



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



February 16, 2024

Welcome to GHLA @ the Capitol, your weekly update about news you need to know related to Georgia's lodging industry and the 2024 General Assembly.

GHLA's legislative team will be your eyes and ears under the Gold Dome.

Legislative Schedule

This week the legislature was in session Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday for days 19-22. Crossover Day deadline is scheduled for Thursday, February 29. This 28th day of session is when bills must pass out of committee and be approved by their chamber of origin to be eligible for further consideration. The pace of the legislature will likely continue to increase this next week as legislators hustle to introduce and perfect priority issues. GHLA's policy team will continue closely monitoring legislation impacting taxation, tort reform, social issues and the hospital industry at large.

Click [here](#) to see the rest of the legislative calendar. The legislature will reconvene on Tuesday, February 20th for Legislative Day 23.

Savannah-Georgia Convention Center Authority

[HB1041](#) by Rep. Stephens (R-Savannah) will increase the Savannah-Georgia Convention Center's bonding capacity from \$50 million to \$400 million, matching the bonding capacity of the World Congress Center. The Savannah-Georgia Convention Center has generated hundreds of millions of dollars since opening in 2000. The Convention Center would like to sell private bonds to fund the construction of a new hotel that will reside on the premises. HB1041 passed out of the House Economic Development committee on Tuesday.

CPACE Financing

[HB206](#) by Rep. Steven Sainz (R-St. Mary's) passed the Senate State and Local Governmental Operations Committee. This bill authorizes commercial property assessed clean energy (C-PACE) financing and allows hoteliers to take advantage of low-cost financing for energy efficient upgrades and other capital purchases. GHLA supports this additional financing option for property owners and will be working with the coalition to move this legislation through the process. This bill is currently pending in Senate Rules Committee.

Cash Mandate Bill

[HB940](#) by Rep. Todd Jones (R - South Forsyth) requires retail stores and restaurants to accept cash. The bill sponsor made changes to allow for a few exceptions such as venues that host live events, airports, and wholesale membership clubs. There is

additional flexibility in the bill for autonomous retail locations with kiosks consumers can use. The bill is currently in House Rules.

Georgia Film Industry Update

The House Economic Development Committee received a Film Industry Update from Tiffany FitzHenry on Tuesday this week. Mrs. FitzHenry emphasized how Georgia is in an incredible position with an extraordinary film industry. Georgia has the largest and most skilled crew base in the world, the best infrastructure and technology, and has more stages and camera ready communities than its competition. Georgia also has a bigger production footprint in the industry, which is important because the industry is seeing a shift to independent production and studios are contracting. They are developing and producing less content on their own, but need more content than ever before. Independent production currently makes up about 95% of the movies and content that are made.

Film Tax Credit

HB1180 by Rep. Carpenter (R - Dalton) is an update to the film tax credit. It would raise the minimum spending to \$1 million on a single state certified production. There is a cap on 2.5% of the revenue estimate of transferability investments. This bill also states that a production would have to meet four of nine criteria to qualify for the credit in addition to the minimum \$1 million spending:

- 50% of the crew are Georgia residents.
- 50% of the vendors used are from Georgia.
- Minimum \$30 million production expenditure.
- 50% of filming is done in rural counties.
- 50% of photography days are done within the state.
- The production forms a long term relationship with the studio.
- Georgia vendors utilize 20% of the post production expenditures in the state of Georgia.
- Working with the Georgia work force and film academy.
- The Uplift for the peach or Georgia marketing for film.

Small Business Protection Act of 2024

SB429 sponsored by Sen. Dolezal (R-Cumming) provides for the preparation and submission of a Small Business Impact Analysis for bills introduced during sessions of the General Assembly. This bill is the centerpiece of the Lieutenant Governor's Red Tape Reduction agenda and creates a Small Business Impact Analysis. Members of the General Assembly will estimate the economic costs and benefits bills would have on small businesses, including the cost of providing goods and services, the availability and cost of workers, industry competition and consumer choice, and potential compliance cost. The hope of this is to prevent the implementation of any regulatory mechanisms that may be harmful to small businesses.

Labor Unions

SB362 sponsored by Sen. Hodges (R-Brunswick) provides requirements for employers

to be eligible to receive an economic development incentive. It states that employers must voluntarily grant recognition rights for the employees on the basis of signed labor organization authorization cards and voluntarily disclose an employee's personal contact information to a labor organization. [SB362](#) passed out of the Senate Chamber last week with a vote of 31-23 and passed out of the House Industry and Labor committee this week. The bill is currently pending in House Rules Committee.

Legislative Tracking Update

House Bills

[HB1227](#) - Representative Mandisha Thomas (D-South Fulton) - the Georgia Unlawful Squatting Act.

[HB1232](#) - Representative Matt Reeves (R-Suwanee) - would allow municipalities to keep wine bars and wine shops open on Sundays if the sale is lawful otherwise.

House Resolutions

[HR1136](#) - Rep. James Beverly (D-Macon) is an amendment to the Constitution of the State of Georgia so as to authorize the Georgia General Assembly to provide by general law for sports betting, pari-mutuel betting, and casino gambling in this state.

Senate Bills

[SB496](#) - Senator Burns (R-Sylvania) - provides extensions for preferential assessment periods for certain historic properties for ad valorem taxation of property.

[SB512](#) - Senator Shawn Still (R-Norcross) - relating to payment and disposition of fines and forfeitures, so as to create the Victims of Human Trafficking Fund and the Victims of Human Trafficking Fund Commission.

[SB514](#) - Senator Shawn Still (R-Norcross) - relating to kidnapping, false imprisonment, and related offenses, so as to provide for a required human trafficking training program for hotels; to provide for definitions; to provide for retraining.

GHLA Full Legislative Tracking Update

Please [click here to go to our Legislative tracking page](#) for the complete list of bills we are watching.