General Update:
The General Assembly met this week for days 30-32. Please click here for a copy of the adjournment resolution. Qualifying for the 2018 primary and general election was held this week at the Capitol and a number of House and Senate members announced their retirements.

Budget
Today Governor Deal signed the FY 2018 amended budget authorizing $25.4 billion in spending for the current fiscal year. The House also passed the FY 2019 budget this afternoon with a vote of 155-14. It will now move over to the Senate.

Bill Movement
Both the House and Senate made progress on their respective healthcare reform bills this week. Rep. Rick Jasperse’s HB 769 passed the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and Sen. Dean Burke’s SB 357 passed the House Health and Human Services Committee.

Bills of Interest

HB 519- Insurance; health benefit plans; utilize certain clinical review criteria to establish step therapy protocols
Bill Author: Rep. Sharon Cooper-R Marietta
Bill Status: 2/28/2018 Passed House; 3/5/2018 Senate Health and Human Services
HB 519 passed by substitute both the Life and Health subcommittee of House Insurance and the full House Insurance Committee this week. The current version of HB 519 is a compromise from all parties involved and establishes a process for when it is medically appropriate to override a step therapy protocol for patients. Georgia Bio Position: SUPPORT

HB 747- Medical assistance; Medicaid recipients receive unrestricted access to hemophilia medications
Bill Author: Rep. Sharon Cooper-R Marietta
Bill Status: House Health and Human Services
HB 747 would provide that Medicaid recipients have unrestricted access to medications prescribed for hemophilia by prohibiting preferred drug list, prior 12 authorization, step edit, or other drug management requirements on any such medications approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration. This bill did not make the Crossover deadline. Georgia Bio Position: SUPPORT
HB 873 - Prescription Drug Benefits Freedom of Information and Consumer Protection Act  
Bill Author: David Knight-R Griffin  
Bill Status: House Insurance  
HB 873 would provide consumer protections and freedom of information regarding prescription drug benefits. HB 873 was introduced on behalf of the Medical Association of Georgia and it requires that PBMs and insurers use a standard prior authorization form developed by the DOI with input from a committee of physicians and insurers. Further, it requires that PBMs/insurers include on their websites formulary information as well as processes for step therapy requirements. This bill did not make the Crossover deadline.  
Georgia Bio Position: Monitoring

SB 357 - The Health Act  
Bill Sponsor: Senator Dean Burke-R Bainbridge  
Bill Status: Passed Senate 2/7/2018; 3/8/2018 Passed House Health and Human Services; House Rules  
SB 357 would establish a new Health Coordination and Innovation Council made of public and private healthcare institutions that would be charged with advising on best practices in healthcare for the state.  
Georgia Bio Position: Monitoring

SB 352 - Commission on Substance Abuse and Recovery  
Bill Sponsor: Renee Unterman-R Buford  
Bill Status: Passed Senate 2/7/2018; House Health and Human Services  
SB 352 would create the Commission on Substance Abuse and Recovery to help combat the issue of opioid addiction in Georgia.  
Georgia Bio Position: Monitoring

SB 432 'Georgia Tax Credit Business Case Act'  
Sen. John Albers (R Roswell)  
Bill Status: Passed Senate  
Senate Bill 432 seeks to repeal thirty-five (35) separate exemptions from state sales and use taxes over a phased period ranging from December 31, 2019 to December 31, 2025 including exemptions related to prescription drugs and medical equipment.  
Georgia Bio Position: Monitoring

HB 769 Health; recommendations from the House Rural Development Council  
Rep. Rick Jasperse (R Jasper)  
Bill Status: 2/21/2018-Passed House; 3/8/2018 Passed Senate Health and Human Services; Senate Rules  
HB 769 is a product of recommendations made by the House Rural Development Council. This bill passed House on Wednesday and will move over to the Senate for consideration. It establishes the Rural Center for Health Care Innovation and Sustainability which will conduct research to identify a postsecondary institution to educate leadership in hospitals to conduct business better. It revises provisions that dictate how pharmacists distribute medications in rural Georgia. HB 769 also streamlines and expedites the billing process for state medical plans.  
Georgia Bio Position: Monitoring

GABIO POLICY & ADVOCACY COMM. MEETINGS/CALL SCHEDULE FOR 2018 GA LEGISLATIVE SESSION  
Mon. Mar. 19 at 12pm  
Mon. April 2 at 12pm