



**Georgia Bio Legislative Watch
February 28, 2022
Legislative Days 19 - 20**

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Today, Monday, February 28th, marks Rare Disease Day in Georgia and across the nation. It is a day to raise awareness for the 7,000+ rare diseases that impact more than 300 million people all around the world. We want to thank Governor Brian Kemp for his proclamation recognizing Rare Disease Day, as well as Chairman Mike Cheokas for sponsoring House Bill 918 to establish a Rare Disease Advisory Council (RDAC) in Georgia. Please join us in raising awareness and taking action for this vulnerable population by participating in our social media education campaign today – information and resources can be found in the section below.

As we draw closer to Crossover Day, Legislative Day 28 and the day that a bill must pass out of its Chamber of origin to still be considered viable for passage this session, legislation will start to move quickly. [SB 345](#), Chairman Jeff Mullis' bill to ban vaccine mandates was heard Wednesday in Senate Health & Human Services Committee. Sen. Mullis offered a substitute that would limit the vaccine passport ban to just those involving COVID-19 vaccines and boosters. The original language would have potentially expanded this ban to all vaccines, including those required for school-aged children and our military, so we are encouraged by the change in scope and will continue to monitor this bill going forward.

[Senate Bill 487](#) was also added to our tracker last week, which would require insurance coverage of diagnostic breast exams as preventative treatment. This is currently scheduled for a hearing in the Health & Workman's Comp Subcommittee of the Senate Insurance & Labor Committee on Wednesday, March 2nd at 10 a.m. If you or someone from your company or patient group would like to testify in support, please contact Ashley Haltom (ahaltom@cghi.org).

Finally, House Bill 1013, the Mental Health Parity Act, had a second hearing in House Health & Human Services on Wednesday. A substitute was offered that addressed some of the concerns from the previous week, most notably, removing the statewide pediatric patient registry. A new version will be updated online once action is taken on the bill.

If you are following legislation that we have not mentioned or that you think we need to be made aware, please send a note to Ashley Haltom (ahaltom@cghi.org) so that we can assess.

RARE DISEASE DAY CAMPAIGN – MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH



TODAY, February 28th is a day to raise awareness of the 7,000+ rare diseases that impact more than 300 million people all around the world. 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 the posts from our social media outlets
- 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.
- **#ShowYourStripes.** 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.2022 LIFE SCIENCES**

VIRTUAL DAY AT THE CAPITOL RECAP:



We are so grateful to everyone who joined our 2022 Virtual Life Sciences Day at the Capitol! It was an excellent event full of interesting conversation and informative updates from our elected officials, BIO, and CGHI staffs.

Special thanks to Speaker David Ralston for making time to share with our group about the progress of House Bill 1013, the Mental Health Parity Act, as well as Chairman Mike Cheokas, BIO's Pete Pellerito and Patrick Plues, and ARxC's Dorothy Leone-Glasser for rounding-out our agenda.

While we hope that this event can resume in person next year, please be on the lookout for information regarding a Legislative Reception in conjunction with our Innovation Summit in October!

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 1400; Georgia Access to Medical Cannabis Commission](#)

Bill Author: Alan Powell (R – Hartwell)

Bill Status: House Regulated Industries

Summary: HB 1400 would provide that the Georgia Access to Medical Cannabis Commission is subject to state procurement laws, revise the number of Class 1 and Class 2 production licenses that can be issued by the commission, revise dates for the retrospective study of minority participation, and provide that the Georgia Access to Medical Cannabis Commission is subject to open records laws, among other items.

[HB 1425; Governor to issue initial Class 1 and Class 2 Medical Cannabis production licenses](#)

Bill Author: Bill Werkheiser (R – Glennville)

Bill Status: N/A

Summary: HB 1425 would authorize the Governor to issue initial Class 1 and Class 2 Medical Cannabis production licenses for a limited time period with an automatic repeal in place.

[SB 487; Prescription Drug Rebate Financial Protection Act](#)

Bill Author: Sheila McNeill (R – Brunswick)

Bill Status: Senate Insurance & Labor

Summary: SB 487 would require that insurance companies cover diagnostic breast cancer screenings as part of preventative care.

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

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

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.