felony criminal matters for the Fulton County Superior Court, by designation. |

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| DEFINITION OF ANTI-SEMITISM / ANTI-ISLAMIC HATRED | In 2023, Fulton County Board of Commissioners voted to support legislation that would provide a definition of Antisemitism for Georgia Hate Crimes laws. Fulton County opposes hatred in all forms and also supports the definition of Anti-Islamic hatred (Islamophobia). |
| HEALTHCARE ACCESS | <p>Fulton County supports policy changes that would increase access to healthcare and strengthen the network of healthcare providers within our community, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for updates to the Certificate of Need implementation to ensure that approved beds stay within the community for which they are approved. • Expansion of Medicaid. • Resources to address the healthcare desert within Fulton County. |
| HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS PROTECTIONS & TRANSPARENCY | Fulton County supports statutory changes that will provide for homeowner protections and transparency to include equitable best practice requirements for governance and financial management for homeowner associations. Specifically, homeowner associations must, under law, provide meeting minutes and all other legal documents to sworn successors. |
| EVICCTIONS PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS | <p>After an eviction case has been fully adjudicated in court, the Sheriff or Marshal will proceed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sheriff or Marshal will generally provide a 1 to 2-day notice of the date and time when they intend to evict the resident and supervise padlocking the property. • All occupants of the rental property will be asked to leave the property. • After the unit is vacated, no one may access the unit without the landlord's consent. <p>If personal possessions remain in the rental property after the Sheriff or Marshal have removed the resident: Residents will have 5 to 7 days from the date of padlocking to remove their possessions. The 5-day period applies if the possessions left in the rental home are worth less than \$500.</p> |
| 2023 CARRYOVER POLICY PRIORITIES | |
| SENIOR HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION SIMPLIFICATION | <p>Fulton County supports equitable homeowner property tax relief through administration of homestead exemptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request elimination of the two-year renewal requirement for the very low income senior homestead exemption. • Equitable administration of floating homestead exemptions and senior homestead exemptions throughout Fulton County. |
| MARTA BOARD APPOINTMENT PARITY | Fulton County seeks to reestablish parity with other MARTA signatory agencies in making direct appointments to the MARTA Board. |
| NATIONAL USE OF FORCE DATA COLLECTION PARTICIPATION | Fulton County requests the General Assembly require law enforcement agencies in Georgia to participate in the FBI's Use-of-Force Data Collection program and enact laws to establish decertification registries and practices or enhance existing ones. |
| <u>Senate Bill 19</u> | Monitor and report on passage of the passage of legislation limiting Clerk of Superior Court Passport Fees |
| <u>Senate Bill 82</u> | Monitor and report on passage of the "Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair" (CROWN) Act |