

Legislators worked long into the evening with tempers flaring and papers flying in both chambers, marking the end of the 40th day of the 2014 Legislative Session. The medical marijuana, Autism insurance coverage, and foster care reform bills all failed to pass this year due to lack of compromise amongst legislative chambers, but an amended gun bill made it out alive. Below you will find the most up-to-date analysis of bills that made it through the legislative process this year and have been sent to the Governor for signing. The Governor will have 40 days from the end of the session to sign or veto these bills, determining which will be made into Georgia law.

FY15 Budget: The supplemental rebate line item that our team worked so hard to get taken out of the Budget in the previous session reappeared in the 2015 House version of the Budget in the amount of \$3,749,726. After successful efforts by our team to educate key Senators on this important issue, the Senate passed their own version of the 2015 Budget, decreasing this line item to \$1,922,846. A Conference Committee was created to iron out this disagreement, among many others, thus releasing and passing the official FY15 Budget. The supplemental rebate line item was completely deleted in the final version and has been sent to the Governor for his signature. We would like to call this a win for the Georgia Bio team, as our efforts to get this item removed from the Budget were extremely successful. The Senate had also allocated \$10 million dollars to the Invest Georgia fund in their version of the budget, which was unfortunately removed in Conference Committee. We will continue educating key legislators on this issue during the interim and hope to see this addition in the FY16 budget next year.

Study Committee: Senator Renee Unterman plans to hold a subcommittee study on biosimilars during the 2014 summer. While no official information has been released, we have been assured that Georgia Bio members will be invited to participate in the discussion and education on biosimilars. This will be a great opportunity for members to be involved in the educational process and will ultimately help the Georgia Bio team educate the General Assembly prior the release of any bio-related legislation in the next session.

Legislation sent to the Governor:

Bill	Analysis
HB809	<p>This bill adds a new article to Title 10 relating to selling and other trade practices creating a cause of action for bad faith assertions of patent infringement. In determining whether or not a bad faith assertion of patent infringement has been made, a court may consider specific factors enumerated in the bill as well as any other factor the court finds relevant. Relief from this cause of action may include equitable injunction, general and exemplary damages, restitution, punitive damages, expenses of litigation including reasonable attorney’s fees, and other relief the court deems just equitable.</p> <p>**Federal regulation of biological products does not apply to this article</p>
SR415	<p>This legislation proposes an amendment to the Georgia Constitution, which would prohibit the General Assembly from raising the state income tax above the current rate of 6%. It is intended to keep Georgia competitive and aims to bring more business into the state.</p>
HR1038	<p>This legislation proposes to encourage the Georgia Department of Education, the Technical College System of Georgia, the University System of Georgia, the Governor's Office of Workforce Development, the Department of Community</p>

	<p>Affairs, and the private sector to work together and collaborate to assist in the return of manufacturing to the United States. These groups are key in continuing to develop and train our current and future workforce to meet the challenges of an ever-changing manufacturing environment. Ultimately, this collaboration and continued innovation will increase the economic stability of our state and strengthen the global economy.</p>
<p>HB943</p>	<p>This legislation is to be known as the Georgia Health Care Freedom Act and the Cancer Treatment Fairness Act.</p> <p>Part 1 (A version of the original HB 707): This legislation prohibits state and local governments from advocating for the expansion of Medicaid coverage in Georgia. However, this does not prohibit public employees or officers from advocating for the expansion on personal time, as part of such persons official duties, or from providing bona fide education instruction about the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in institutions of higher learning. The Attorney General will enforce this prohibition.</p> <p>This legislation also prohibits state and local governments from establishing or operating a health care exchange or navigator program. Additionally, state and local governments are prohibited from applying for, accepting, or expending any money to operate an exchange. However, this prohibition does not apply to any navigator-related grant in effect on this bills effective date.</p> <p>Part 2: Part II of this bill relates to the Cancer Treatment Fairness Act that requires health insurance policies that provide coverage for intravenously administered chemotherapy to provide at least the same level of coverage for orally administered chemotherapy. An insurer that limits the total amount paid by an insured through all cost sharing requirements to no more than \$200 per filled prescription.</p>
<p>HB990</p>	<p>This bill prohibits the Department of Community Health, the Board of Community Health, or any other representative of the state from expanding Georgia Medicaid eligibility by increasing the income threshold without prior legislative approval. Such legislative approval may only be by Act of the General Assembly or through the adoption of a joint resolution of the General Assembly. It does not apply to any increase in the federal poverty level that may result from a cost-of-living increase.</p>
<p>HB511</p>	<p>This bill requires the Department of Community Health to conduct a pilot program on obesity that provides coverage of bariatric surgery for selected members as well as requiring DCH to submit an annual report on the results of the pilot program.</p> <p>In 2011, the State Health Benefit Plan ceased to offer coverage for bariatric surgery. This bill requires DCH to conduct a two-year pilot program on coverage for the treatment of obesity and related conditions under the SHBP, including coverage of medically necessary bariatric procedures for participants chosen for the program.</p> <p>DCH is to provide a final report by December 15 of the last year of the pilot program to the chairpersons of House and Senate Committees on Health and Human Services and the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations. This report is to include information on reductions in the body mass indexes of participants, the average costs of procedures conducted under the program, and the total cost of each participant’s annual health care costs prior to bariatric surgery and for three years after the surgical</p>

	<p>procedure, among other information.</p>
<p><u>HB310</u></p>	<p>This bill revises the dates for primaries, elections, runoff elections, as well as revises the times for qualifying. It was sent and signed by the Governor.</p> <p>A. Qualifying for the General Primary will be held beginning at 9am on Monday of the 11th week prior to the General Primary and ending at 12:00 Noon on the Friday immediately following. In 2014, these dates will be Marc 3-7, 2014.</p> <p>B. The General Primary will be held on the 24th week preceding the November General Election. In 2014, that date will be May 20, 2014.</p> <p>C. The General Primary Runoff will be held on the Tuesday of the 9th week following the General Primary. In 2014, that date will be July 22, 2014.</p> <p>D. The General Election will be held on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November. In 2014, that date is November 4, 2014.</p> <p>E. The General Election Runoff for federal offices will be held on the Tuesday of the 9th week following the General Election. For the 2014 elections, that date is January 6, 2015.</p> <p>F. The General Election Runoff for state and county offices will be held on the 28th day following the General Election. For the 2014 elections, that date is December 2, 2014.</p>
<p><u>SR 981</u></p>	<p>This legislation creates the Joint Study Committee on Violence Against Health Care Workers and the Joint Study Committee on the Prescription of Medical Cannabis for Serious Medical Conditions.</p> <p>Both committees will stand abolished on December 2, 2014.</p>

Notes