

Legislative Watch

presented by

GEORGIA BIO™

policy & advocacy committee



Georgia Bio Legislative Report January 25, 2021

Budget Week

GENERAL UPDATE:

Each January the governor proposes two distinct budgets. The amended budget for FY 2021 adjusts spending levels for the current fiscal year and the full budget for FY 2022 laying out a new spending plan. After last year's budget reductions and the additional cuts from the Special Session, Governor Kemp's budget proposal seeks to bring Georgia back to pre-COVID spending.

[Click here to read his full budget proposal](#)

The week after the first week of session is always reserved for Budget Week where representatives from the various state agencies present their proposed budgets before Joint Sessions of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. Georgia Bio is closely following the House Education Subcommittee discussions as our Rural Teacher Training Initiative (RTTI) funding is housed in the Department of Education budget.

RURAL TEACHER TRAINING INITIATIVE (RTTI) UPDATE:

The Rural Teacher Training Initiative was created in 2019 to support the growth of the life science workforce and improve opportunities for young people in rural communities. After last year's round of budget cuts, the Georgia General Assembly appropriated \$290,000.00 in the FY2021 general appropriations budget to Georgia BioEd, and we anticipate the same amount will be provided for the program's third year of funding.

RTTI is a collaboration among the Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Youth Science and Technology Centers, the Georgia BioEd Institute, the Technical College System of Georgia, the University of Georgia, and Georgia Tech, as well as the Georgia life science industry. RTTI delivered cutting edge, hands-on training and equipment for secondary science teachers January 13-14, 2020 at the UGA Griffin campus and looks to provide four hybrid trainings as part of their curriculum this year. The training provides educators with laboratory experiences that enable them to return to the classroom and offer instruction that aligns with the Georgia Standards of Excellence and prepares and inspires students to enter a career in life sciences.

GEORGIA BIO LEGISLATIVE TRACKING SHEET

Georgia Bio will provide updates on specific legislation of interest to the Georgia Bio membership. If you have bills that you would like included in the weekly bill update, please email ahaltom@gabio.org.

[Legislative Tracking Sheet](#)

GEORGIA BIO POLICY & ADVOCACY COMMITTEE CALL SCHEDULE FOR 2021 GEORGIA LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Tue. January 19th at 10am
Tue. February 2nd at 10am
Tue. February 16th at 10am
Tue. March 2nd at 10am
Tue. March 16th at 10am
Tue. March 30th at 10am

If you would like to participate on a Georgia Bio Policy Committee call, please contact Ashley Haltom at ahaltom@gabio.org.

RTTI YEAR 2 IMPACT

- Teacher Attendance – 91
- Rural Districts Participated – 26
- Total Districts Impacted – 54
- Anticipated Students Impacted – 13,000+
- Courses Impacted – 23 standard, 20 CTAE
- Industry Donations – More than \$240,000

NEW COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN:

After a series of retirements and changes after the 2020 election cycle, there are a number of new committee chairmen in both the House and Senate. Most notably, Rep. Robert Dickey (R-Musella) was named the new Chair of the House Agriculture & Consumer Affairs Committee. Rep. Todd Jones (R-South Forsyth) replaced him as the House Appropriations Education Subcommittee Chair and we plan to continue our great working relationship with him to secure the funding for our RTTI program.

Rep. Shaw Blackmon (R-Bonaire) was also appointed as the Chair of the House Ways & Means Committee, where we anticipate legislation important to the life sciences sector this session.

The Senate also saw several committee changes including Sen. Larry Walker (R-Perry) being appointed as the new Chair of the Senate Agriculture & Consumer Affairs Committee and Sen. Dean Burke (R-Bainbridge) appointed as the Chair of the Senate Insurance & Labor Committee.

[Click here to see all new House committee assignments](#)

[Click here to see all new Senate committee assignments](#)

GEORGIA BIO LEGISLATIVE TRACKING SHEET:

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HB 73 – Insurance; reduce out-of-pocket costs for consumers requiring insulin

Bill Author: Rep. Carolyn Hugley (D - Columbus)

Bill Status: House Insurance Committee

Summary: HB 73 would implement a \$50 out-of-pocket cap on insulin prescriptions for Medicaid and PeachCare recipients. It also outlines annual reporting requirements to the Department of Insurance.

[Click here to view our 2021 Legislative Tracker](#)

GEORGIA BIO LEGISLATIVE TEXT ALERT SYSTEM:

In an attempt to keep our members and partners updated throughout the legislative session, Georgia Bio has purchased a text alert system through Mozeo. This system is free for members and will allow us to provide instant updates and calls-to-action as they arise especially given the remote work due to COVID protocols.

[Click here to opt-in to our text alert system](#)

COVID PROTOCOLS FOR VISITING THE STATE CAPITOL:

To ensure the safety of those working and visiting the State Capitol, the following safety protocols have been implemented:

- Thermal temperature checks at public entrances
- Sanitizing stations throughout building
- Directional guides to minimize crowd flow
- Masks strongly encouraged

Capitol staff has also requested that you only come to the building for specific business and do not linger so as to keep crowding in the halls to a minimum.

LEGISLATIVE RESOURCES

Below you will find a list of helpful links for viewing House and Senate floor sessions, committee meetings, calendars, and legislation search.

[House Floor Stream](#)

[House Committee Calendar](#)

[Senate Floor Stream](#)

[Senate Committee Calendar](#)

[Legislation Search](#)