



## **February 10, 2023**

Welcome to GHLA @ the Capitol, your weekly update about news you need to know related to Georgia's lodging industry and the 2023 General Assembly.

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

### **Legislative Schedule**

This week the General Assembly was in session Monday to Thursday for legislative days 13-16.

The legislature will convene again on Monday, February 13, 2023 for day 17.

For the full legislative schedule, view the [adjournment resolution](#).

### **Destination Marketing Organization Legislation**

This week Sen. Billy Hickman (R-Statesboro) introduced [SB 127](#). Sen. Hickman worked closely with GHLA to place guardrails on hotel/motel tax usages and the associated authorities. The bill would require a local government, prior to altering their local Convention and Visitors Bureau, to first go to the hotel/motel performance review board under the Dept. of Community Affairs for review.

This bill mirrors [HB 223](#) previously introduced and sponsored by Rep. Ron Stephens (R-Savannah).

### **Buckhead City Legislation**

This week Sen. Randy Robertson (R-Cataula) introduced two pieces of legislations related to Buckhead City.

The legislation [SB 113](#), dealing with transfer of facilities and assets, and [SB 114](#), dealing with a referendum for incorporating the new city out of the current city of Atlanta, is not a new proposal. Similar legislation from the previous session was introduced but failed to pass due to then-Lt. Gov Duncan and then-Speaker Ralston pledging they would not support the measure.

Sen. Robertson stated this week in a press release regarding Buckhead City, "Regardless of the outcomes, what matters to me as a legislator is that the people had the opportunity to decide for themselves. As lead sponsor of this legislation, you will not

hear me politicizing, name-calling, or blaming. I simply believe in the right of self-determination, and there is a lot of wisdom in letting the voters sort through the politics and settle the argument once and for all.”

Although there is new leadership in the House and Senate, with Lt. Gov. Burt Jones and Speaker John Burns, [Mayor Andre Dickens, and city parnters, maintain vehement opposition to Buckhead City legislation.](#)

### **Human Trafficking Hotline Legislation**

[SB42](#) sponsored by Sen. Mike Hodges (R-Brunswick) increases the fines to up to \$1,000 for any business that do not properly post the model notice related to the Human Trafficking Hotline Information as required by current state law. This week the bill was favorably passed by the Senate Public Safety Committee and will continue to move in the legislative process.

### **Interchange Fee Legislation**

This week Sen. Hickman (R-Statesboro) introduced [SB 127](#) to remove interchange fees on sales tax that are negotiated between the merchants and the payment processors. This model legislation is being introduced in various state legislatures as an attempt by the retail industry to reduce fees associated with the sale of consumer products.

### **Legislative Tracking Update**

#### **House**

[HB 223](#) - Representative Ron Stephens (R-Savannah) Revenue and taxation; procedures for certain local governments to change certain nonprofit organizations engaged to promote tourism, conventions, and trade shows for such jurisdiction.

[HB241](#) - Representative Dewey McClain (D-Lawrenceville) increases the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, with exceptions including employers that make less than \$50,000 a year and if the employee is in HS or college.

[HB256](#) - Representative Kim Schofield (D- Hapeville) expands the definition of age discrimination in the workplace from it being illegal to fire anyone 40-70 on the basis of age to anyone over the age of 40.

#### **Senate**

[SB 113](#) - Senator Randy Roberston (R-Cataula) This bill will provide for the transition of services and facilities from an existing municipality to a newly incorporated municipality.

[SB114](#) - Senator Randy Roberston (R-Cataula) This bill will create a city of Buckhead, create its charters, and detailing the powers of the city.

[SB 127](#) - Senator Billy Hickman (R-Statesboro) revenue and taxation; procedures for certain local governments to change certain nonprofit organizations engaged to promote tourism, conventions, and trade shows for such jurisdiction.

### **Hotel Tax Local Update**

[HB 210](#) - Representative Vance Smith (R-Pine Mountain) Harris County; levy an excise tax

### **[GHLA Full Legislative Tracking Update](#)**

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