

It was another busy week down at the Georgia State Capitol, with legislators and lobbyists working hard to push bills through the system despite the legislature only being in session for three days this week. Here are some additional highlights from this week in the General Assembly:

**Senate Health and Human Services Committee – Pharmacy Subcommittee:** Sen. Ben Watson (R-Savannah) convened the Pharmacy Subcommittee of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee this week to consider the biosimilar substitution bill, SB 51 (Dr. Dean Burke, R-Bainbridge). Sen. Burke presented a substitute to his bill and articulated the growing interest and success of biological medicines and the release this year by the FDA of interchangeable biological products. The bill defines these terms and permits substitution of the bio similar products by pharmacists with appropriate labeling and the notification to the prescribing physician that a substitution has occurred. The substitute version of the bill specifies that the notice occur within 48 hours of dispensing a prescription, rather than in a “reasonable” time.

Alan Hayes testified for the American Association of Health Plans (AHIP) that it looked forward to wider use of biosimilar products but pointed out that FDA approval had not yet occurred. AHIP opposes the requirement that pharmacists notify prescribing physicians of the substitution, pointing out that this is not required when less expensive generic drugs are substituted for brand name ones. The Arthritis Association of Georgia and the Medical Association of Georgia testified in support of the bill, as written with the physician notice included. Two rheumatoid arthritis patients movingly testified as to the efficacy of biologic drugs for their otherwise crippling conditions and argued that they strongly preferred that their treating physicians be notified of any bio similar substitution. Sen. William Ligon, Jr. (R-Brunswick) moved passage of the substitute; Dr. Burke seconded the motion and the bill carried and moves on to the full Health and Human Services Committee.

**Senate Judiciary Non-Civil Committee:** Sen. Jesse Stone (R-Waynesboro) and his Committee held a hearing on SB 8 and SR 7, the proposals to create the Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund and the Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund Commission. Sen. Renee Unterman (R-Buford) a long-time champion for child victims who have been sexually exploited has authored these proposals. She and Rep. Andy Welch (R-McDonough and a lawyer) presented to the Committee, describing the aspects of both proposals. They described the numbers of children who are trafficked for sex and/or labor as 800,000 annually. Georgia has 100 girls trafficked nightly; Atlanta has one of the highest numbers of children who are exploited. They described how 1.6 million children run away annually. It takes 10-12 months to treat a child who has victimized at a cost of \$6,000.00 per month for rehabilitation services to remove addictions and fear from the child and offer some sort of security. In an earlier version of the bill, there was language around "conclusive presumption" which has been removed. Sen. Unterman essentially stated that such language was eliminated to help move the bill along. Sen. Hunter Hill (R-Atlanta) noted that he would like for Georgia to take a stronger approach to do more with the perpetrators, perhaps "crushing" those individuals. The Committee also asked about similar laws in the State,

including the revenue generating aspects (assessing fees on adult entertainment businesses). Texas and Utah have passed similar laws and both have seen state court challenges. Chuck Spahos, Executive Director of the Georgia Prosecuting Attorneys Council, spoke in favor of the legislation, noting that they had worked on the affirmative defense language and stated it was a good bill.

**House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee:** The House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee met this week, chaired by Rep. Rich Golick (R–Smyrna). Although it was only a hearing, the Chairman allotted two hours for Rep. Allen Peake (R–Macon) to introduce HB 1, also known as "Haleigh's Hope Act." Essentially, this legislation would provide for the regulated use of medical cannabis to treat certain medical conditions, including seizure disorders, Autism, cancer, and PTSD, to name a few. The bill would only allow for the use of non-smoking medical cannabis.

Rep. Peake introduced the Committee substitute and gave a brief presentation. He highlighted that the bill would provide immunity to individuals who have legally obtained the medicine by decriminalizing possession of cannabis oil that contains less than 5% THC (3% for individuals under the age of 18), and holds a minimum of 1:1 CBD-THC ratio. Rep. Peake went on to address a few concerns he felt the Committee had, starting with the "slippery slope" assumption held by critics of the bill. He stated that the Governor has asserted that this bill will not lead to the legalization of the recreational use of marijuana, as that is not the bill's intent nor would the Governor allow such legislation to pass. Additionally, he stated that the 5% THC/CBD limit that is found in the cannabis oil is very different than what people are obtaining on the streets to smoke and get high. The cannabis oil in HB 1 is diluted with either olive oil or coconut oil and contains a minimum of 1:1 CBD-THC ratio, ultimately causing the THC to be canceled out by the CBD. He went on to address a concern of law enforcement officials, who have stated that this law would be too difficult to enforce. Rep. Peake assured the committee that the bottle of cannabis oil will be labeled to show the amount of THC and CBD; that patients obtaining this oil would have to register with the Department of Public Health and obtain a medical marijuana registration card; and that resources would be allocated through the budget to allow GBI to test the product should law enforcement officers wish to do so. He addressed a final concern surrounding the claim that there is no scientific evidence or enough clinical trials to prove medical efficacy by stating that 17 Georgia families have become medical refugees by moving to Colorado/California to 'save' their kids with seizure disorders. Through anecdotal evidence, every child who has been given this oil has reduced their seizures significantly. He finished his presentation by stating that four Georgia children have died since March 2014 when this bill failed to pass through the legislature.

Chairman Golick posed the first question, asking Rep. Peake to highlight the differences between the legislation from the 2014 session and the legislation being proposed this year. Rep. Peake indicated that the bill from last year had a .8% THC level and was limited to seizure disorders. After looking at additional states that have passed similar legislation for reference and speaking with medical marijuana experts throughout the nation, he decided that the 5% THC level is what is appropriate to treat specific disorders without causing psychotropic reactions.

Rep. Ed Setzler (R–Acworth) expressed concern surrounding the interchangeability of the two terms medical cannabis and medical cannabis oil. He recommended that the legislation omit the

term medical cannabis to clarify that the scope of the bill is strictly limited to cannabis oil. Rep. Peake responded by saying that he doesn't support smoking of any sort of cannabis, but that there are many different ways in which this cannabis oil can be consumed. He doesn't want to limit what the best application is for patients or what the best model for the State would be.

Danny Porter of the Gwinnett County District Attorney's office gave testimony against the bill, stating that while they were supportive of the language in the bill last year; his group cannot support the bill in its current form with the language revisions. Charles "Chuck" Spahos, Executive Director of the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia also spoke against the bill in its current form. He gave a few recommendations, including defining "oil" in line 53, clarifying who will be diagnosing the patients (line 32), and reconsidering the 5% and 3% levels.

Frank Rotondo, Executive Director of the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police spoke next. He stated that due to the changes of the potency levels in the bill, his organization will not support legislation. Mr. Rotondo was concerned about the legislation causing a slippery slope to the legalization of recreational marijuana. Chairman Golick said that this argument is not credible with the Committee and requested that all further testimony be given with scientific standpoints. Terry Norris, Executive Director of the Sherriff's Association, was the final speaker. He stated that for the record, the Sherriff's are opposed to the legalization of marijuana for recreational purposes. Last year, they did not oppose the bill but the substitution to HB 1, which vastly expands the treatment, will not be supported. He did say, however, that the Association would not fight the legislation.

Rep. Peake gave final comments on the legislation. Chairman Golick closed the meeting, stating that sometimes the moral imperative of an issue outweighs the possibility of abuse. The bill will be taken up in Committee again in the near future, after Committee members have been able to conduct some further research on the subject.

**Senate Rules Committee:** The Senate Rules Committee met to hear Rep. Mike Dudgeon (R-Johns Creek) present HB 57, the "Solar Power Free-Market Financing Act" to the Senate. This bill would allow residents and businesses to finance solar powered equipment, while also capping the amount of financed equipment allowed. Rep. Dudgeon highlighted the savings people will make by not being forced to pay Georgia Power excessive amounts of money. The main concerns of the Committee were regarding capping the amount of power received through solar powered devices. Rep. Dudgeon assured the Committee that this legislation will not lead to people selling their own solar power and any excess power will go back to Georgia Power or EMCs.

The Chairman said HB 57 will be held for another day since there are still a number of questions and concerns from committee members. They tabled the bill and then adjourned.

**HB 237:** Rep. Bruce Williamson (R-Monroe) seeks to amend O.C.G.A. §48-7-40.30 and the imposition, rate and computation of and exemptions from State income tax so as to extend Georgia's angel investor tax credit. Current law permits the qualified investments through 2015 and this change would allow those to be made in years 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 with a tax

credit of 35 percent of the amount invested against the tax imposed. There are limits posed for qualified investors or pass-through entities for such investments in the proposal (not to exceed \$5 million in each such year).

The General Assembly is in recess until Monday, February 9<sup>th</sup> for the 12<sup>th</sup> legislative day. The House will convene at 10:00 and the Senate at 11:00.

Bill	Summary	Sponsor	Committees	Status	Analysis
<b>HB1</b>	A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 34 of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to physicians, acupuncture, physician assistants, cancer and glaucoma treatment, respiratory care, clinical perfusionists, and orthotics and prosthetics practice, so as to change certain provisions relating to the use of marijuana for treatment of cancer and glaucoma; to provide for regulated medicinal use of cannabis and derivatives thereof to treat certain conditions; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.	(1) Peake, Allen 141st	HC: Judiciary Non-Civil	Jan/28/2015 - House Second Readers	Rep. Allen Peake (R – Macon) proposes an amendment to O.C.G.A. Chapter 34-43 to encourage the use of medical marijuana for specified treatment conditions, his “Haleigh’s Hope Act” for 2015. The discussion around this proposal has been to add epilepsy to the set of conditions, such as glaucoma and cancer, for which medical marijuana in liquid, pill or injection form may be used. The initial version of the bill is stated in the form of legislative intent to permit use of cannabis of controlled strength to qualified patients. The bill prohibits recreational use of cannabis. The bill would provide immunity to individuals who have legally obtained the medicine by decriminalizing possession of cannabis oil that contains less than 5% THC (3% for individuals under the age of 18), and holds a minimum of 1:1 CBD-THC ratio. Additionally, patients obtaining this oil would

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					<p>have to register with the Department of Public Health and obtain a medical marijuana registration card; and that resources would be allocated through the budget to allow GBI to test the product should law enforcement officers wish to do so.</p>
<p><b>HB8</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 4 of Title 34 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to minimum wage, so as to provide for a substantive and comprehensive reform of provisions regarding the minimum wage law; to provide for legislative findings; to provide for an increase in the minimum wage; to provide for annual minimum wage increases to match the rising cost of living; to provide a credit toward the minimum wage for employers of tipped workers; to eliminate various eligibility exemptions from the minimum wage; to provide for related matters; to provide an effective date; to</p>	<p>(1) Brooks, Tyrone 55th</p>	<p>HC:</p>	<p>Jan/14/2015 - House Second Readers</p>	<p>HB 8 – Rep. Tyrone Brooks (D-Atlanta) proposed this initiative to amend O.C.G.A. § 34-4-3 to provide for "substantive and comprehensive reform" of the provisions regarding the minimum wage law. Among the proposals would include the requirement that employers pay all covered employees a minimum wage of not less than \$6.20 per hour for each hour worked (current law is \$5.15 per hour). There is also a "tip credit" for employers of employees who meet the eligibility requirements under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. Section 203(t), of up to 50 percent of the minimum wage. It also has exceptions where this chapter applies, like current law, and includes one for "any individual who is employed by a nonprofit child-caring institution or long-term</p>

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	<p>repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>				<p>care facility serving children or mentally disabled adults who are enrolled in such institution and reside in residential facilities of the institution, if such employee resides in such facilities, receives without cost board and lodging from such institution, and is compensated on a cash basis at an annual rate of not less than \$15,000.00 (current law places this amount at \$10,000.00).</p>
<p><b>HB9</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 1 of Title 34 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general provisions relative to labor and industrial relations, so as to provide that it shall be unlawful for any employer to include on an application for employment a question inquiring whether the applicant has ever been arrested for, charged with, or convicted of any crime; to provide for exceptions; to provide that such information may be sought during the first interview with the applicant; to provide that the</p>	<p>(1) Brooks, Tyrone 55th</p>	<p>HC:</p>	<p>Jan/14/2015 - House Second Readers</p>	<p>HB 9 – Rep. Tyrone Brooks (D-Atlanta) authored this initiative adding a new Code Section at O.C.G.A. § 34-1-8, regarding labor and industrial relations, so that it will be unlawful for any employer on an application for employment to question an applicant inquiring whether he or she has ever been arrested for, charged with, or convicted of any crime (except for law enforcement agency positions or other positions related to law enforcement agencies). Further, there are some additional exceptions including whether a federal or state law or regulation creates a mandatory or presumptive disqualification from employment based upon a</p>

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	<p>criminal history records of an applicant may be sought after the first interview with the applicant; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>				<p>person's conviction of one or more specified criminal offenses then the employer may include such a question or otherwise inquire if the applicant has been convicted of any such offenses; if a standard fidelity bond or an equivalent bond is required for the position and that person's conviction of one or more specified criminal offenses would disqualify the applicant from obtaining such bond then the employer may inquire; an employer may also ask if an applicant for information about his or her criminal convictions at the first interview or thereafter, in accordance with all applicable State and federal laws; and an employer may seek to obtain the criminal history records of any applicant per O.C.G.A. § 35-3-34 after the first interview of such applicant is conducted.</p>
<p><b>HB10</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Article 11 of Chapter 6 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to miscellaneous provisions of the uniform rules of the</p>	<p>(1) Mayo, Rahn 84th</p>	<p>HC:</p>	<p>Jan/15/2015 - House Hopper</p>	<p>Rep. Rahn Mayo (D-Decatur) offered this bill, which proposes to revise O.C.G.A § 40-6-241 relating to the exercise of due care by drivers while operating a motor vehicle by adding subsection (a) to provide that only hands-free telephone calls shall</p>

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	road, so as to provide that only hands-free telephone calls shall be conducted by a driver of a motor vehicle; to provide for exceptions; to provide for penalties; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.				be conducted by a driver of a motor vehicle unless (d) a person is calling during an emergency situation.
<b>HB34</b>	A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to health, so as to enact the "Georgia Right to Try Act"; to provide for investigational drugs, biological products, and devices for patients with advanced illnesses; to provide for a short title; to provide for legislative findings; to provide for definitions; to provide for eligibility criteria; to provide for written informed consent; to allow manufacturers to make such drugs available; to provide that health benefit coverage is not mandatory; to prohibit sanctions against a physician's license; to prohibit blocking access; to	(1) Dudgeon, Mike 25th	HC:	Jan/15/2015 - House Hopper	Rep. Mike Dudgeon (R-Johns Creek) authored this proposal which is titled the "Georgia Right to Try Act." It would amend Title 31 to add a new chapter (50) addressing investigational drugs, biological products, and devices for patients with advanced illnesses should be made available despite prior approval from the FDA. Written informed consent shall be required and should include a description of the product and treatments for the advanced illness which the patient suffers, as well as a description of the potential best and worst outcomes of using the investigational drug, biological product, or device and a realistic description of the most likely outcome, among others. Additionally, the Georgia Composite Medical Board shall not revoke, suspend, sanction, fail to renew, or take any

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	provide for statutory construction; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.				action against a physician's license solely based on such physician's recommendation, prescription, or treatment of an eligible patient with an investigational drug, biological product, or device (O.C.G.A. § 31-50-8)
<b>HB47</b>	A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Code Section 26-4-80 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to dispensing prescription drugs, so as to authorize certain refills of topical ophthalmic products under certain conditions; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.	(1) Cooper, Sharon 43rd	HC:	Jan/14/2015 - House First Readers	<p>Rep. Sharon Cooper (R-Marietta) authored this proposal in O.C.G.A. § 26-4-80(f) relating to the dispensing of prescription drugs. It would authorize certain refills of topical ophthalmic products to prevent "unintended interruptions in drug therapy." Further, it states:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A pharmacist shall be authorized, without obtaining subsequent authorization from the practitioner or obtaining a new prescription from the practitioner, to permit refills at 70 percent of the predicted days of use; and</li> <li>2. A physician shall be permitted to authorize refills earlier than 70 percent of the predicted days of use for patients</li> </ol>

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					<p>who have continual difficulty with inadvertent wastage.</p> <p>The change, though, would "apply to refills purchased through retail pharmacies and mail order sources."</p>
<b>HB92</b>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 1 of Title 34 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general provisions relative to labor and industrial relations, so as to allow employees to use sick leave for the care of immediate family members; to provide for definitions; to provide for conditions to take leave; to provide that retaliatory actions are unlawful; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>	<p>(1) Benton, Tommy 31st</p>	<p>HC: Industry and Labor</p>	<p>Jan/28/2015 - House Second Readers</p>	<p>Rep. Tommy Benton (R – Jefferson) has proposed allowing employees, at O.C.G.A. § 34-1-8, to use sick leave for the care of immediate family members. An immediate family member is defined as an employee's child, spouse, grandchild, grandparent, or parent or any dependents as shown in the employee's most recent tax return. Sick leave time must be earned and any employee who uses sick leave shall comply with the terms of the employer's sick leave policy.</p>
<b>HB105</b>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Code Section 31-12-3.2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to meningococcal</p>	<p>(1) Wilkinson, Joe 52nd</p>	<p>HC: Health &amp; Human Services</p>	<p>Jan/29/2015 - House Second Readers</p>	<p>Rep. Joe Wilkinson (R-Atlanta) introduced this proposed change in O.C.G.A. § 31-12-3.2(b) concerning meningococcal disease and those vaccinations and</p>

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	<p>disease vaccinations and disclosures, so as to revise provisions regarding vaccination against meningococcal disease of college students; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>				<p>disclosures. It would revise what is required to be done with respect to college students. The proposal would require that any vaccination and disclosure requirements follow recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and would further require that any newly admitted students who are 18 and older residing in campus housing be required to sign a document provided by the postsecondary educational institution stating that he or she has received a vaccination against meningococcal disease not more than five years prior to admittance to that institution or has reviewed information provided about the disease.</p>
<p><b>HB106</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Title 32 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to highways, bridges, and ferries, so as to revise what constitutes part of the state highway system; to provide for the appropriation of funds to the Department of Transportation; to</p>	<p>(1) Roberts, Jay 155th</p>	<p>HC: Transportation</p>	<p>Jan/29/2015 - House Second Readers</p>	<p>Rep. Jay Roberts (R-Ocilla) offered this Title 32 proposal concerning laws governing Georgia's highways, bridges and ferries. It would specifically address the State's highway system and those requirements – striking in O.C.G.A. § 32-4-20(5), which is a current requirement to be considered, that a public road "serves as part of a programmed road</p>

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	<p>amend Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to motor vehicles and traffic, so as to provide for submission of electronic accident reports by law enforcement agencies; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>				<p>improvement project plan in which the department will utilize state or federal funds for the acquisition of rights of way." Other revisions include addressing O.C.G.A. § 32-5-2, relating to the appropriation of funds to the Department of Transportation so that it would now read: "All federal funds received by the state treasurer under Code Section 32-5-1 are continually appropriated to the department for the purpose specified in the grants of such funds except as such funds may be directed by the federal government to the State Road and Tollway Authority."</p>
<p><b>HB117</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 8 of Title 34 of the O.C.G.A., relating to employment security, so as to change certain provisions relating to employment security; to modify the definition of the term "most recent employer"; to amend Code Section 50-36-1 of the O.C.G.A., relating to requirements, procedures, and</p>	<p>(1) Hamilton, Mark 24th</p>	<p>HC: Industry and Labor</p>	<p>Jan/29/2015 - House Second Readers</p>	<p>Rep. Mark Hamilton (R-Cumming) offered this initiative relating to "employment security." It adds language to current law at O.C.G.A. § 34-8-43 concerning the most recent employer (the last employer for whom an individual worked in claiming benefits with years that begin on or after July 1, 2015). It further proposes deleting and adding new language at O.C.G.A. § 34-8-157 concerning the charging of regular benefits paid</p>

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	<p>conditions for verification of lawful presence within the United States, exceptions, regulations, and criminal and other penalties for violations, so as to provide a method for such verification of lawful presence that may be utilized in conjunction with the electronic filing of an application for unemployment insurance with the Department of Labor; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>				<p>against experience rating account.</p>
<p><b>HB119</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Code Section 24-12-21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to disclosure of AIDS confidential information, so as to change provisions relating to disclosure of such information under certain circumstances; to provide for procedure; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting</p>	<p>(1) Reeves, Bert 34th</p>	<p>HC: Judiciary</p>	<p>Jan/29/2015 - House Second Readers</p>	<p>Rep. Bert Reeves (R-Marietta) introduced this amendment to O.C.G.A. § 24-12-21 regarding the disclosure of AIDS confidential information in Georgia's Evidence Code. It would add that AIDS confidential information shall be disclosed as medical information, per O.C.G.A. § 24-12-1, or pursuant to any other law which either authorizes or requires such disclosure of medical information if the person identified in the information: "is suspected</p>

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	<p>laws; and for other purposes.</p>				<p>by being mentally ill and is the subject of an order issued pursuant to Code Section 37-3-41 when the court issuing such order finds in an in camera hearing by clear and convincing evidence a compelling need for the information which cannot be accommodated by other means. In assessing compelling need, the court shall weigh the public health, safety, or welfare needs or any other public or private need for the disclosure against the privacy interest of the person identified by the information and the public interest which may be disserved by disclosures which may deter voluntary HIV tests. If the court determines that disclosure of that information is authorized under this subparagraph, the court shall order that disclosure and impose appropriate safeguards against any unauthorized disclosure. The records of that hearing otherwise shall be under seal."</p>
<p><b>HB138</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 1 of Title 34 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general provisions regarding labor and</p>	<p>(1) Dawkins-Haigler, Dec 91st</p>	<p>HC: Industry and Labor</p>	<p>Jan/29/2015 - House First Readers</p>	<p>Rep. Dee Dawkins-Haigler (D-Lithonia) introduced this proposal to create the "Social Media Privacy Protection Act" by adding language to create a new Code Section at O.C.G.A. § 34-1-8. It</p>

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	<p>industrial relations, so as to prohibit employers from requesting username, password, or other means of accessing an account or service for the purpose of accessing personal social media through an electronic communications device of employees or prospective employees with certain exceptions; to provide for penalties; to provide a short title; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>				<p>would prohibit employers from requesting of employees or prospective employees their username, password, or other means of accessing an account or service for the purpose of accessing personal social media through an electronic communications device. There are some exceptions outlined and would protect certain employer's rights (e.g., when relevant to an investigation of allegations of an employee's misconduct or violations of laws/regulations or when the employer's computer or information systems were used).</p>
<p><b>HB141</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 8 of Title 34 of the O.C.G.A., relating to employment security, so as to provide that the Commissioner of Labor may establish a self-employment assistance program; to change certain provisions relating to withdrawals from the Unemployment Trust Fund for expenditures under the "Employment Security Law"; to change certain provisions relating to</p>	<p>(1) Fludd, Virgil 64th</p>	<p>HC: Industry and Labor</p>	<p>Jan/29/2015 - House First Readers</p>	<p>Rep. Virgil Fludd (D-Tyrone) introduced this legislation which would create a new Article II in Chapter 8 of Title 34, relating to employment security. The legislation intends to help individuals who are trying to establish a new business or become self-employed. It would allow the Commissioner of Labor to establish a self-employment assistance program and establish the maximum allowable amount of weekly self-employment assistance. Further, it outlines the determination of eligibility and amount</p>

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	<p>benefits to be paid pursuant to rules and regulations prescribed by the Commissioner; to change certain provisions relating to the procedure for judicial review of final decisions of the Board of Review of the Department of Labor; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>				<p>which could be paid (it would allow the weekly amount of self-employment assistance allowance payable to an individual to be equal to the weekly benefit amount for regular benefits under O.C.G.A. § 34-8-193).</p>
<p><b>HB145</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Article 10 of Chapter 2 of Title 20, Title 36, and Part 1 of Article 3 of Chapter 5 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to contracts and purchases by public schools, local government, and general authority, duties, and procedure relative to government purchasing, respectively, so as to modify provisions relating to contractual and purchasing preferences for Georgia service providers and certain supplies, materials, equipment, and</p>	<p>(1) Beverly, James 143rd</p>	<p>HC: Agriculture &amp; Consumer Affairs</p>	<p>Jan/29/2015 - House First Readers</p>	<p>Rep. James Beverly (D-Macon) authored this legislation referred to as the "Georgia Jobs Matter Act" to amend O.C.G.A. § 20-2-500 relating to promulgation of rules and regulations by the State Board of Education for contracts and purchases over \$100. The bill adds language to require all requests for competitive bids issued by local schools or school districts, local government, any state, department, agency, or commission, and any state or local authority to be accompanied by an employment impact statement, which would include (A) the number of jobs expected to be created or retained in the state that might otherwise be lost if the contract is awarded to another</p>

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	<p>agricultural products grown, manufactured, or produced in this state; to provide for a short title; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date and applicability; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>				<p>contractor; (B) The number of jobs expected to be created or retained in the state that might otherwise be lost if the contract is awarded to another contractor by the subcontractors expected to be used by the contractor in the performance of the contract; and (C) A guarantee from the contractor that, as a condition of such contract, the jobs created or retained in this state shall not be moved outside of this state during the duration of the contract. Additionally, O.C.G.A. § 50-5-62 shall be revised to require that the Department of Administrative Services, in awarding all contracts, shall give preference to (1) sellers of products produced, grown, or manufactured in Georgia; (2) sellers who maintain a business located in Georgia; (3) providers of services who are located in the state to promise as a condition of any such contract to continue to remain in the state for the duration of the contract; (4) and any business that promises to employ residents of Georgia for the purposes of satisfying the terms of the contract to promise to continue such employment throughout</p>

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					the duration of the contract.
<b>HB155</b>	A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 12 of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the control of hazardous conditions, preventable diseases, and metabolic disorders, so as to require registration with the vaccination registry by persons who administer vaccines and by pharmacies, agencies, or businesses employing persons who administer vaccines; to amend Article 2 of Chapter 34 of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to medical practice, so as to provide that certain pharmacists and nurses who enter into an influenza vaccine protocol agreement with a physician shall register with the vaccination registry; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.	(1) Randall, Nikki 142nd	HC: Health & Human Services	Jan/29/2015 - House First Readers	Rep. Nikki T. Randall (D – Macon) authored this legislation to revise subsection (b) of O.C.G.A. § 31-12-3.1 by adding two new subsections. The first, (a.1), would require any person and every pharmacy, agency, or business employing a person who administers vaccines licensed by the FDA to register with the vaccination registry. Failure to register may result in prohibition of a person, pharmacy, agency or business to administer vaccines.

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<p><b>HB195</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 4 of Title 26 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to pharmacists and pharmacies, so as to provide for substitutions of interchangeable biological products; to define certain terms; to provide for requirements and limitations; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>	<p>(1) Cooper, Sharon 43rd</p>	<p>HC: Health &amp; Human Services</p>	<p>Feb/04/2015 - House Second Readers</p>	<p>Rep. Sharon Cooper (R–Marietta) brings the House version of the biosimilar drug substitution bill in O.C.G.A. § 26-4-5. Similar to SB 51, this version defines biological products and interchangeable biological product and permits the substitution by a dispensing pharmacist of the interchangeable product for the biological one unless a physician instructs that no substitution be made. The bill requires labeling the substituted product as such and notification to the prescribing physician that the substitution has occurred. Unlike the Senate bill, this version requires this <i>notice to occur within 48 hours</i> of the dispensing of the product. The bio similar drug with the lowest retail price is required to be substituted.</p>
<p><b>HB211</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 13 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to controlled substances, so as to change certain provisions relating to Schedules I, III, and IV controlled substances; to change</p>	<p>(1) Broadrick, Bruce 4th</p>	<p>HC: Judiciary Non-Civil</p>	<p>Feb/04/2015 - House First Readers</p>	<p>Rep. Bruce Broadrick (R-Dalton) proposes to amend Chapter 13 of Title 16 relating to controlled substances. This bill changes provisions relating to Schedules I, III, and IV controlled substances. This is the dangerous drug update. Additionally, under O.C.G.A. § 16-13-73, language has been</p>

Bill	Summary	Sponsor	Committees	Status	Analysis
	<p>certain provisions relating to the definition of "dangerous drug"; to revise provisions relating to labeling prescription containers of dangerous drugs; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>				<p>amended to require the name of the 'practitioner' instead of 'physician' to appear on the container of the prescribing drug from the pharmacy.</p>
<p><b>HB237</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Article 2 of Chapter 7 of Title 48 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the imposition, rate, and computation of and exemptions from state income tax, so as to extend the angel investor tax credit; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>	<p>(1) Williamson, Bruce 115th</p>	<p>HC:</p>	<p>Feb/04/2015 - House Hopper</p>	<p>Rep. Bruce Williamson (R-Monroe) seeks to amend O.C.G.A. §48-7-40.30 and the imposition, rate and computation of and exemptions from State income tax so as to extend Georgia's angel investor tax credit. Current law permits the qualified investments through 2015 and this change would allow those to be made in years 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 with a tax credit of 35 percent of the amount invested against the tax imposed. There are limits posed for qualified investors or pass-through entities for such investments in the proposal (not to exceed \$5 million in each such year).</p>
<p><b>HR121</b></p>	<p>A RESOLUTION recognizing and commending the American Heart Association's Go Red</p>	<p>(1) Dempsey, Katie 13th</p>	<p>HC:</p>	<p>Jan/28/2015 - House Read and Adopted</p>	<p>Rep. Katie Dempsey (R-Rome) authored this Resolution recognizing and commending the American Heart</p>

Bill	Summary	Sponsor	Committees	Status	Analysis
	For Women movement and recognizing February 6, 2015, as National Wear Red Day; and for other purposes.				Association's Go Red for Women movement and recognizing February 6, 2015 as National Wear Red Day.
<b>SB15</b>	A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 4 of Title 34 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to minimum wage, so as to provide for a substantive and comprehensive reform of provisions regarding the minimum wage law; to provide for an increase in the minimum wage; to provide for annual minimum wage increases to match the rising cost of living; to provide a credit toward the minimum wage for employers of tipped workers; to provide for related matters; to provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.	(1) James, Donzella 35th	SC:	Jan/12/2015 - Senate Hopper	SB 15 – Sen. Donzella James (D-Atlanta) offered this change to O.C.G.A. § 34-4-3 to raise the minimum wage for covered employees from not less than \$5.15 to \$10.10 per hour for each hour worked and to provide that the annual minimum wage increase to match the rising cost of living. In subsection (b), it provides employers of employees who meet the eligibility requirements for the "tip credit" under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. Section 2023(t), to credit tips towards satisfaction of up to 50 percent of the minimum wage.
<b>SB19</b>	A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Code Section 34-8-35 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the definition of employment	(1) Orrock, Nan 36th	SC:	Jan/12/2015 - Senate Hopper	SB 19 – Sen. Nan Orrock (D-Atlanta) authored this initiative amending the definition of employment applicable to the "Employment Security Law" found at O.C.G.A. § 34-8-35(f). It would

Bill	Summary	Sponsor	Committees	Status	Analysis
	<p>applicable to the "Employment Security Law," so as to change certain provisions of such definition in order to provide that services performed by an individual for wages shall be deemed to be employment unless the Department of Labor makes a contrary determination based upon evidence submitted of certain factors demonstrating that such individual has been and will continue to be free from control or direction over the performance of such services; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>				<p>allow that services performed by an individual for wages shall be deemed to be employment "subject to this chapter unless and until it is shown that such individual has been and will continue to be free from control or direction over the performance of such services both under the individual's contract of services and in fact, as demonstrated by evidence timely submitted to the department upon which department determines" various factors of that individual's performance (e.g. is not prohibited from working for other companies or holding other employment contemporaneously; is not prescribed minimum hours to work, or, in the case of sales, does not have a minimum number of orders to be obtained; receives only minimal instructions and no direct oversight or supervision regarding services to be performed; etc.).</p>
<p><b>SB51</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 4 of Title 26 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to pharmacists and pharmacies, so as to provide for</p>	<p>(1) Burke, Dean 11th</p>	<p>SC: Health and Human Services</p>	<p>Jan/26/2015 - Senate Read and Referred</p>	<p>Sen. Dean Burke (R – Bainbridge) has proposed to amend O.C.G.A. Chapter 4 of Title 26 to define “biological products” and “interchangeable biological products” in a new O.C.G.A. ? 26-4-</p>

<b>Bill</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Committees</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Analysis</b>
	<p>substitutions of interchangeable biological products; to define certain terms; to provide for requirements and limitations; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>				<p>5. These terms flow from approved products from the United States Food and Drug Administration and the goal is to encourage prescription of such biological medicines and then permit substitution of bio similar meds for the brand name, patented “biological products” approved by the FDA. The bill adds these products and their interchangeable bio similar ones to the substitution permissions in O.C.G.A. 26-4-81, tracking the language for the substitution of generic drugs for brand name ones. It requires that a dispensing pharmacist notify the prescribing physician of any substitution in a reasonable time and by various electronic, fax, or telephonic means, unless the substitution is for a refill or there is no approved bio similar product. The bill permits a prescribing physician or patient to instruct the pharmacist that substitution is not permitted on a scrip and this limitation may be done on a form prescription pad by a physician. If a substitution is made, it must be shown on the label for the bio similar product.</p>

Bill	Summary	Sponsor	Committees	Status	Analysis
<p><b>SB52</b></p>	<p>A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Code Section 50-18-72 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to disclosure of public records, so as to clarify that certain tax credits and exemptions are subject to disclosure; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.</p>	<p>(1) Fort, Vincent 39th</p>	<p>SC: Finance</p>	<p>Jan/27/2015 - Senate Read and Referred</p>	<p>Sen. Vincent Fort (D-Atlanta) proposed this initiative to amend O.C.G.A. § 50-18-72, clarifying tax credits and exemptions which are subject to public disclosure. Specifically, his language states that records relating to tax credits or tax exemptions granted to individuals or businesses under Georgia law would not be subject to disclosure – when it relates to tax matters or tax information under State or federal law. However, the documents maintained by the Department of Economic Development relating to an economic development project, until it is secured by binding commitment, requires that such be disclosed upon proper request – after a binding commitment has been secured or the project has been terminated. Sen. Fort added, though, that document subject to disclosure under paragraph (46) of O.C.G.A. § 50-18-72(a) would include all documents relating to tax credits or tax exemptions granted to individuals or businesses under State law.</p>

Bill	Summary	Sponsor	Committees	Status	Analysis
<b>SB53</b>	A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend an Act relating to mental health and authorizing a licensed professional counselor to perform certain acts, Act No. 546, approved April 21, 2014 (Ga L. 2014, p. 347), so as to revise a sunset provision; to provide for an effective date; and for other purposes.	(1) Kirk, Greg 13th	SC: Health and Human Services	Jan/27/2015 - Senate Read and Referred	Sen. Greg Kirk (R-Americanus) offered this proposal to remove the sunset provision included in Act Number 546 (SB 65 by Sen. Renee Unterman (R-Buford)) passed in 2014. That legislation, as passed last year and signed into law, permitted licensed professional counselors to perform emergency examinations of persons who are mentally ill or alcoholic or drug dependent in O.C.G.A. § 37-3-41 and O.C.G.A. § 37-7-41(d) but that such permission was only granted through March 15, 2015 when the Act would be repealed. This legislation would extend that sunset from March 15, 2015 to June 30, 2018.
<b>SB66</b>	A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Title 30 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to handicapped persons, so as to create the Governor's Task Force on Blind and Visually Impaired Persons; to provide for membership; to provide for duties; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.	(1) Jackson, Lester 2nd	SC: Health and Human Services	Feb/02/2015 - Senate Read and Referred	Sen. Lester Jackson (D-Savannah) authored a proposed new Chapter 11 in Title 30 to create the Governor's Task Force on Blind and Visually Impaired Persons. It would be a seven-member Task Force that would investigate how State services and initiatives can be developed or improved for blind and visually impaired persons (such as their mobility and access, education, etc.). The Task Force would be required to submit suggestions for

Bill	Summary	Sponsor	Committees	Status	Analysis
					legislation on or before November 1 annually.
<b>SB74</b>	A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Titles 31 and 48 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to health and revenue and taxation, respectively, so as to establish charity care organizations to provide health care services to the uninsured in this state; to provide for definitions; to provide for tax credits for contributions to charity care organizations; to provide for the amount, nature, limits, and procedures for such tax credits; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.	(1) Hill, Judson 32nd	SC: Finance	Feb/02/2015 - Senate Read and Referred	Sen. Judson Hill (R-Marietta) has proposed to add a new Code Section to Article 1 of Chapter 8 of Title 31, relating to hospital care for the indigent. O.C.G.A. § 31-8-9.1 is added to this bill to (a) define 'charity health care organization' to mean a nonprofit corporation supporting ten or more charity health care clinics providing health care services to the uninsured and qualified as exempt from federal income taxation; and (b) have the department approve and maintain a list of charity health care organizations eligible for the purposes of the charity health care tax credit. O.C.G.A. § 48-7-29.20 is also added under this legislation, relating to imposition, rate, and computation of income taxes and exemptions.
<b>SR53</b>	A RESOLUTION recognizing January 20, 2015, as Multi-Agency Alliance for Children Day at the state capitol; and for other purposes.	(1) Orrock, Nan 36th	SC:	Jan/26/2015 - Senate Read and Adopted	Sen. Nan Orrock (D-Atlanta) authored this Resolution to recognize Multi-Agency Alliance for Children and their Day at the State's Capitol on January 20, 2015. This agency was formed in 1996, serving children from all parts of Georgia by providing behavioral

Bill	Summary	Sponsor	Committees	Status	Analysis
					<p>health services who are troubled or difficult children, have been in numerous out-of-home placements or are in State custody.</p>
<p><b>SR56</b></p>	<p>A RESOLUTION recognizing January 28, 2015, as Autism Awareness Day at the state capitol; and for other purposes.</p>	<p>(1) Albers, John 56th</p>	<p>SC:</p>	<p>Jan/26/2015 - Senate Read and Adopted</p>	<p>Sen. John Albers (R-Roswell) offered this Resolution to recognize January 28, 2015 as "Autism Awareness Day" at the State Capitol. Autism is four to five times more common in boys than in girls. 1 of 42 boys diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders where as 1 in 189 girls receive such diagnoses.</p>
<p><b>SR65</b></p>	<p>A RESOLUTION creating the Senate Special Tax Exemption Study Committee; and for other purposes.</p>	<p>(1) Jones II, Harold 22nd</p>	<p>SC: Government Oversight</p>	<p>Jan/27/2015 - Senate Read and Referred</p>	<p>Sen. Harold V. Jones, II (D-Augusta) authored this Resolution to create a six-member Senate Special Tax Exemption Study as Georgia has long used as economic development tools various tax credits to attract and retain businesses. This Study Committee is proposed to "work with independent researchers at the State's research universities to undertake a study of tax records in order to analyze and examine existing economic development tax credits to determine whether employers receiving the credits are actually creating jobs at a higher rate than those that</p>

Bill	Summary	Sponsor	Committees	Status	Analysis
					do not receive the tax credits and recommend any action or legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate." The Study Committee would make a report on its findings and/or recommendations.
<p><b>SR69</b></p>	<p>A RESOLUTION commending science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) and recognizing May 8, 2015, as Georgia STEM Day at the state capitol; and for other purposes.</p>	<p>(1) Albers, John 56th</p>	<p>SC:</p>	<p>Jan/27/2015 - Senate Read and Adopted</p>	<p>Sen. John Albers (R – Roswell) proposed this resolution that recognizes May 8, 2015 as Georgia STEM Day at the state capitol. STEM education is recognized as being fundamental to the success of our future workforce. Nearly 211,000 technology jobs are projected to exist in Georgia by 2018, so fostering student interest in STEM careers is very important.</p>
<p><b>SR72</b></p>	<p>A RESOLUTION commending Don Graham; and for other purposes.</p>	<p>(1) Jones, Burt 25th</p>	<p>SC:</p>	<p>Jan/27/2015 - Senate Read and Adopted</p>	<p>Sen. Burt Jones (R – Jackson). This resolution's purpose is to encourage the development of minority owned plasma centers. The resolution claims there are no plasma collection centers in the United States owned by an African American. The hope is that this will encourage the US plasma industry to open its markets and allow equal opportunity for minorities to participate.</p>

Bill	Summary	Sponsor	Committees	Status	Analysis
SR104	A RESOLUTION commending Georgia Bio for the advancements it has made in the life sciences industry and for the impact it has on this state's economy; and for other purposes.	(1) Tippins, Lindsey 37th	SC:	Jan/29/2015 - Senate Read and Adopted	Sen. Lindsey Tippins (R–Marietta) authored this Resolution commending Georgia Bio for the advancements it has made to the life sciences industry and for the impact it has on this state's economy.
SR113	A RESOLUTION creating the Senate Entrepreneur in Residence Study Committee; and for other purposes.	(1) Hill, Judson 32nd	SC: Economic Development and Tourism	Feb/02/2015 - Senate Read and Referred	Sen. Judson Hill (R–Marietta) authored this Resolution to create the Senate Entrepreneur in Residence Study Committee to look at ways in which to establish an entrepreneur in residence program which would place experienced entrepreneurs in government for limited periods of time to help identify and resolve problem areas slowing down entrepreneurs from creating jobs and bringing new products to market. This Committee would be composed of six members of the Senate and the chairpersons of the Senate Economic Development Committee and the Science and Technology Committee.
SR114	A RESOLUTION creating the Joint Entrepreneur in Residence Study Committee; and for other purposes.	(1) Hill, Judson 32nd	SC: Economic Development and Tourism	Feb/02/2015 - Senate Read and Referred	Sen. Judson Hill (R–Marietta) has proposed this Resolution creating the Joint Entrepreneur in Residence Study Committee. The Committee would be

<b>Bill</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Committees</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Analysis</b>
					composed of six members, three House members and three Senate members.