

# Legislative Watch

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GEORGIA BIO™

policy & advocacy committee



## Georgia Bio Legislative Report

June 26, 2020

*Days 36-40 of 40 Day Session*

### GENERAL UPDATE:

This week the Georgia General Assembly met for legislative days 36-40 with Friday June 26, 2020 as Sine-Die or last day of the legislative session. All bills that successfully made it through this year will now head to the Governor's desk for his approval. He has 40 days to sign or veto legislation. Georgia Bio will continue to monitor legislation over the next 40 days and keep members informed as bills are signed into law. Georgia Bio will also be working with our members this year on our legislative priorities going into the 2021 session.

### BUDGET UPDATE:

The Senate and House adopted the Conference Committee report for HB 793, the General Appropriations budget for FY 2021. Georgia Bio is excited to announce that the legislature continued to fund our Georgia BioEd Rural Teacher Training Initiative (RTTI) in the FY21 budget. The bill is now headed to the Governor's desk.

### BILL MOVEMENT:

The legislature passed several key pieces of legislation this week relating to surprise billing, pharmacies, pharmacy benefit managers, greater healthcare transparency, hate crimes, and ethylene oxide reporting. Please see below for bills of interest that are headed to the Governor's desk for a signature.

#### [HB 426 - Criminal procedure; imposition of punishment for crimes involving bias or prejudice](#)

**Bill Author:** Rep. Chuck Efration (R – Dacula)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** HB 426 relates to procedure for sentencing and imposition of punishment, so as to revise the criteria for imposition of punishment for crimes involving bias or prejudice

#### [HB 789 - Insurance; creation of a surprise bill rating system based upon the number of certain physician specialty groups contracted with a hospital within a health insurer's network; provide](#)

**Bill Author:** Rep. Mark Newton (R - Augusta)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** HB 789 relates to accurate provider directories to provide for the creation of a surprise billing rating system based upon the number of certain physician specialty groups contracted with a hospital within a health insurer's network. The bill would require insurers include hospital surprise billing ratings online and in print provide directories.

**[HB 791 - Pharmacists; dispense up to a 90 day supply of a maintenance medication under certain conditions](#)**

**Bill Author:** Rep. Ron Stephens (R - Savannah)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** HB 791 relates to license required for practice of pharmacy, dispensing prescription drugs, prescription drug orders, electronically transmitting drug orders, refills, and Schedule II controlled substance prescriptions, so as to authorize a pharmacist to dispense up to a 90 day supply of a maintenance medication under certain conditions.

**[HB 793 - General appropriations; State Fiscal Year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021](#)**

**Bill Author:** Rep. David Ralston (R – Blue Ridge)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** HB 797 provides appropriations for the State Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021. The bill makes and provides such appropriations for the operation of the state government and its departments, boards, bureaus, commissions, institutions, and other agencies, for the university system, common schools, counties, municipalities, and political subdivisions, for all other governmental activities

**[HB 847 - Hemp farming; definitions, penalties and criminal background checks; provide](#)**

**Bill Author:** Rep. John Corbett (R - Lake Park)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** HB 847 relating to hemp farming, so as to provide criminal background checks, compliance with federal laws and regulations, hemp nursery licensees, license and permit fees, testing of hemp samples, destruction of noncompliant hemp, and for violations of the state hemp plan.

**[HB 888 - Surprise Billing Consumer Protection Act; enact](#)**

**Bill Author:** Rep. Lee Hawkins (R - Gainesville)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** HB 888 provides for certain consumer protections against surprise billing, mechanisms to resolve payment disputes between insurers and out-of-network providers, maintenance of an all-payer health claims data base, and for in-network cost-sharing amounts in healthcare plan contracts.

**[HB 918 - Pharmacies; various provisions relating to the practice of pharmacy; revise](#)**

**Bill Author:** Rep. Sharon Cooper (R - Marietta)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** HB 918 relates to pharmacies, so as to revise various provisions relating to the practice of pharmacy, to repeal provisions relating to required licensure as a pharmacy by pharmacy benefits managers engaging in the practice of pharmacy, to revise provisions relating to "The Pharmacy Audit Bill of Rights"; and to revise pharmacy anti-steering provisions.

**[HB 946 - Insurance; extensive revisions regarding pharmacy benefits managers; provide](#)**

**Bill Author:** Rep. David Knight (R - Griffin)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** HB 946 relating to regulation and licensure of pharmacy benefits managers, so as to revise provisions relating to license requirements and filing fees, to provide additional authority for the Insurance Commissioner to regulate pharmacy benefits managers, rebates from pharmaceutical manufacturers, and to revise provisions relating to administration of claims

**[HB 991 - Healthcare Transparency and Accountability Act; enact](#)**

**Bill Author:** Rep. Matt Hatchett (R - Dublin)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** HB 991 provides transparency relating to state healthcare plans and its contractors.

**[SB 303 - 'Georgia Right to Shop Act'; greater transparency of prices for nonemergency healthcare services; provide](#)**

**Bill Author:** Senator Ben Watson (R - Savannah)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** SB 303 provide for greater transparency of prices for nonemergency health care services. The bill seeks to provide for the disclosure of certain pricing information through insurer websites to allow consumers to compare prices and that insurers may use third parties to comply with such requirements.

**[SB 313 - Pharmacy Benefits Managers; regulation and licensure; extensive revisions; provide](#)**

**Bill Author:** Senator Dean Burke (R - Bainbridge)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** SB 313 relates to regulation and licensure of pharmacy benefits managers. The bill seeks to revise provisions to license requirements and filing fees, prohibition on the practice of medicine, reimbursement requirements, rebates from pharmaceutical manufacturers, administration of claims, and prohibited activities by a pharmacy benefits manager.

**[SB 359 - 'Surprise Billing Consumer Protection Act'; certain consumer protections against surprise billing; provide](#)**

**Bill Author:** Senator Sally Harrell (D - Atlanta)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** SB 359 provides certain consumer protections against surprise billing, mechanisms to resolve payment disputes between insurers and out-of-network providers regarding the provision of healthcare services, maintenance of an all-payer health claims data base, and in-network cost-sharing amounts in healthcare plan contracts.

**[SB 391 - "Early Prescription Refills During Emergencies Act"; health insurers to provide coverage for early refills of a 30 day supply; require; enact](#)**

**Bill Author:** Senator Kay Kirkpatrick (R - Marietta)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** SB 391 relating to general provisions regarding insurance, so as to require health insurers to provide coverage for early refills of a 30 day supply of certain prescription medications under certain emergency situations; to amend Code Section 26-4-80 of the O.C.G.A., relating to license required for practice of pharmacy, dispensing of prescription drugs, prescription drug orders, electronically transmitted drug orders, refills, and schedule II controlled substance prescriptions, so as to allow pharmacists to dispense certain refill prescription medications under certain circumstances.

**[SB 426 - Air Quality; reporting of any unpermitted release of ethylene oxide to the Environmental Protection Division of the Department of Natural Resources; provide](#)**

**Bill Author:** Senator Brian Strickland (R - McDonough)

**Bill Status:** **PASSED**

**Summary:** SB 426 relates to air quality, to provide for the reporting of any unpermitted release of ethylene oxide to the Environmental Protection Division of the Department of Natural Resources within 24 hours.



The Life Sciences Partnership

**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](mailto:jsantoro@gabio.org) with any questions or bills to include.

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