

Legislative Watch

presented by

GEORGIA BIO™

policy & advocacy committee



Georgia Bio Legislative Report

June 20, 2020

Days 30-35 of 40 Day Session

GENERAL UPDATE:

With public health concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Speaker of the Georgia House and Lt. Governor on behalf of the Georgia Senate mutually agreed that the Georgia General Assembly would suspend on March 13, 2020 not knowing when they would resume session. The next day Governor Kemp declared a public health state of emergency to deploy additional resources and give the Department of Public Health authority to direct specific healthcare action to fight against the spread of COVID-19. A few days later, Governor Kemp called on the legislature to convene a special session on Monday March 16th to ratify his public Health State of Emergency, thus giving the governor and state health officials more flexibility and all available resources to combat the virus. Over the next several days, Governor Kemp signed Georgia's Amended Fiscal Year 2020 Budget, HB 792, with \$100 million in emergency funding to address the spread of COVID-19 and called on all Georgia businesses who are able to help the state provide, produce, distribute, or store critical health care items.

Over the next few months Governor Kemp issued several executive orders regarding sheltering in place, social distancing, closed non-essential businesses, and new health & safety regulations. As the state began reopening in May, the Georgia General Assembly reconvened the 2020 Georgia Legislative Session on Monday June 15, 2020.

This week the Georgia Legislature convened session for legislative days 30-35 with a primary focus on passing a balanced Fiscal Year 2021 budget and budget related legislation. Several legislative committees also met this week to address other important issues that passed through one chamber before crossover day.

The House and Senate adopted the 2020 Georgia Legislative Session [Adjournment Calendar](#) with Legislative Day 36 on Monday June 22nd and Sine Die or last day of the legislative session on Friday June 26th.

For more details and resources please visit our [COVID-19 Resource Page](#).

BILL MOVEMENT:

The legislature passed key pieces of legislation and committees favorably reported on several bills this week relating to surprise billing, pharmacy benefit managers, greater healthcare transparency, and ethylene oxide reporting. Other pieces of legislation being introduced and considered this week include the CURE Act that creates a multistate compact to award prizes for curing diseases, hate crime legislation, and repealing sunset provisions regarding certain tax exemptions. Please see below for bill of interest that moved this week.

HB 426 – Criminal Procedure; imposition of punishment for crimes involving bias or prejudice

- Senate Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute on June 19, 2020

HB 793 - General appropriations; State Fiscal Year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

- Senate Passed/Adopted By Substitute on June 19, 2020
- House Disagreed Senate Amend or Sub on June 19, 2020
- Conference Committee Appointed on June 20, 2020

HB 888 - Surprise Billing Consumer Protection Act

- Senate Passed/Adopted on June 17, 2020

HB 991 - Healthcare Transparency and Accountability Act

- Senate Passed/Adopted By Substitute on June 20, 2020

HB 1035 - Sales and use tax; certain tax exemptions; repeal sunset provisions

- Senate Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute on June 18, 2020

SB 303 - 'Georgia Right to Shop Act'; greater transparency of prices for nonemergency healthcare services

- House Passed/Adopted By Substitute on June 19, 2020

SB 313 - Pharmacy Benefits Managers; regulation and licensure

- House Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute on June 18, 2020

SB 359 - 'Surprise Billing Consumer Protection Act'

- House Withdrawn, Recommitted on June 17, 2020

SB 391 - "Early Prescription Refills During Emergencies Act"; health insurers to provide coverage for early refills of a 30-day supply

- House Passed/Adopted By Substitute on June 19, 2020

SB 426 - Air Quality; reporting of any unpermitted release of ethylene oxide to the Environmental Protection Division of the Department of Natural Resources

- House Committee Favorably Reported on June 18, 2020

SB 484 - Health; Solemn Covenant of the States to Award Prizes for Curing Diseases

- House Second Readers on June 15, 2020

SR 1010 – Adjournment

- Senate & House Adopted on June 20, 2020

GEORGIA BIO LEGISLATIVE TRACKING SHEET:

Georgia Bio will provide updates on specific legislation of interest to the Georgia Bio membership. Please contact Joseph Santoro at jsantoro@gabio.org with any questions or bills to include.

[Click here to view our 2020 Legislative Tracker](#)