

Welcome to the Georgia Bio Legislative Watch, a weekly update on the 2013 legislative session of the Georgia General Assembly provided by Brock Clay Attorneys exclusively for Georgia Bio members.

This week, the smooth and quick tenor of the legislative session quickly threatened to grind to a halt this week as the House and Senate began the widely accepted late-session gamesmanship that normally define the final 15 legislative days. The breakdown began with an attempted fix to the state's car tax law that was passed in 2012. The legislature previously overhauled the state's "birthday tax" and created a new system for a title transfer fee, the proceeds of which would be distributed between state and local government authorities.

Last week, the House passed the legislative fix without a fiscal note, and the legislation quickly ran into problems in the Senate as the Senate discovered the fiscal note would cost the taxpayers \$140 million. Several legislators protested as the Senate shifted operations this week in an effort to fix the legal challenges by the March 1 deadline.

The Senate proposed to fix the penalty by adjusting the state rental car tax slightly upward. [The Senate's version passed today, but the House had already adjourned and will vote on the measure next week.](#)

The House and Senate also appear to be in a silent standoff over Speaker David Ralston's proposed ethics reform legislation. [When the legislation passed the House](#), it was quickly assigned to the powerful Rules Committee, controlled by Senator Jeff Mullis (R - Chickamauga), one of Lt. Governor Casey Cagle's closest allies. It is widely thought that the Senate will make some sort of substantial changes and send it back to the House for consideration.

The potential changes are unclear, but it's clear that the Senate intends to make a political statement and attempt to make the Speaker's attempt at ethics reform weak and watered down.

Legislative Schedule

Saturday-Sunday March 2-3	In adjournment
Monday, March 4	Legislative day 28
Tuesday, March 5	Legislative day 29
Wednesday, March 6	In adjournment
Thursday, March 7	Legislative Day 30
Friday-Sunday March 8-10	In Adjournment
Monday, March 11	Legislative Day 31
Tuesday, March 12	Legislative Day 32
Wednesday, March 13	Legislative Day 33
Thursday, March 14	Legislative Day 34
Friday-Tuesday, March 15-19	In adjournment
Wednesday, March 20	Legislative Day 35

Legislative Tracking Grid

HB105	2013-2014 Regular Session - HB 105 Supplemental appropriations; State Fiscal Year July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013	(1) Ralston, David 7th (2) Jones, Jan 47th (3) O'Neal, Larry 146th (4) England, Terry 116th	HC: Appropriations SC: Appropriations	Summary Feb/22/2013 - Senate Conference Committee Appointed 4th, 16th, 48th	(Monitor) Last week, the Senate passed their version of the 2013 amended budget, with slight modifications from the version passed by the House. The version passed by the Senate spends \$26 million less overall, and sends an extra \$167 million to local school districts. The budget also increase the restoration of cuts by the House to the School Nutrition Program to a total of \$979,000. It also restored \$2.2 million in cuts to Georgia Gwinnett College and provides for \$4 million in grants to charter systems.
HB106	2013-2014 Regular Session - HB 106 General appropriations; State Fiscal Year July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014	(1) Ralston, David 7th (2) Jones, Jan 47th (3) O'Neal, Larry 146th (4) England, Terry 116th	HC: Appropriations SC:	Summary Jan/29/2013 - House Second Readers	General Approps, 2013-2014

<p>HB142</p>	<p>2013-2014 Regular Session - HB 142 Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission; change certain provisions</p>	<p>(1) Ralston . David 7th (2) O'Neal, Larry 146th (3) Smyre, Calvin 135th (4) Jones, Jan 47th (5) Lindsey . Edward 54th (6) Smith, Richard 134th</p>	<p>HC: Rules SC: Rules</p>	<p>Summary Feb/26/20 13 - Senate Read and Referred</p>	<p>(Monitor) Several weeks ago, Speaker David Ralston (R - Blue Ridge) released his widely discussed ethics reform package. In short, HB 142 and HB 143 would ban most individual “gifts” from lobbyists, while broadening requirements for lobbyist registration and granted expanded authority to the State Ethics Commission. As drafted, the legislation did exempt legislative committees, sub-committees, and caucuses. As the committee process continued, Speaker Ralston introduced several amendments to his legislation. Those amendments include: - Reducing the lobbyist registration fee from \$300 to \$25 for all registrants - Restricts spending on legislator travel and travel for legislative spouses - Allows the waiver of reporting requirements if individual advocates swear an affidavit not to spend on legislators - Allows advocates to bypass the lobbyist registration process if they aren't at the Capitol more than five days each year. The legislation was passed by the House and assigned by the Lt. Governor to the powerful Senate Rules Committee. It is widely expected to become a political bargaining chip as the session progresses.</p>
<p>HB143</p>	<p>2013-2014 Regular Session - HB 143 Campaign contributions; disclosure reports; change certain provisions</p>	<p>(1) Ralston . David 7th (2) O'Neal, Larry 146th (3) Smyre, Calvin 135th (4) Jones, Jan 47th (5) Lindsey . Edward 54th (6) Smith, Richard 134th</p>	<p>HC: Rules SC: Rules</p>	<p>Summary Feb/26/20 13 - Senate Read and Referred</p>	<p>(Monitor) This is the second of Speaker Ralston's two ethics bills.</p>
<p>HB178</p>	<p>2013-2014 Regular Session - HB 178 Georgia Pain Management Clinic Act; enact</p>	<p>(1) Weldon . Tom 3rd (2) Cooper . Sharon 43rd (3) Taylor, Tom 79th (4) Chann ell, Mickey 120th (5) Parrish, Butch 158th (6) Oliver, Mary Margaret 82nd</p>	<p>HC: Health & Human Services SC: Health and Human Services</p>	<p>Summary Feb/21/20 13 - Senate Read and Referred</p>	<p>(Monitor) This legislation, sponsored by Rep. Tom Weldon, grants new power to the Composite Board of Medical Examiners whereby the Board can license and regulate pain management clinics. Specifically, the legislation would prevent ownership by convicted felons and require all owners to be license physicians in the state of Georgia. HB 178 passed the House 150-15 and currently awaits action in the Senate.</p>

<p>HB272</p>	<p>2013-2014 Regular Session - HB 272 Income tax credit; certain qualified investments for limited period of time; extend</p>	<p>(1) Peake, Allen 141st (2) Lindsey, Edward 54th (3) Dudgeon, Mike 25th (4) Williamson, Bruce 115th (5) Abrams, Stacey 89th (6) Stephens, Ron 164th</p>	<p>HC: Ways & Means SC:</p>	<p>Summary Feb/28/2013 - House Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute</p>	<p>(Monitor) This legislation renews Georgia's angel investor tax credit.</p>
<p>HB481</p>	<p>2013-2014 Regular Session - HB 481 Ethical Treatment of Human Embryos Act; enact</p>	<p>(1) Neal, Jay 2nd (2) Kirby, Tom 114th (3) Taylor, Darlene 173rd (4) England, Terry 116th (5) Sheldon, Donna 104th (6) Nix, Randy 69th</p>	<p>HC: Judiciary SC:</p>	<p>Summary Feb/27/2013 - House Second Readers</p>	<p>H.B. 481, sponsored by state Rep. Jay Neal, R-LaFayette, is titled the "Ethical Treatment of Human Embryos Act." SB 481 would make it illegal to: -- "Create or attempt to create a human-animal hybrid;" -- "Transfer or attempt to transfer a human embryo into a nonhuman womb;" -- "Transfer or attempt to transfer a nonhuman embryo into a human womb" -- Transport or receive for any purpose a human-animal hybrid or any product "derived from such a hybrid." Nothing in the bill would prohibit: -- "Research involving the use of transgenic animal models containing human genes; -- "Xenotransplantation of human organs, tissues or cells into recipient animals; -- "An individual from receiving nonhybrid organs, tissues or cells delivered from outside of this state..." The legislation also states that: "In disputes arising between any parties regarding the in vitro human embryo, the judicial standard for resolving such disputes shall be in the best interest of the in vitro human embryo."</p>