



AIA
Georgia

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GOVERNMENT
RELATIONS

Jan. 21 - Jan. 25, 2018
Week 2

WEEKLY REPORT

The Legislature was not officially in this week but legislators returned to the Capitol to hash out the state's budget for FY19 and FY20, which will begin on July 1. The Appropriations Committees in the House and the Senate heard from Commissioners, Department Heads and staff as well as the Secretary of State and the Governor.

Kenneth Heaghney, head of Georgia State University's Fiscal Research Center, was one of the first to present to lawmakers on Tuesday of this week. His presentation centered on the State's budget outlook. Heaghney assured legislators that the state's economy continues to grow. Despite signs of problems internationally, Georgia is expected to see continued, but slow, growth. Unemployment remains low and tax collections have improved significantly over previous years. Heaghney ended his presentation with "My takeaway is an economic outlook that is quite positive but slowing."

Governor Kemp's Proposed Budget

Governor Kemp's proposed FY19 and FY20 budgets are fairly conservative reflecting the limited government approach of his campaign platform. The main areas of focus include improved public sector pay for teachers and state employees, school safety enhancements, improved senior care and a range of IT and capital projects that fill community needs his team identified while on the campaign trail.

You can view the Governor's proposed budget in its entirety [HERE](#).

Highlights of the Governor's proposed budget include the following:

Education:

The biggest number is \$500M for a \$3,000 pay raise for all teachers in Georgia
\$30,000 to each of Georgia's 2,294 schools for a total of \$69M
\$8.4M state-wide for student mental health counselors

State Employees

2% pay raise for state employees

Healthcare

\$1M to the Department of Community Health to create a waiver plan that would give the state more flexibility in using Medicaid funding – he did not elaborate on that this plan will look like but it is likely it will be a partial expansion through a waiver

Voting Machines

\$150M in bond funds to replace the state's aging voting machines

Department Increases

Governor Kemp has spent much of his first weeks in office meeting with commissioners and department heads to learn of their needs. These efforts are reflected in his budget proposal.

Department highlights include the following:

- Environmental Protection Division – development of a statewide water plan: \$14M
- Department of Agriculture – enterprise real estate assessment: \$75,000
- Department of Community Health – The previously mentioned Medicaid waiver application consulting fee: \$1M
- DCH – Medicaid asset verification system expansion: \$2.7M
- Department of Revenue – online tax payment system: 1.75M and additional staffing funds
- Secretary of State – new voting system: \$150M
- ATL Transit Authority – \$2.4M in operational funds

You can find the budget presentations for the various departments on the following links:

- Superintendent Richard Woods, Department of Education [HERE](#)
- Chancellor Steve Wrigley, Board of Regents [HERE](#)
- Commissioner Frank Berry, Department of Community Health [HERE](#)
- Commissioner Timothy Ward, Department of Corrections [HERE](#)
- Commissioner Jim Beck, Department of Insurance and Fire Safety [HERE](#)
- Commissioner Gary Black, Department of Agriculture [HERE](#)
- Commissioner Judy Fitzgerald, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities [HERE](#)
- Commissioner Pat Wilson, Department of Economic Development [HERE](#)

AIA New Legislation of Interest

Due to the nature of budget week, there was no new legislation introduced this week.

Legislation We Are Following

While the bills did not move this week, we expect that hearings will begin soon. AIA met with Senator John Albers regarding his school safety initiatives and discussed some minor improvements we recommend for his bill. We are looking forward to working with Senator Albers as the bills move through the process.

SB 15 – (Senator John Albers) “Keeping Georgia’s Schools Safe Act.” This bill adds additional requirements to the existing public school threat assessment requirements to the existing requirements and imposes the collective list on private schools as well. The additions include:

- Preparation for security issues involving school functions held outside of normal school hours
- Addressing issues involving transportation to and from school functions when the transportation is furnished by the school or school system
- Requiring annual drills for responses to fire, weather, acts of violence, and acts of terrorism

The bill also creates a task force charged with sharing and providing homeland security activity on school data as well as allows this task force to create individual profiles on students for the purpose of analyzing threats.
referred to Public Safety Committee

SR 12 – (Senator John Albers) Proposes an amendment to the Georgia Constitution to allow sales tax for educational purposes to be used for school safety project.
referred to the Finance Committee

Committee Meetings

Aside from Appropriations, there were no committee meetings this week.

For the upcoming week:

Joint House and Senate Transportation Committee meeting:

1/29/2019

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Room 406 CLOB

Last week, we reported on the Senate Committees but House Committees has not come out yet. The new House Committees are [HERE](#)

- Education: Rick Jasperse replacing Brooks Coleman
- Judiciary: Barry Fleming replacing Wendell Willard
- Regulated Industries: Alan Powell replacing Howard Maxwell
- Rules: Jay Powell replacing John Meadows
- Ways and Means: Brett Harrell replacing Jay Powell

AIA Day at the Capitol

Your day at the Capitol is coming quick! AIA will be at the Capitol on February 7, 2019. You can click [HERE](#) for additional information or to register -

We are looking forward to hearing from a diverse group of speakers that have a strong grasp on our issues. Currently, your team at the Capitol has confirmed Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, Senator John Albers and Representative Teri Anulewicz to address our group.

Contact Us

Please contact your lobbying team if you have any questions or concerns.

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