



**DISABILITY DAY AT THE CAPITOL!** More than 2,000 advocates, friends and family members gathered at the Capitol steps on a beautiful, sunny day to hear from speakers including Governor Nathan Deal, Commissioner Frank Berry of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, and Executive Director Greg Schmieg of the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency. Rabbi Analia Bortz led a prayer for fallen soldiers. Governor Deal praised the Academy for Inclusive Learning at Kennesaw State and expressed his desire to expand similar opportunities all over Georgia. GCDD’s Executive Director Eric Jacobson emceed the rally and Public Policy Director D’Arcy Robb brought the crowd up to date on efforts to secure funding that would expand inclusive post-secondary programs to four other Georgia universities, Unlock the Waiting Lists!, House Bill 290 (“The Family Care Act”), Georgia’s death penalty law as it relates to proving intellectual disability, and House Bill 309 (“Ava’s Law”).

WHAT’S YOUR CONNECTION? To stay connected to this legislative session, see [www.unlockthewaitinglists.com](http://www.unlockthewaitinglists.com) and [www.gcdd.org](http://www.gcdd.org) for more advocacy information!

House and Senate News:

**House Leadership — Speaker of the House:** David Ralston, 7th; **Speaker Pro Tempore:** Jan Jones, 46th. **Majority Leader:** Larry O’Neal, 146th; **Minority Leader:** Stacey Abrams, 84th.

**Senate Leadership**—Presiding: **Lt. Gov.** Casey Cagle; **President Pro Tempore:** David Shafer, 48th. **Majority Leader:** Ronnie Chance, 16th; **Minority Leader:** Steve Henson, 41st.

**Contact information for the Governor**—The Honorable Nathan Deal, 203 State Capitol, Atlanta, Georgia, 30334; 404-656-1776, <http://gov.state.ga.us>

Visit [www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org) to identify your legislators. Find your legislators’ contact information at [www.legis.state.ga.us](http://www.legis.state.ga.us) House Information, 1-800-282-5800; Senate Information 1-800-282-5803.

Budget Information:

The 2013 Session tackles the 2013 supplemental budget, referred to here as FY 2013A, (ending June 30, 2013) and the 2014 FY budget (beginning July 1, 2013). Earlier this week, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved their FY 2013A budget bill. This issue reviews the differences in FY 2013A between the governor’s proposed budget, the House-approved budget and the Senate Appropriations Committee budget.

Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities; FY 2013A

The Senate Appropriations committee recommended one change to the DBHDD budget proposed by the governor and approved by the House. The committee voted to negatively adjust Adult Forensic Services by \$237,000 to reflect actual employee start dates. The Senate Appropriations committee did not make any other changes to the 2013A budget for DBHDD, including the Department of Justice settlement funds.

Settlement Funds for Developmental Disabilities—FY 2013A

	FY13 current	FY13 Amended
Family Supports for 1,350 Families:	\$4,648,400	\$4,648,400
NOW/COMP Waivers (250 new):	\$19,846,352	\$19,846,352
Crisis Respite Homes (9) & Mobile Crisis Teams (6):	\$11,917,681	\$11,917,681
Education of Judges and Law Enforcement:	\$250,000	\$250,000
Waiver Audits:	\$200,000	\$200,000
DD Total spending:	\$36,862,433	\$36,862,433

Department of Community Health; FY 2013A

In the Aged, Blind and Disabled program (ABD), there are some differences between the Governor's proposed budget, the House-approved budget and the budget approved by Senate Appropriations. After the full Senate votes on the budget, these differences will be worked out; stay tuned.

In the Aged, Blind and Disabled (ABD) program, the proposed \$3.5 million reduction in state funds to be achieved by better enforcing the level of care required to qualify for long-term care and home and community-based services did not change.

Following are the budget numbers for DCH as proposed by the

governor, approved by the House, and recommended by the Senate Appropriations Committee (SAC).

Reduce funds to reflect an unimplemented pharmacy reimbursement policy

<b>State General Funds:</b>		
⇒ Governor \$0	House (\$1,200,000)	SAC (\$1,200,000)
<b>Medical Assistance Program:</b>		
⇒ Governor \$0	House (\$2,299,562)	SAC (\$2,299,562)
<b>Total Public Funds:</b>		
⇒ Governor \$0	House (\$3,499,563)	SAC (\$3,499,563)

Transfer Funds from Low-Income Medicaid to Medicaid ABD to reflect updated Medicaid projections

<b>State General Funds:</b>		
⇒ Governor \$0	House \$85,443,030	SAC \$86,302,216
<b>Medical Assistance Program:</b>		
⇒ Governor \$0	House \$162,734,660	SAC \$165,381,120
<b>Total Public Funds:</b>		
⇒ Governor \$0	House \$249,177,690	SAC \$251,683,336

Reduce funds for unrealized prior year reserves to reflect the FY2012 audited Budgetary Compliance Report

<b>Prior year state General Funds:</b>		
⇒ Governor \$0	House \$0	SAC (\$6,500,000)

Recognize an increase from 2 percent to 10 percent in budgetary flexibility between Low-Income Medicaid and Medicaid ABD programs (Senate: YES)

<b>State General Funds:</b>		
⇒ Governor \$0	House \$0	SAC \$0

In the DCH budget, the Senate Appropriations committee transferred \$23,177,802 to the new "Surplus to the Revenue Shortfall Reserve" program. We are analyzing how this program would work in relation to Medicaid; stay tuned.

Department of Human Services; FY 2013A

In the Elder Community Living Services program, the \$2.6 million reduction based on the capping of the CCSP waiver in October 2012 did not change.

In the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency budget, the House added \$1 million to the Governor's recommended funds for the Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute. The Senate Appropriations committee did not approve this additional \$1 million. After the full Senate votes on the budget, the difference will be resolved; stay tuned.

Department of Education; FY 2013A

In the Non-Quality Basic Education Formula Grants, the governor’s budget recommended reducing funds for Residential Treatment Centers and Sparsity Grants by 3 percent.

The House reduced these cuts to 1 percent. The Senate Appropriations committee kept the 1 percent cut to Residential Treatment Center funding and eliminated the cut to Sparsity Grants.

In the Quality Basic Education (QBE) program, neither the House nor the Senate Appropriations committee changed the amount of additional funding recommended by the Governor for enrollment growth and Special Needs scholarships; both House and Senate Appropriations rolled these into one item along with charter school funds. (The amount for charter schools in this item is different between House and Senate Appropriations.)

Again, as with all differences, stay tuned as these will be resolved after the full Senate votes on the budget.

**CALENDAR** The Legislature has set the calendar up to Day 29, which will be Tuesday, March 5. The dates below indicate when the General Assembly will be in session.

Monday, Feb. 25 to Friday, March. 1	(Days 23-27)
Monday, March 4 to Tuesday, March 5	(Days 28-29)



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**Legislation — HOUSE:**

**HB 18:** The "Blind Persons' Braille Literacy Rights and Education Act"; to provide requirements for textbook publishers relating to electronic materials; to provide license requirements relating to Braille for certain teachers. **Sponsor:** Waites, K., 60. **Status:** Prefiled.

**HB 67:** To expand the Brain and Spinal Injury Trust Fund provisions under the Constitution of Georgia to authorize additional penalty assessments for additional violations. **Sponsor:** Culver, 145. **Status:** Judy; House Second Readers.

**HB 70:** Relating to the scholarship program for special needs students; to provide for the waiver of one of the scholarship requirements under certain conditions. **Sponsors:** Golick, 40; Coleman, 97; Setzler, 35; Lindsey, 54; Dudgeon, 25; Kaiser, 59. **Status:** Ed; House Committee Favorably Reported by Substitute.

**HB 74:** To require health plans to provide coverage for hearing aids for certain individuals. **Sponsors:** Edward Lindsey, 54; Doug Holt, 112; Mike Glanton, 75; Tom Dickson, 6; Tommy Benton, 31; Pat Gardner, 57. **Status:** Insurance; House Second Readers.

**HB 78:** Relating to the protection of disabled adults and elder persons, and reporting abuse or exploitation of residents in long-term care facilities; to change provisions relating to cruelty to a person 65 years of age or older. **Sponsors:** Wendell, 51; Jones, 47; Lindsey, 54; Abrams, 89; Cooper, 43; Houston, 170. **Status:** Judy; House Second Readers.

**HB 119:** To provide for enhanced sentencing of defendants guilty of crimes that target a victim due to the victim's race, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin. **Sponsors:** Marin, 96; Waites, 60; Brooks, 55; Bell, 58. **Status:** JudyNC; House Second Readers.

**HB 166:** The "Parent Protection Act"; to provide for leave for employees to attend school conferences and medical appointments; to provide that retaliatory actions are unlawful. **Sponsors:** Bruce, 61; Anderson, 92; Abrams, 89; Hugley, 136; Mitchell, 88; Holcomb, 81. **Status:** I&L; House Second Readers.

**HB 198:** To provide for licensing of health insurance navigators under the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. **Sponsors:** Smith, R., 134; Meadows, 5; Maxwell, 17; Shaw, 176; Abrams, 89; Gardner, 57. **Status:** Insurance; House Passed & Adopted; Senate Read and Referred.

**HB 205:** To provide for a psychiatric advance directive. **Sponsors:** Lindsey, 54; Gardner, 57; Willard, 51; Neal, 2; Weldon, 3; Oliver, 82. **Status:** H&HS; House Second Readers.

**HB 207:** To authorize issuance of a special turkey-hunting permit and provide for an extended turkey season for young and mobility impaired hunters. **Sponsors:** Shaw, 176; Roberts, 155; Tankersley, 160; Williams, 168; Nimmer, 178; Black, 174. **Status:** GF&P; House Second Readers.

**HB 242:** To enact comprehensive juvenile justice reforms recommended by the Governor's Special Council on Justice Reform in Georgia. **Sponsors:** Willard, 51; Coomer, 14; Hatchett, 150; Nimmer, 178; Oliver, 82; Neal, 2. **Status:** Judy; House Committee Favorably Reported by Substitute.

**HB 290:** To allow employees to use sick leave for the care of immediate family members. **Sponsors:** Dempsey, 13; Benton, 31; Clark, 101; Brockway, 102; Kaiser, 59; Powell, 171. **Status:** HR&A; House Committee Favorably Reported.

**HB 299:** Relating to tax returns, so as to provide for contributions to Special Olympics Georgia Incorporated. **Sponsors:** Watson, 172; Shaw, 176; Carter, 175; England, 116; Sharper, 177; Black, 174. **Status:** W&M; House Second Readers.

**HB 303:** to provide that a person who has been denied a license to carry a weapon or has had such license revoked because of mental incompetency may reapply after five years. **Sponsors:** Gardner, 57; Jones, 62; Abrams, 89; Williams, 168; Fludd, 64; Holcomb, 81. **Status:** PS&HS; House Second Readers.

**HB 309:** "Ava's Law," to provide for certain insurance coverage of autism spectrum disorders. **Sponsors:** Harbin, 122; Dempsey, 13; Ramsey, 72; Randall, 142; Neal, 2; Battles, 15. **Status:** Insurance; House Second Readers.

**HR 24:** To authorize the General Assembly to provide for additional penalties or fees for offenses involving illegal parking in spaces reserved for persons with disabilities, operating a motorcycle without protective headgear, operating a boat or other watercraft while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and reckless driving; authorized to allocate such additional penalties or fees to the Brain and Spinal Injury Trust Fund. **Sponsor:** Kidd, 145. **Status:** Judy; House Second Readers.

**Legislation — SENATE:**

**SB 14:** To create a Georgia Alzheimer's and Related Dementias State Plan Task Force. **Sponsor:** Unterman, R. 45. **Status:** H&HS; Senate Passed & Adopted; House Second Readers.

**SB 23:** The "Stacey Nicole English Act," to aid in the location of missing persons who may be incapacitated due to serious medical conditions. **Sponsor:** Davenport, 44; Fort, 39; Jones, 10; Donzella, 35; Tate, 38; Butler, 55. **Status:** PS; Senate Read and Referred.

**SB 24 (Companion bill to HB51):** To enact the "Hospital Medicaid Financing Program Act"; to authorize the Department of Community Health to assess a provider payment on hospitals. **Sponsors:** Bethel, 54; Jeffares, 17; Jackson, 24. **Status:** RI&U; House & Senate Passed and Adopted; Signed by governor.

**SB 47:** To provide that each individual accident and sickness health insurance policy sold shall provide coverage for treatment of dependent children with cancer and provide coverage for autism. **Sponsors:** Fort, 39; Henson, 41; Tate, 38; Sims, 12; Lucas, 26; Donzella, 35. **Status:** I&L; Senate Read and Referred.

**SB 50:** Relating to absentee voting, so as to change the time periods for advance voting. **Sponsors:** Henson, 41; Ramsey, 43; Tate, 38; Butler, 55; Lucas, 26; Fort, 39. **Status:** Ethics; Senate Read and Referred.

**SB 62:** To establish the Federal and State Funded Health Care Financing Programs Overview Committee. **Sponsors:** Hill, 32; Shafer, 48; Unterman, 45; Miller, 49; Gooch, 51; Hill, 6. **Status:** H&HS; Senate Read and Referred.

**SB 65:** To authorize a licensed professional counselor to perform certain acts which physicians, psychologists, and others are authorized to perform regarding emergency examinations of persons who are mentally ill or alcoholic or drug dependent. **Sponsor:** Unterman, 45. **Status:** H&HS; Senate Passed and Adopted; House Second Readers.

**SB 115:** To provide that performance data of students in certain placements are included in the resident school system data. **Sponsors:** Tipkins, 37; Wilkinson, 50; Jeffares, 17; Williams, 19; Harper, 7; Millar, 40. **Status:** Ed&Y; Senate Read and Referred.

**SB 161:** To change provisions relating to persons who are ineligible for weapons carry licenses, and providing certain information to the FBI in conjunction with the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, so as to change provisions relating to the retention of certain information. **Sponsors:** Jones, 10; Harbison, 15; Jackson, 2; Butler, 55; Sims, 12; Seay, 34. **Status:** JudyNC; Senate Read and Referred.

**SB 163:** To require the Department of Community Health to study and identify options for Medicaid reform; to provide for a report on findings and recommendations. **Sponsors:** Ligon, 3; Albers, 56; Millar, 40; Loudermilk, 14; McKoon, 29; Crane, 28. **Status:** H&HS; Senate Read and Referred.

**SR 12 (Partner resolution to HR 280):** A resolution urging the Governor to expand Medicaid coverage under the Affordable Care Act. **Sponsors:** Henson, 41; Fort, 39; Tate, 38; Harbison, 15; Lucas, 26; James, 35. **Status:** H&HS; Senate Read and Referred.

**SR20:** A resolution requesting that all physicians include autism spectrum disorders screening in all well-child visits no later than 18 months of age. **Sponsors:** Donzella, 35; Davenport, 44; Orrock, 36; Henson, 41. **Status:** H&HS; Senate Read and Referred.

**SR 228:** A resolution requesting the repeal of the \$100 billion federal sales tax on health insurance imposed by the Affordable Care Act. **Sponsors:** Shafer, 48; McKoon, 29; Hill, 32; Albers, 56; Loudermilk, 14; Ligon, 3. **Status:** Rules; Senate Read & Referred.

**Dates to Remember:**

**February is Self-Advocates Month at the Capitol**

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