



LEGISLATIVE REPORT

The Georgia General Assembly officially adjourned the 2023 Legislative Session, Sine Die at 12:15 am on March 30th. Over the last three months, we have addressed many pressing issues facing both our industry and state. Many pieces of legislation will now go to the Governor's desk for consideration. Governor Kemp now has 40 days (until Mid-May) to sign or veto the bills that passed both chambers. We appreciate the Senators and Representatives who were willing to listen, to introduce business friendly legislation, and to work to push meaningful bills across the finish line. Since this was the first year of a two-year cycle, bills that did not pass this year will be eligible for passage in 2023.

The 2023 General Assembly reviewed 2,371 pieces of legislation this session:

House Resolutions: 761

Senate Resolutions: 429

House Bills: 850

Senate Bills: 331

Bills of Interest:

Budget:

The only Constitutional requirement of the General Assembly is to pass a balanced budget each year. After days of negotiation between the House and the Senate, the Legislature did finally pass the FY 2024 budget – which takes effect July 1, 2023. Some significant items in

this year's budget include raising the Hope Scholarship to cover 100% of tuition, helping thousands of students in our state. Also, the budget includes \$6,000 raises for frontline state law enforcement officers and \$4,000 for all state law enforcement officers, as well as \$2,000 raises for all teachers and state employees. The FY 24 Budget further includes \$117 million in mental health service funding, \$212 million for Georgia DOT's local maintenance and improvements, Georgia Department of Natural Resources (\$30.4 million for Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program, Solid Waste Trust Fund \$7.6 million, and Hazardous Waste Trust Fund \$17.5 million). In the FY 2023 Supplemental Budget, the Department of Revenue will receive \$950 million for Homeowner Tax Relief Grants.

* [To Read the Entire FY 2023 Amended Budget \(July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023\) – CLICK HERE](#)

* [To Read the Entire FY 2024 Supplemental Budget \(July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024\) – CLICK HERE](#)

Taxes:

HB 162 - One-time Tax Credit for Taxpayers who Filed Returns for Both 2021 and 2022 Taxable Years

– Rep. Lauren McDonald – This bill relates to income taxes, so as to provide for a one-time tax credit for individual taxpayers who filed income tax returns for both the 2021 and 2022 taxable years.

Bill Status: House Passed/Adopted; Senate Passed/Adopted; Senate Transmitted House; House Sent to Governor; Signed by Governor on 03/14/2023; Act 2

HB 403 – Tax Credit for Certain Geothermal Machinery Installations at Residential Dwellings

– Rep. Rick Jasperse – This bill relates to income taxes, so as to provide for a tax credit for certain expenses incurred by taxpayers for certain geothermal machinery installations at residential dwellings. *Bill Status: House Ways and Means Committee*

HB 461 – Proceeds to Local Government Regulatory Fees be Used to Pay for Regulatory Activity and not General Operations

– Rep. Brad Thomas – This bill relates to general provisions regarding specific, business, and occupation taxes, so as to require that the proceeds of local government regulatory fees be used to pay for regulatory activity and not general operations; to revise the list of professions which may be subject to such regulatory fees; to remove certain provisions authorizing calculation of regulatory fees for renovation and other construction projects; to provide for refunds in certain circumstances.

Bill Status: House Ways and Means Committee

HB 581 - Audits and Accounts: Revise Deadlines, Selection Criteria, and Required Contents for Certain Annual Economic Analyses

– Rep. Shaw Blackmon – This bill relates to economic analysis of certain tax benefits of law or law, and analysis on performance and outcomes of Code Section 33-1-25, so as to revise the deadlines, selection criteria, and required contents for certain annual economic analyses conducted by the Department of Audits and Accounts.

Bill Status: House Passed/Adopted; Senate Read and Referred, DID NOT PASS

[SB 56 – Create Uniform Three-Party Contract for Collection of City Taxes](#) - Sen. Chuck Hufstetler – This bill would create a uniform, three-party contract between the county, tax commissioner, and cities for the collection of city taxes, and caps the tax commissioner's side compensation at 50% of their minimum annual salary.

Bill Status: Senate Passed/Adopted by Substitute; House Passed/Adopted by Substitute; Senate Agreed House Amend or Sub; Waiting for Governor's Consideration

Human Resources:

[HB 480 - Workers' Compensation; Benefits; Change Certain Provisions](#) – Rep. Lehman Franklin – This bill relates to workers' compensation, so as to change certain provisions related to workers' compensation benefits; to change provisions relating to surviving spouse dependency determination and termination; to increase the compensation benefits for total disability and temporary partial disability; and to increase the total compensation payable to a surviving spouse as a sole dependent at the time of death.

Bill Status: House Passed/Adopted; Senate Passed/Adopted; Waiting for Governor's Consideration

[SB 3 - Reducing Barriers to State Employment Act of 2023](#) – Sen. John Albers – This bill relates to personnel administration generally, so as to require state departments, agencies, boards, bureaus, offices, commissions, public corporations, and authorities to assess educational, experiential, and training requirements for jobs; to identify jobs for which such requirements can be reduced; and to require efforts to reduce the number of jobs for which a four-year college degree is required.

Bill Status: Senate Passed/Adopted by Substitute; House Passed/Adopted; Waiting for Governor's Consideration

[SB 20 - "Surprise Billing Consumer Protection Act"](#) – Sen. Kay Kirkpatrick – This bill would ensure consumer access to quality healthcare setting adequacy standards for network plans offered by an insurer; to provide for an exemption; to provide for standards for network plans; to prohibit an insurer from denying preauthorization for healthcare services to be performed by a participating provider solely because the referral was made by a nonparticipating provider; to provide for telehealth services; to provide for monitoring and reports; to authorize the Commissioner to ensure compliance through multiple means; and to provide for rules, regulations, and penalties.

Bill Status: Senate Passed/Adopted by Substitute; House Passed/Adopted; Waiting for Governor's Consideration

SB 61 - Sick Leave for Care of Immediate Family Members – Rep. Brian Strickland – This bill relates to use of sick leave for care of immediate family members, so as to repeal the sunset provision relating to such sick leave requirements.

Bill Status: Senate Passed/Adopted; House Passed/Adopted; Waiting for Governor's Consideration

SB 91 - Workers' Comp: The Time Period for the Dissolution of the Subsequent Injury Trust Fund – Sen. Clint Dixon – This bill relates to workers' compensation, so as to extend the time period for the dissolution of the Subsequent Injury Trust Fund.

Bill Status: Senate Passed/Adopted; House Passed/Adopted; Waiting for Governor's Consideration

SB 157 - Preclearance Process in the Licensing of Individuals with Criminal Records Who Make an Application to or are Investigated by Certain Licensing Boards and Commissions – Sen. Brian Strickland – This bill relates to education, food, drugs, and cosmetics, health, insurance, and professions and businesses, respectively, so as to create a preclearance process in the licensing of individuals with criminal records who make an application to or are investigated by certain licensing boards and commissions.

Bill Status: Senate Passed/Adopted by Substitute; House Withdrawn, Recommitted; DID NOT PASS

SB 160 - Employment Security; Provisions – Sen. Shawn Still – This bill would extend the end date of a statute that authorizes the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) to collect required contributions from employers from 2022 to 2026; extending this statute would reduce the required Unemployment Insurance contribution rate for newly covered employees from 2.7% of wages to 2.64%; this bill would also reinstate administrative assessments that the GDOL collects for administrative costs; the assessment would be set at .06% of wages paid by an employer until 2027.

Bill Status: Senate Passed/Adopted as Amended; House Passed/Adopted; Waiting for Governor's Consideration

SB 203 - "Trucking Opportunity Act of 2023" – Sen. Jason Anavitarte – This bill relates to industry services training program, so as to provide for tuition-free programs that relates to the operation of a commercial motor vehicle for veterans; to amend Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to motor vehicles and traffic, so as to repeal provisions authorizing joinder of motor carriers and their insurance carriers in tort and contract causes of action; to provide for standards of service hours for motor carriers operating solely intrastate; and to provide for hiring standards for commercial driver's license holders.

Bill Status: Senate Passed/Adopted as Amended; House Second Readers; DID NOT PASS

Business and Economic Development:

[HB 155 - Issuance of Licenses by Endorsement for Spouses of Firefighters, Healthcare Providers, and Law Enforcement Officers who relocate to Georgia](#) – Rep. Chuck Martin

– This bill relates to general provisions of professions and businesses, so as to provide for the issuance of licenses by endorsement for certain licenses to spouses of firefighters, healthcare providers, and law enforcement officers who relocate to the State of Georgia; to establish qualifications for such license by endorsement; and to provide for exceptions and applicability.

Bill Status: House Passed/Adopted by Substitute; Senate Passed/Adopted; Waiting for Governor's Consideration

[HB 189 - Allowable Variance for Weight Limitations upon a Vehicle or Load](#) – Rep. Steven Meeks

– This bill relates to dimensions and weight of vehicles and loads, so as to provide for an allowable variance for weight limitations upon a vehicle or load; and to repeal certain exceptions which allow for excess weight for vehicles and loads. HB 189 proposes that allowable weight variance on trucks be raised from 5% to 10% and maintain an 80,000 lb base weight. This variance would mean that the allowed gross vehicle weight of a semi would increase from 84,000 pounds to 88,000 pounds for all five-axle commercial trucks hauling industry products. On the final days, HB 189 resulted in a Conference Committee Report that limits quantities that can haul heavier loads, restricts these heavier loads to outside Metro Atlanta, allows local law the ability to enforce truck weights, increases fines for overweight vehicles, and adds a sunset provision to this bill set for July 1, 2025.

Bill Status: House Passed/Adopted By Substitute; Senate Passed/Adopted by Substitute; House Disagreed Senate Amend or Sub; Senate Insisted; Senate Conference Committee Appointed 8th, 27th, & 51st; House Insisted; House Conference Committee Appointed 178th, 11th, & 176th

[HB 336 - Prohibit Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes from Prohibiting use of Certain Refrigerants](#) – Rep. Brent Cox

– This bill relates to the amendment and revision of codes, so as to prohibit the Georgia state minimum standard codes from prohibiting the use of certain refrigerants; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

Bill Status: House Passed; Senate Table in Regulated Industries Committee

[HB 514 - Housing Regulation Transparency Act](#) – Rep. Dale Washburn

– This bill relates to zoning procedures, so as to provide for the length and renewal of moratoriums related to zoning decisions; to provide for legislative findings; to provide procedures for the levy, collection, use, and waiver of fees related to zoning decisions and related permits; and to revise notice and hearing requirements for certain zoning decisions.

Bill Status: House Passed/Adopted by Substitute; Senate Passed/Adopted by Substitute; House Disagreed Senate Amend or Sub; Senate Insisted; House Insisted; House Conference Committee Appointed 144th, 175th, & 33rd; Senate Conference Committee Appointed 30th, 21st, & 45th

[SB 1 - Automatic Repealer on the Prohibition on State and Local Governments from Requiring Proof of Covid Vaccination for Government Services](#) – Sen. Greg Dolezal –

This bill relates to general provisions regarding state government, so as to remove the automatic repealer on the prohibition on state and local governments from requiring proof of COVID vaccination for government services.

Bill Status: Senate Passed/Adopted by Substitute; House Passed/Adopted; Waiting for Governor's Consideration

[SB 60 - Secondary Metals Recyclers; It Shall be Illegal for Certain Persons to Purchase, Possess, Obtain, or Sell or Attempt to Purchase, Possess, Obtain, or Sell](#) – Sen. Bo Hatchett –

This bill relates to secondary metals recyclers, so as to provide that it shall be illegal for certain persons to purchase, possess, obtain, or sell or attempt to purchase, possess, obtain, or sell used, detached catalytic converters, used utility wire, or used communications copper; to provide for definitions; to regulate and limit the payment allowed by secondary metals recyclers; to require certain registrations; to provide that certain used, detached catalytic converters, used utility wire, and used communications copper and the vehicles transporting them are contraband. SB60 contains cash payout language that limits sellers to two transactions of less than \$100, per person, per day and cash payments for catalytic converters are strictly prohibited. It also contains several additions that allow law enforcement better legal tools to help reduce catalytic converter thefts.

Bill Status: Senate Passed/Adopted by Substitute; House Passed/Adopted by Substitute; Senate Agreed House Amend or Sub; Waiting for Governor's Consideration

Other:

[HB 119 - Uniform Rules of the Road; Procedure for Passing Stationary Vehicles](#) – Rep.

John Corbett – This bill relates to Georgia's Spencer Pass Law which currently requires drivers to safely change lanes or slow down when approaching stationary emergency or service vehicles on our roadways so that drivers do not pass directly next to stopped emergency vehicles. HB 119 would update the law and require drivers to move over for any disabled vehicle, such as another car or tow truck, that displays flashing hazard lights and/or yellow, amber, white or red lights if it is safe to do so.

Bill Status: House Passed/Adopted; Senate Tabled; DID NOT PASS

[HB 120 - Standards for Issuance of Limited Driving Permits for Certain Offenders](#) – Rep.

John Corbett – This bill relates to limited driving permits for certain offenders, so as to provide for standards for issuance of such permits. HB 120 would update the list of individuals with a suspended, revoked or canceled license who are eligible to apply for a limited driving permit, which restricts where and when these individuals are allowed to drive. Under HB 120, individuals convicted of driving under the influence of a controlled substance or marijuana could also apply for one of these limited driving permits.

Bill Status: House Passed/Adopted; Senate Passed/Adopted by Substitute; House Agreed Senate Amend or Sub; Waiting for Governor's Consideration

