



2-6-2026 GHLA Capitol Report Week 4

Welcome to GHLA @ the Capitol, your weekly update about news you need to know related to Georgia's lodging industry and the 2026 General Assembly. GHLA's legislative team will be your eyes and ears under the Gold Dome.

Report HB 61 " No Pay, No Stay" Advances

This week, HB 61 passed out of the Senate Public Safety Committee, marking a significant step forward for one of GHLA's top legislative priorities this session. The bill will now move to the Senate Rules Committee before advancing to the Senate floor.

Representative Devan Seabaugh, the bill's sponsor, has fought fiercely on behalf of the hospitality industry to move this legislation forward and will continue to face strong opposition as the bill advances. HB 61 provides much-needed clarity and enforcement authority by requiring law enforcement to remove individuals from hotel and motel properties who refuse to pay and refuse to leave.



Representative Devan Seabaugh (left) and Lisa Anders (right) close out debate with a powerful statement.

GHLA strongly encourages members to thank Rep. Seabaugh for his continued leadership and willingness to stand with our industry in the face of intense opposition.

Suggested Thank-You Template for Rep. Seabaugh:

Dear Representative Seabaugh,

On behalf of the [Hotel / Property Name], I want to thank you for your continued leadership and support of Georgia's hospitality industry.

HB 61 addresses a critical issue facing hotels across the state and provides long-overdue clarity for operators and law enforcement alike. We sincerely appreciate your willingness to fight for this legislation and for our industry, even in the face of significant opposition.

Thank you for your hard work and for continuing to push HB 61 toward the finish line.

Sincerely, [Name]

Representative Seabaugh's Email: devan.seabaugh@house.ga.gov

Governor's Race Shake-Up

This week saw a major and unexpected development in the 2026 governor's race. Rick Jackson, founder and CEO of Jackson Healthcare, officially entered the race as a Republican, launching his campaign with a \$50 million self-funded investment, including a \$40 million advertising buy already on the air.

Jackson's entry immediately reshapes an already crowded field and positions him as a serious contender, given the scale of his personal investment and ability to self-fund for the duration of the race. His announcement adds new pressure to existing frontrunners and underscores how competitive and fluid the 2026 statewide landscape will be.

GHLA will continue to closely monitor all statewide and legislative races as the election cycle progresses.

New Legislation Introduced: HB 1179 and HB 1216

Two new bills impacting hotel-motel tax administration and oversight were introduced this week. Both bills are sponsored by the Chairman of the House Economic Development & Tourism Committee, Ron Stephens.

HB 1179 updates the process for changing or altering a local government's designated destination marketing organization. The bill removes the existing \$500,000 revenue threshold that currently limits when changes can occur and instead routes disputes to the Hotel-Motel Tax Performance Review Board. It also establishes clear criteria the board must consider, requires quarterly meetings, and adds transparency through notice and hearing requirements. The bill is designed to strengthen oversight while providing consistency and accountability in tourism promotion decisions.

HB 1216 would require all hotel-motel excise taxes to be remitted to the Department of Revenue for centralized disbursement rather than directly to local governments. The bill outlines new reporting, documentation, and compliance requirements, including itemized

expenditure reporting and submission of contracts governing tax use. The proposal represents a significant shift in how hotel-motel taxes are administered statewide and will be closely reviewed by GHLA as it moves forward.

Human Trafficking Prevention Training Legislation

GHLA continues advancing legislation requiring human trafficking prevention training for lodging businesses statewide, one of the association's top priorities this session.

The language in HB 490 continues to be refined, and the bill is expected to return to the House Economic Development and Tourism Committee next Thursday. GHLA is actively working with the bill's author and committee leadership to perfect the legislation before it advances.

On the Senate side, Senator Shawn Still is working on a companion bill using the same training language. While that language is still being finalized, GHLA remains engaged to ensure consistency across both chambers.

Legislative Tracking Update:

House Bills:

[HB 1116](#) - Homeownership Opportunity and Market Equalization Act of 2026; enact

[HB 1122](#) - Insurance; group or individual accident and sickness plans; provisions

[HB 1124](#) - State government; require certain agencies to consider definition of hinduphobia to apply to laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin

[HB 1125](#) - Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act; add independent filmmakers to list of entities eligible to claim tax credits for qualified production activities

[HB 1126](#) - Georgia Musical Investment Act; enact

[HB 1128](#) - State Board of Workers' Compensation; notice of eligibility for compensation to an injured employee to his or her legal guardian; provide

[HB 1129](#) - Local government; designation of enterprise zones; provisions

[HB 1132](#) - Sales and use tax; exempt materials used in construction, renovation, and rehabilitation of affordable housing by purely public charities

[HB 1137](#) - MARTA; authority of local governing bodies to collect a 1 percent retail sales and use tax; extend sunset

[HB 1147](#) - Georgia Childcare for Economic Well-Being Act; enact

[HB 1148](#) - Income tax; donation of real property for conservation purposes; revise tax credits

[HB 1152](#) - Health Coverage Affordability and Fairness Act; enact

[HB 1153](#) - Revenue and taxation; tax credit for newly constructed residences built by a

residential contractor or builder that are sold to taxpayers earning no more than 80 percent of the area median income; provide

[HB 1157](#) - Labor and industrial relations; preemption of wage and employment benefit mandates adopted by a local government entity; repeal certain provisions

[HB 1162](#) - Corporations; require corporations and limited liability companies and their subsidiaries to provide certain information to the Secretary of State if they own a certain number of multifamily residences

[HB 1165](#) - Georgia Urban Sustainable Gardens Act; enact

[HB 1166](#) - Local government; zoning decisions shall not affect or be required for certain residential dwellings of 400 square feet or fewer; provide

[HB 1171](#) - Landlord and tenant; establish minimum habitability standards consistent with recognized housing standards

[HB 1174](#) - Federal Workforce Stability and Reemployment Priority Act; enact

[HB 1175](#) - Crimes; offense of theft by shoplifting of essential items; provide

[HB 1176](#) - Sales and use tax; sale of any tangible personal property used or consumed in connection with the generation, transmission, distribution, sale, or furnishing of electricity; exempt

[HB 1177](#) - Development authorities; certain affordable housing uses of property qualify as projects; provide

[HB 1179](#) - Revenue and taxation; excise tax on rooms, lodgings, and accommodations; provisions

[HB 1180](#) - Georgia Housing and Finance Authority; eliminate outstanding bond limit

[HB 1186](#) - Garden City Area Convention and Visitors Bureau Authority; repeal Act

[HB 1187](#) - Trey's Law; enact

[HB 1188](#) - Commerce and trade; encourage transparency and fairness with respect to rent pricing for residential properties

[HB 1192](#) - Public assistance; certain accounting practices by Department of Human Services and Department of Community Health; provide

[HB 1196](#) - Crimes; offense of criminal trespass involving a wild animal; provide

[HB 1197](#) - Georgia Lottery for Education Act; authorize certain billiards and darts tournaments and prizes

[HB 1199](#) - Revenue and taxation; Internal Revenue Code and Internal Revenue Code of 1986; revise terms and incorporate certain provisions of federal law into Georgia law

[HB 1201](#) - Fire protection; compliance with safety standards for smoke detectors; provide

[HB 1204](#) - Employment; age discrimination; change age of individuals protected

[HB 1209](#) - Sales and use tax; purchases of tangible property and construction materials used for or in the construction and furnishing of certain buildings; provide exemption

[HB 1212](#) - PFAS Removal and Remediation Promotion Act; enact

[HB 1216](#) - Revenue and taxation; require that any excise tax on rooms, lodgings, and accommodations be remitted to the Department of Revenue for disbursement

[HB 1217](#) - Bryce Brooks Act; enact

[HB 1219](#) - Property; require new property owners' associations to be subject to Georgia Property Owners' Association Act

[HB 1221](#) - Property owners' associations; written notice of certain sums; provide

[HB 1224](#) - Contracts; termination of certain automatic renewal provisions; reduce applicable period

[HB 1225](#) - Contracts; automatic renewal provisions; provide certain consumers a pro rata refund relative to a canceled service contract in the event of a price increase

[HB 1229](#) - Alcoholic beverages; authorize a local governing authority to allow certain museums within its jurisdiction to sell alcoholic beverages at the same times on Sundays as other retailers

House Resolutions:

[HR 1177](#) - Pedestrians; wear bright or reflective clothing at night to improve visibility to drivers; urge

[HR 1178](#) - General Assembly; provide by general law for local grant and adjustment programs; authorize

[HR 1203](#) - General Assembly; trust fund for purpose of providing no-cost access to certain vaccines for children 18 years of age or younger and seniors 60 years of age or older; provide - CA

[HR 1243](#) - Georgia Next Generation 9-1-1 Fund; authorize creation - CA

[HR 1244](#) - Ad valorem tax; business enterprises; rate of assessment of 1,000 or more single family residential properties used for rental income; provisions - CA

Senate Bills:

[SB 444](#) - Private Review Agents; certain decisions with regard to the provision of insurance coverage for healthcare services shall not be based solely on artificial intelligence systems; provide

[SB 448](#) - State Income Taxes; tax credits for low income buildings; certain senior living facilities to acquire and maintain sufficient emergency and standby power systems to provide for the safety and welfare of residents at such facility; require

[SB 453](#) - "Rural Incentive Act"; enact

[SB 454](#) - Regulation of Fire and Other Hazards; use of temporary door locking devices in public buildings during certain emergency situations; authorize

[SB 455](#) - Georgia Artificial Intelligence Commission; establishment

[SB 456](#) - Alcoholic Beverages; regulation of the manufacture, distribution, and sale; provide

[SB 458](#) - "Home Inspector Licensing Act of Georgia"; enact

[SB 463](#) - Specialized Land Transactions; business enterprises or business enterprises controlled by natural born persons from owning an interest in more than 500 single-family residential properties; prohibit

[?SB 464](#) - Law Enforcement Officers and Agencies; federal immigration authorities from utilizing certain technologies to identify individuals for certain purposes; prohibit

[SB 465](#) - Income Taxes; business enterprises that hire illegal aliens for large-scale projects from claiming certain tax credits associated with such projects; disqualify

Senate Resolutions:

[SR 668](#) - General Assembly; the assessment of property taxes on property; electronic equipment primarily used to process, store, or transmit digital information and data; authorize

GHLA Full Legislative Tracking Update

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

[Visit our main page.](#)