



**Georgia Bio Legislative Watch
February 21, 2022
Legislative Days 16 - 18**

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Last week was a busy committee week at the State Capitol with hearings on both [HB 1176](#), the Right to Repair legislation, and [HB 1013](#), House leadership's Mental Health Parity bill. HB 1013 was introduced in the House Health & Human Services Committee with a committee substitute on Wednesday that we are told contains only minor adjustments from the original version. The new version is not available online yet, but we will flag any potential concerns once available.

HB 1176 was in the House Agriculture & Consumer Affairs Committee for a Hearing Only on Thursday where Georgia Bio testified to the concerns of our medical technology and device members. This is model legislation that is being shopped in several states that would require original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) to provide certain items necessary for diagnostic, maintenance, or repair services on digital products. IP rights and unlicensed repairs to highly advanced medical equipment are the primary concerns, but this bill would extend to any product with a digital component. While no action was taken on the bill, we are encouraged by the response and hope to work with bill sponsor Rep. Clay Pirkle and committee Chairman Robert Dickey to address a possible carve out for medical technology and devices.

There are also several committee meetings of note this week, primarily Wednesday's Senate Health & Human Services Committee meeting where [SB 345](#), Chairman Jeff Mullis' bill to ban vaccine mandates, will be heard. We are closely monitoring the development of this legislation and will continue to give updates.

2022 LIFE SCIENCES VIRTUAL DAY AT THE CAPITOL:



Join Georgia Bio on Wednesday, February 23rd for a VIRTUAL Day at the Capitol! While we cannot gather in-person, connecting with legislators is still vital to the growth of our industry. Join us from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. for a virtual event featuring a keynote address from Speaker David Ralston (R-Blue Ridge), who will give us an update on the 2022 legislative session as well as his Mental Health Parity Act (House Bill 1013). Attendees will also receive an update from Georgia Bio on our legislative priorities as well as some exciting news on our development front!

Our event will also feature a conversation with Chairman Mike Cheokas (R-Americus) with Dorothy Leone-Glasser of ARxC on the effort to establish a Rare Disease Advisory Council in Georgia as well as the impact that this could have on the rare disease patient community. Additionally, Pete Pellerito and Patrick Plues from BIO will discuss the findings from BIO's new report on bioscience economic development best practices, including public policy strategies and programs across the country to highlight new and innovative initiatives that enhance the future of the bioscience industry.

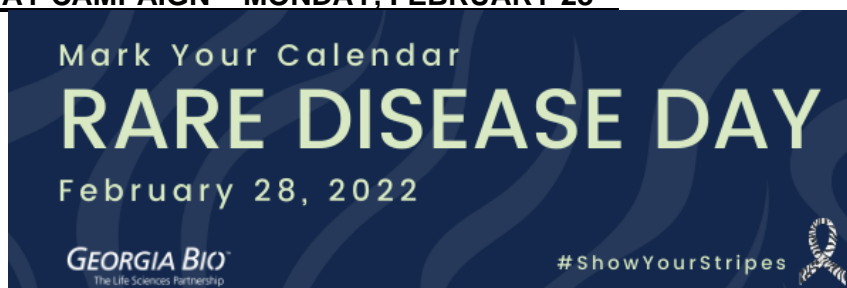
Due to the continued threat of COVID-19, we are holding this event virtually; however, we are planning for an in-person legislative reception in conjunction with one of our signature events later this year, so stay tuned for information and updates as we are able to return to in-person events!

Agenda:

10:00 a.m. – Welcome and CGHI Development Updates, Maria Thacker-Goethe
10:15 a.m. – Rare Disease Advisory Council (RDAC) – HB 918 Update, Chairman Mike Cheokas & Dorothy Leone-Glasser
10:30 a.m. – Legislative Updates, Ashley Haltom & Sally Kilpatrick
10:45 a.m. – BIO Industry Report Presentation, Pete Pellerito & Patrick Plues
11:00 a.m. – Keynote Address: Speaker David Ralston
11:15 a.m. – Questions and Final Thoughts
11:30 a.m. – Adjourn

Registration is free but is required for event access and can be found [HERE](#).

RARE DISEASE DAY CAMPAIGN – MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH



February 28 is a day to raise awareness of the 7,000+ rare diseases that impact more than 300 million people all around the world. Starting next Monday, please join us in raising awareness and taking action for this vulnerable population that needs greater attention and more resources.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Share our [social media toolkit](#) or re-share our posts starting Feb. 21
- Email Ryan Brooks at rbrooks@cghi.org with information about how your organization is making a difference in the rare disease community, and we will share your story via the Georgia Bio and CGHI platforms.
- Register for our virtual [Georgia Bio Life Sciences Day at the Capitol](#) where **Chairman Mike Cheokas (R-Americus)** and **Dorothy Leone-Glasser of ARxC** will provide an update on the effort to establish a Rare Disease Advisory Council (RDAC) in Georgia.
- **#ShowYourStripes** on Feb. 28. The zebra has become the official symbol of rare diseases in the United States. In honor of our shared mascot, we wear striped clothing and accessories to show

our support of those lives impacted by a rare disease. Post a picture your striped look, tag Georgia Bio and share it on social media with the hashtags **#ShowYourStripes** and **#RareDiseaseDay**.

GEORGIA BIO LEGISLATIVE TRACKING SHEET

Georgia Bio will provide updates on specific legislation of interest to the Georgia Bio membership. Please see below for legislation that has been added to our legislative tracker this week. You can also view our 2022 Policy Priorities [HERE](#). If you have bills that you would like included in the weekly bill update, please email ahaltom@gabio.org.

HB 1351; pharmacy benefits management program for Medicaid

Bill Author: David Knight (R – Griffin)

Bill Status: House Special Committee on Access to Quality Healthcare

Summary: HB 1351 would establish a pharmacy benefits management program for Medicaid under the Georgia Department of Community Health.

HB 1371; Establish Rural Health Advancement Commission

Bill Author: Rick Jasperse (R – Jasper)

Bill Status: House Special Committee on Access to Quality Healthcare

Summary: HB 1371 would establish the Rural Health Advancement Commission to develop private-sector solutions to address short-term and long-term health care and long-term care workforce shortages, with an emphasis on rural areas.

HB 1394; Repeal authority of Dept. of Public Health to require proof of vaccinations

Bill Author: Charlice Byrd (R – Woodstock)

Bill Status: N/A

Summary: HB 1394 would repeal the authority of the Department of Public Health and all county boards of health to require persons to submit to vaccinations against or other measures to prevent contagious or infectious diseases

SB 379; establish a program to promote the creation and expansion of registered apprenticeship programs

Bill Author: Brian Strickland (R – McDonough)

Bill Status: Senate Economic Development and Tourism

Summary: SB 379 provide for the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia to establish a program to promote the creation and expansion of registered apprenticeship programs in the state related to careers in the High Demand Career Initiatives list.

SB 514; Unmask Georgia Students Act

Bill Author: Clint Dixon (R – Gwinnett)

Bill Status: Senate Education & Youth

Summary: SB 514 provides provide that no local board of education, local school superintendent, or school administrator, teacher, or other school personnel shall make or enforce any rule that requires a

student to wear a face mask or face covering while present on school property unless such rule provides that a parent or guardian of such student may elect for his or her child to be exempt from such rule.

SB 518: Prescription Drug Rebate Financial Protection Act

Bill Author: Chuck Hufstetler (R – Rome)

Bill Status: Senate Insurance & Labor

Summary: SB 518 would require all health insurers to pass along no less than 80 percent of all third-party prescription drug rebates to enrollees.

[Click here to view the full 2022 Tracking Document](#)

GABIO POLICY & ADVOCACY COMM. MEETINGS/CALL SCHEDULE FOR 2022 GA LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Tue. February 22

Tue. March 8

Tue. March 22

Tue. April 5

All calls will be conducted via Zoom and will begin at 10 a.m. EST. If you or someone from your team would like to participate on a call, please contact ahaltom@gabio.org for access information.

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 & Senate Schedules \(Including Livestreams\)](#)

[Legislation Search](#)

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 to keep crowding in the halls to a minimum.