



This Week in the Senate

March 4 – March 8, 2013

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A Message from Senate President Pro Tempore David Shafer

“The Georgia Senate made a tremendous effort this week working through the 246 bills filed in the Secretary of the Senate’s office before Crossover Day. We could not have finished the job without the help of our hard working Senate staff, aides and interns. My thanks to each one of you.”

“Congratulations to Sen. Burt Jones (R – Jackson) and Sen. Chuck Hufstetler (R – Rome) on passing their first bill through the Senate this week.”

“It was also a pleasure to talk with Senator Johnny Isakson, a distinguished alumnus of the Georgia Senate, during his visit to the State Capitol this week.”

– Senate President Pro Tem David Shafer

Senate Bills

MONDAY, MARCH 4

Bill to Create Returning Veterans Task Force Passes Senate

SB 76, sponsored by Sen. Lester Jackson (D-Savannah), passed the Senate by a vote of 51-0. The legislation would create the Returning Veterans Task Force within the State Department of Veterans Services. If passed into law, the task force would meet at least quarterly to investigate how state services can be provided to veterans returning from military service in order to assist them in readjusting to civilian life. **–SB 76**

Bill to Allow Part-Time Assistant and Solicitors-General to Practice Law Passes Senate

A bill to allow part-time assistant and solicitors general to practice law in their state court, with exemptions, passed the Senate by a vote of 52-0. SB 96 would allow these individuals to practice law outside their official capacity. They would not, however, be able to represent defendants in criminal matters in their state court. SB 96 was sponsored by Sen. Jeff Mullis (R-Chickamauga). **–SB 96**

Weapons Reporting and Licensing Bill Passes Senate

SB 101, a bill that would remove burdensome reporting requirements for firearms dealers and recognize out-of-state weapons carry licenses in Georgia, passed the Senate by a vote of 41-10. Other measures proposed in SB 101 include removing the superfluous state required license currently required for a firearms dealer and requiring only a Federal Firearms License, and strengthening confidentiality by prohibiting the state from creating and maintaining a database of license holders. SB 101 was sponsored by Sen. Frank Ginn (R-Danielsville)—**SB 101**

‘Borrow Pit’ Redefined

SB 156, sponsored by Sen. Ross Tolleson (R-Perry), revises the term ‘borrow pit’ to allow a property owner to use earthen materials from excavated areas of less than five acres without having to apply for a mining permit. However, these materials cannot be sold. SB 156 passed the Senate by a vote of 51-0. **–SB 156**

Bill to Streamline Business License Renewal Process Passes Senate

SB 160, sponsored by Sen. Frank Ginn (R-Danielsville) passed the Senate by a vote of 51-0. This legislation would clarify and streamline the verification process for individuals applying for or renewing business licenses and public benefits. –**SB 160**

State and Local Public Works Contracts Bill Passes Senate

A bill to prohibit state local governments from disqualifying or penalizing a bidder for a public works contract based upon a lack of previous experience with the same type of job passed the Senate by a vote of 50-0. This bill would allow a contractor who has done the same type of work to bid for a job up to 30 percent greater in size than their previous works. Increasing bids and making the process more competitive will reduce the costs for taxpayers. SB 168 was sponsored by Sen. Lindsey Tippins (R-Marietta). –**SB 168**

Public Works Construction Contracts Bill Passes Senate

SB 179, sponsored by Sen. Hunter Hill (R-Smyrna), passed the Senate by a vote of 48-0. This bill would encourage competitive proposals for public works construction projects by eliminating the need for bid bonds when the state or a local government invites such proposals. SB 179 would also authorize state and local public works construction contracts to collect compensation for the completion of late construction projects, and would provide incentives for early project completion. –**SB 179**

Family Support Laws Bill Passes Senate

This bill, sponsored by Sen. Bill Cowsert (R-Athens) clarifies and codifies jurisdictional, procedural, and evidentiary rules relating to family support laws. This bill would assist with enforcing modifying custody or child support obligations, specifically in cases involving other states or countries. SB 193 would ensure that identifying information that could jeopardize health, safety, or liberty would not be disclosed to the other party or the public. SB 193 passed the Senate by a vote of 45-0. –**SB 193**

Barn Restoration Bill Passes Senate

SB 194, sponsored by Sen. Jeff Mullis (R-Chickamauga), would allow a person to restore historic structures built prior to 1965 and which previously promoted Georgia tourist destinations. SB 194 is intended to help preserve the state's remaining 'See Rock City' barns. –**SB 194**

Epinephrine Bill Passes Senate

SB 195 passed the Senate by a vote of 50-1. This is the first bill sponsored by Sen. Chuck Hufstetler (R-Rome), and would authorize physicians and other practitioners with prescribing authority to prescribe auto-injectable epinephrine in the name of a public or private school. Furthermore, this bill would allow schools to stock a supply of auto-injectable epinephrine if a practitioner has issued a prescription in the name of the school, and would allow a school employee to provide or administer auto-injectable epinephrine to a student that the employee believes in good faith is experiencing an anaphylactic adverse reaction. –**SB 195**

Bill to Allow Self-Help Documents Passes Senate

Under this bill, sponsored by Sen. John Wilkinson (R-Toccoa), individuals or companies providing self-help or informational documents would not be prohibited from doing so as long as the storefront, website, or other medium providing the items states that the information is not a substitute for the advice of a relevant industry professional. This provision would apply regardless of whether the items, which may be provided in hard copy, electronically, or online, are made available with or without a fee. SB 209 passed the Senate by a vote of 48-1. –**SB 209**

Bill to Authorize DOT to Issue Commercial Wrecker Emergency Tow Permits Passes Senate

A bill to authorize the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to issue commercial wrecker emergency tow permits for additional vehicles and increase the allowable weight limits passed the Senate by a vote of 50-0. Current law authorizes the GDOT Commissioner to issue an annual permit for vehicles towing disabled, damaged, or wrecked commercial vehicles, unless the vehicle exceeds certain weight and length limits. This legislation was sponsored by Sen. Steve Gooch (R-Dahlonega). –**SB 218**

TUESDAY, MARCH 5

Bill to Allow Parent to Review Child's Health Insurance Records Passes Senate

SB 1, sponsored by Sen. William Ligon (R-Brunswick) passed the Senate by a vote of 49-3. This legislation would require health insurers to allow a parent to inspect, review, or attain copies of health insurance records relating to his or her own child. Frequently, one parent will have custody over a child while another carries the child's health insurance. This bill would allow both parents to have access to their child's health records. **—SB 1**

Fractional Penny Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax Passes Senate

Sen. Judson Hill (R-Marietta) sponsored SB 99, which passed the Senate by a vote of 47-1. SB 99 would authorize local governments to collect up to one penny for SPLOST referendum questions. **—SB 99**

Bill to Increase Penalty for Homicide by Vehicle Passes Senate

A bill to increase the penalty for vehicular homicide from 'misdemeanor' to 'misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature' passed the Senate by a vote of 32-18. This change would increase the maximum fine from \$1,000 to \$5,000, and the judge would not be given the statutory discretion to allow the sentence be served on weekends. SB 116 was sponsored by Sen. Curt Thompson (D-Tucker). **—SB 116**

Bill to Allow Farm Weddings Passes Senate

Sen. Bill Heath (R-Bremen) sponsored SB 145, which passed the Senate by a vote of 46-2. Under current legislation, farm owners who host weddings on their property may lose their Conservation Use Valuation Assessment (CUVA) status, even if they're not in the commercial wedding operation business. This legislation would allow farm owners to host weddings while maintaining their CUVA status. **—SB 145**

Georgia Student Finance Authority Bill Passes Senate

SB 155, sponsored by Sen. Steve Gooch (R-Dahlonega) passed the Senate by a vote of 47-0. This bill would add a member to the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation and the Georgia Student Finance Authority in order to account for the new 14th Congressional district. **—SB 155**

Medicaid Reform Bill Passes Senate

Sen. William Ligon (R-Brunswick) sponsored SB 163, which would require the Board of Community Health to examine and identify options for reforming Georgia's Medicaid Program. If passed, this effort is expected to bring significant cost savings to the state. SB 163 passed the Senate by a vote of 39-10. **—SB 163**

Bill to Designate September as Georgia History Month Passes Senate

The Senate passed a bill to designate September as Georgia History Month by a vote of 46-0. Currently, September is American History Month and SB 181 would align the two celebrations. SB 181 was sponsored by Sen. Charlie Bethel (R-Dalton). **—SB 181**

Bill to Modernize Georgia's Secured Transactions Code Passes Senate

Sen. Jesse Stone (R-Waynesboro) sponsored SB 185 to update language in article 9 of the Uniform Commercial Code to realign it with the current commercial practices for secured transactions. Provisions including electronic signatures were added to modernize the code. SB 185 passed the Senate by a vote of 48-0. **—SB 185**

Child Custody Judgments Bill Passes Senate

A bill to remove unnecessary wording regarding authorizations and appeals in child custody cases passed the Senate by a vote of 51-0. SB 204 was sponsored by Sen. Bill Cowsert (R-Athens). **—SB 204**

Bill to Add First Offenders to Employment Disqualification List Passes Senate

Sen. John Albers (R-Roswell) sponsored SB 207, which would add private home care providers to the list of persons who may be disqualified from employment following a first offender plea. Under current law, felons who claim 'first offense' status regarding child molestation or sexual violence cases are still disqualified from employment in places such as schools, nursing homes, and mental institutions. SB 207 passed the Senate by a vote of 47-4. **—SB 207**

Bill to Require CPR and AED Training in Local Schools Passes Senate

A bill to require certain local school systems to provide instruction in CPR and the use of an AED as part of its health or physical education courses passed the Senate by a vote of 44-6. SB 212 would apply to each local board of education that operates a school with grades 9-12 and was sponsored by Sen. Jeff Mullis (R-Chickamauga). **–SB 212**

Medical Director of an Emergency Service Provider Bill Passes Senate

This bill, sponsored by Sen. Buddy Carter (R-Pooler) would provide that the medical director of an emergency service provider may contract with more than one pharmacy as a provider of drugs and consultant services. SR 216 passed the by a vote of 50-0. **–SB 216**

Bill to Create Invest Georgia Fund Passes Senate

A bill sponsored by Sen. Tim Golden (R-Valdosta), Sen. Pres. Pro Tem David Shafer (R-Duluth) and Sen. Majority Leader Ronnie Chance (R-Tyrone) would create the Invest Georgia fund. This legislation seeks to keep Georgia companies in Georgia, thus boosting revenue and creating jobs. SB 224 passed the Senate by a vote of 49-3. **–SB 224**

THURSDAY, MARCH 7

Nursing Mandatory Reporting Requirement Bill Passes Senate

SB 13 would require nurses and health care entities to report suspected professional violations to the Board of Nursing or the Board of Examiners of Licensed Practical Nurses and passed the Senate by a vote of **52-0**. SB 13 is sponsored by Sen. Buddy Carter (R-Pooler). **–SB 13**

Stacey Nicole English Act Passes Senate

The Stacey Nicole English Act passed the Senate by a vote of 51-0. Sen. Gail Davenport (D-Jonesboro) sponsored this bill to prohibit law enforcement agencies from implementing a minimum waiting period before initiating a missing person's report and allow vehicle owners to designate an emergency phone number when registering their vehicles. SB 23 would also require medically endangered individuals be included within the Mattie's Call alert system, an emergency alert system for disabled and senior citizens. This bill focuses on helping missing people with medical conditions that could hinder their recovery. **–SB 23**

Federal and State Funded Health Care Financing Programs Overview Committee Created

Sen. Judson Hill (R-Marietta) sponsored SB 62, which would create the Federal and State Funded Health Care Financing Programs Overview Committee. The Committee would be charged with periodically reviewing the actions of the Board of Community Health and the Department of Community Health to evaluate the success and functionality of their programs. SB 62 passed the Senate by a vote of 45-5. **–SB 62**

Bill Allowing Nurses and Pharmacists to Administer Vaccines Passes Senate

A bill to expand the types of vaccines that can be administered in a pharmacy setting passed the Senate by a vote of 46-7. This bill would allow certain vaccines previously obtained at a doctor's office to be made readily available at a neighborhood pharmacy similar to seasonal flu vaccines. The vaccines would be administered by pharmacists and nurses under physician oversight. SB 85 was sponsored by Sen. Charlie Bethel (R-Dalton). **–SB 85**

Car Rental Tax to be Used for Public Transit Construction and Improvements

SB 92, sponsored by Sen. Vincent Fort (D-Atlanta) passed the Senate by a vote of 45-2. This legislation would permit a car rental tax to be used for public transit construction and improvements. **–SB 92**

Radiographic Imaging Tests Bill Passes Senate

SB 94 passed the Senate by a vote of 34-18. This bill, sponsored by Sen. Fran Millar (R-Atlanta) would allow advanced practice registered nurses to order radiographic imaging tests in accordance with a nurse protocol agreement, regardless of whether a situation is or is not life-threatening. **–SB 94**

Personal Service in an Action Against a Domestic or Foreign Corporation Bill Passes Senate

Under current law, service in an action against a corporation is made by delivering a copy of the summons and complaint to the president or other manager of a corporation, and to the Secretary of State if no other option is available. This legislation provides the service can be made only upon the registered agent, officer and managing agent of the corporation. This bill was sponsored by Sen. Emanuel Jones (D-Decatur) and passed the Senate by a vote of 49-0. **–SB 113**

Bill to Establish a Special License Plate for Retired State Legislators Passes Senate

Sen. Ronald Ramsey (D-Decatur) sponsored SB 121, which would establish a special license plate for retired State Legislators. This bill passed the Senate by a vote of 34-12. –**SB 121**

Bill to Grant Temporary Medical Consent Guardianship Passes Senate

Sen. Nan Orrock (D-Atlanta) sponsored SB 158 to fix current law's language and give more flexibility and control to patients in end of life care. This bill passed the Senate by a vote of 48-0. –**SB 158**

Bill to Provide Additional Superior Court Judges Passes Senate

A bill to provide for 1 additional Superior Court Judge in both the Chattahoochee and Oconee Judicial Circuits passed the Senate by a vote of 53-0. Sen. Josh McKoon (R-Columbus) sponsored this legislation. –**SB 165**

Medical Identity Theft Bill Passes Senate

Sen. Judson Hill (R-Marietta) sponsored SB 170, which passed the Senate by a vote of 52-1. This bill would make medical identity theft subject to the same punishment as financial identity theft. –**SB 170**

Bill to Establish a Civil Rights Museum on Capitol Hill Passes Senate

SB 172, which would establish a civil rights museum on Capitol Hill, passed the Senate by a vote of 50-2. This bill would require a portrait of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to be on display. In addition to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the bill would require portraits of Rev. Joseph Lowery, Congressman John Lewis, Ambassador Andrew Young and other civil rights legends to be on display in the State Capitol. The legislation will also require the museum to be a division of the Georgia Capitol Museum. SB 172 was sponsored by Sen. Emanuel Jones (D-Decatur). –**SB 172**

Georgia Tourism Foundation Bill Passes Senate

Sen. Frank Ginn (R-Danielsville) sponsored SB 177, which would alter membership of the Georgia Tourism Foundation by removing members from various authorities, parks and associations, and set parameters for appointments and membership. SB 177 passed the Senate by a vote of 55-0. –**SB 177**

Legislative Retirement System Bill Passes Senate

Under SB 178, the board of trustees for the Georgia Legislative Retirement System (LRS) would be allowed to determine the time and circumstance of paying member benefits to preserve the System's status as a qualified plan under federal law. This bill would extend the current prohibition on receipt of benefits upon a return to service to all LRS retirees, not just those who have yet to reach the normal age of retirement. SB 178 was sponsored by Sen. Fran Millar (R-Atlanta) and passed the Senate by a vote of 47-3. –**SB 178**

Exemption from Verification of Lawful Presence Expanded for Postsecondary Education

SB 187 would expand the list of boards that could set postsecondary regulations in Georgia, and passed the Senate by a vote of 39-16. SB 187 adds the board of commissioners of the Georgia Student Finance Commission and the board of directors of the Georgia Student Finance Authority to the list of boards which can set forth policies regarding postsecondary benefits that comply with federal law. Currently, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia and the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia are the only boards allowed to set postsecondary guidelines. SB 187 was sponsored by Sen. Judson Hill (R-Marietta). –**SB 187**

Establishment of College and Career Academies Expanded

A bill to allow private proprietary postsecondary institutions that are eligible for tuition equalization grants to participate in establishing college and career academies passed the Senate by a vote of 53-1. This legislation was sponsored by Sen. Fran Millar (R-Atlanta), and adds these institutions to the list of eligible participants. –**SB 189**

Bill to Allow Article V Convention Delegation Passes Senate

The Georgia State Senate passed legislation proposing a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Senate Bill 206, a companion bill to Senate Resolution 371, would limit the authority of Georgia's delegates to an amendment convention and passed by a vote of 45 to 8. –**SB 206**

Bill to Create Georgia Legacy Program and Georgia Legacy Council Passes Senate

Sen. Ross Tolleson (R-Perry) sponsored SB 210, which passed the Senate by a vote of 52-2. This legislation would create the Georgia Legacy Program to conserve the state's land, water, fisheries and wildlife resources. It would also create the Georgia Legacy Council to approve projects eligible for funding, and would establish two funds to provide grants and loans for the approved projects. **—SB 210**

Bill to Revise Rules Affecting Flint River Basin Passes Senate

SB 213, sponsored by Sen. Ross Tolleson (R-Perry) passed the Senate by a vote of 52-1. SB 213 creates the Flint River Drought Protection Plan, which undertakes studies to use in establishing new and revised rules and regulations pertaining to the management of water resources within the Flint River Basin. **—SB 213**

Bill to Amend Existing Criminal Bonds and Forfeiture Laws Passes Senate

SB 225, which passed the Senate by a vote of 51-2, would update existing law regarding criminal bonds law. Under this legislation, failure to appear due to an involuntary treatment would not be considered a reason of forfeiture. A bailsmen would not be liable for bond forfeiture for failure to appear if the surety was detained and released. Sen. Jesse Stone (R-Waynesboro) sponsored this legislation. **—SB 225**

Bill to Change Coroner Compensation Passes Senate

Sen. Steve Gooch (R-Dahlonega) sponsored SB 226, which would allow a coroner to elect to be compensated by death investigation fees in lieu of their current compensation. SB 226 passed the Senate by a vote of 51-0. **—SB 226**

Sunset Date for Georgia Driver's Education Commission Extended

Sen. Barry Loudermilk (R-Cassville) sponsored SB 231, which would change the sunset date for the Georgia Driver's Education Commission from June 30, 2013 to June 30, 2018. Specifically, this bill focuses on 'Joshua's Law,' which requires that 16-year-olds wishing to obtain a Class D driver's license must first complete a driver education course as well as a total of at least 40 hours of other supervised driving experience. SB 231 passed the Senate by a vote of 51-1. **—SB 231**

Travel Insurance Producer Licenses Bill Passes Senate

SB 234 would authorize the Insurance Commissioner to issue limited lines travel insurance producer licenses to travel retailers. This bill passed the Senate by a vote of 55-0 and was the first bill sponsored by Sen. Burt Jones (R-Jackson). **—SB 234**

Bill Requiring Premium Increase Notice Passes Senate

Senate Bill 236 states whenever a health insurer increases a premium, they must provide a notice explaining how much of the increase is attributable to the ACA. The bill was amended to include that the Commissioner of Community Health would also have to notify those on the State Health Benefit Plan with the increases. SB 236 was sponsored by Sen. Burt Jones (R-Jackson) and passed the Senate by a vote of 36-17. **—SB 236**

Georgia Leadership and Service Admissions Act Passes Senate

Sen. Hunter Hill (R-Smyrna) sponsored SB 241, which would create the Georgia Leadership and Service Admissions Act. Under this act, members of the General Assembly, as well as the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, will choose an aspiring applicant to one of Georgia's ROTC programs as a candidate for admission; a process similar to the federal system of nominating candidates to U.S. service academies. The main purpose of Senate Bill 241 is to encourage qualified Georgians for the service and leadership training that ensues from military training and education. SB 241 passed the Senate by a vote of 52-0. **—SB 241**

Bill to Clarify the Role of Downtown Development Authorities Passes Senate

SB 242, sponsored by Sen. Hunter Hill, passed the Senate by a vote of 36-7. This legislation would clarify the role of downtown development authorities with regards to providing financing to property owners seeking to modify their property for energy efficiency purposes. Under this legislation, downtown development authorities would be authorized to provide financing to property owners citywide for the purposes of installing or modifying improvements to their property in order to reduce energy or water consumption, or to install an improvement that produces energy from renewable resources. **—SB 242**

Bill to Designate Student Scholarship Organization Awards and Reporting Requirements Passes Senate

Senator Charlie Bethel (R-Dalton) sponsored SB 243, which passed the Senate by a vote of 54-0. This bill clarifies the requirements and reporting process for student scholarship organizations, including eligibility, audit procedures and fund distribution. SB 243 also expands qualifications and requires a Georgia student to be enrolled in and attend a Georgia secondary or primary public school for at least six weeks before being eligible for a scholarship or tuition grant. —**SB 243**

House Bills

TUESDAY, MARCH 5

Amended Fiscal Year Budget Passes Senate

The House transferred the Amended Fiscal Year 2013 Budget, also known as the supplemental budget, back to the Senate on Tuesday, March 5. The Senate approved the \$19.3 billion midyear budget by a vote of 48-0. The supplemental budget runs through June 30, 2013. It now heads to the Governor's desk. —**HB 105**

Tax Code Revisions Pass Senate

HB 266 brings Georgia's Revenue Code in line with federal law to reflect changes made at the federal level. It also corrects and makes changes to House Bill 386, which passed last year, such as eliminating the double taxation on leased vehicles and reflecting a realistic timeline for Georgians to obtain a vehicle title. HB 266 passed the Senate by a vote of 42-4 and has been signed into law on March 5. —**HB 266**

Senate Resolutions

MONDAY, MARCH 4

Thrombosis Awareness Month

Sens. Renee Unterman (R-Buford), Donzella James (D-Atlanta), Gail Davenport (D-Jonesboro), Gloria Butler (D-Stone Mountain) and Nan Orrock (D-Atlanta) addressed Thrombosis Awareness Month. Each year, an estimated 400,000 people develop deep vein thrombosis of the legs. Pulmonary embolism, a serious and potentially fatal complication of vein thrombosis, affects at least 200,000 people in the United States annually and kills an estimated 180,000 Americans each year. Through public awareness, the State of Georgia seeks to minimize the frequency of deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism among all Georgia citizens and those who visit the state. — **SR 133**

Cumberland Community Improvement District Honored

Sen. Hunter Hill (R-Atlanta) welcomed members of the Cumberland Community Improvement District to the State Senate. CIDs are public-private partnerships which allow the local business community to invest in infrastructure planning, funding and project delivery in order to enhance property values for the benefit of commercial owners as well as local municipalities. The Cumberland CID was launched in 1988 as the first in the State of Georgia. The Cumberland submarket is one of the largest and most active economic engines in the state, totaling an estimated 5 percent of the State of Georgia's economy. Companies headquartered within the Cumberland CID include The Home Depot, GE Energy, Genuine Parts Company, Travelport and BlueLinX. — **SR 259**

Savannah St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee Welcomed

Sen. Buddy Carter (R-Pooler) and Sen. Lester Jackson (D-Savannah) welcomed members of the Savannah St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee to the Senate Chamber, including this year's Grand Marshal, James A. Ray. Savannah's St. Patrick's Day celebration was begun in 1824 by the Hibernation Society of Savannah, which was formed to aid the early Irish immigrants to Georgia. Since then, the celebration has become a tourist attraction for visitors throughout the world. — **SR 380**

Gordon Lee High School Wrestling Team Welcomed

Members of the Gordon Lee High School wrestling team were the special guests of Sen. Jeff Mullis (R-Chickamauga). The Gordon Lee High School wrestling team achieved a dual record of 29-6 and maintained a number one ranking during the 2012 season. – **SR 384**

TUESDAY, MARCH 5

Constitutional Amendment: Fireworks, Future Sales and Framework Passes Senate

Sens. Jeff Mullis (R-Chickamauga), Cecil Staton (R-Macon), Butch Miller (R-Gainesville), John Albers (R-Roswell), John Wilkinson (R-Toccoa) and Chuck Hufstetler (R-Rome) sponsored SR 378. This resolution would set the framework for the sale of fireworks in Georgia and was adopted by the Senate on Tuesday by a vote of 44-5. The proposed constitutional amendment would appear on Georgia ballots in November 2014. If SR 378 is approved by local referendum, cities and counties in Georgia will be charged with writing specific rules about the sale of fireworks within that specific jurisdiction. –**SR 378**

Dalton High School Boys Swimming Team Welcomed

Sen. Charlie Bethel (R-Dalton) hosted members of the Dalton High School boys swimming team. The Dalton High School boys swimming and diving team were the Georgia High School Association 2013 Class AAAAA State Champions. – **SR 382**

Georgia Southern University ROTC Programs Commended

Sens. Jack Hill (R-Reidsville), Jesse Stone (R-Waynesboro), William Ligon (R-Brunswick), Buddy Carter (R-Pooler), Cecil Staton (R-Macon) and Mike Dugan (R-Carrollton) hosted members of the Georgia Southern University ROTC programs. Georgia Southern University President Dr. Brooks Keel was in also in attendance. The school's 2013 Ranger Challenge Team won the Regional Ranger Challenge competition, its first in over 12 years. –**SR 417**

American Association of Adapted Sports Honored

The American Association of Adapted Sports Programs (AASP) was honored by Sens. Steve Henson (D-Tucker), Horacena Tate (D-Atlanta), Butch Miller (R-Gainesville), Charlie Bethel (R-Dalton) and Gloria Butler (D-Stone Mountain). The AASP was founded in 1996 by two Georgia educators and has served over 4,000 student-athletes with physical disabilities in school based athletic adapted sports programs. The AAS formed an historic alliance with the Georgia High School Association (GHSA) in 2001, making it possible for every Georgia student with a physical disability to participate directly with his or her school team in track and field and for the AASP wheelchair basketball championship game to be included in the GHSA basketball finals. –**SR 421**

Chipper Jones Visits State Senate

Atlanta Braves legend Chipper Jones visited the State Senate. Sen. Jeff Mullis (R-Chickamauga), Sen. Pres. Pro Tem David Shafer (R-Duluth), Senate Majority Leader Ronnie Chance (R-Tyrone), Sen. Steve Henson (D-Tucker), Sen. Horacena Tate (D-Atlanta) and Sen. Cecil Staton (R-Macon) sponsored SR 419 to make March 5, 2013 'Chipper Jones Day' at the Capitol. –**SR 419**

THURSDAY, MARCH 6

Resolution to Dedicate Highways and Roads Passes Senate

Sen. Steve Gooch (R-Dahlonega) sponsored SR 293, which would dedicate various highways, roads and causeways to honor of the men and women who have given of themselves to help others and their communities. SR 293 was adopted by the Senate by a vote of 46-0. –**SR 293**

Joint Resolution Calls for U.S. Constitutional Amendment

Sen. Bill Cowsert (R-Athens) sponsored Senate Resolution 371, the constitutional amendment proposal. The resolution recommends that the total of all federal appropriations made by the Congress for any fiscal year may not exceed that total of all estimated federal revenue for that fiscal year. An exception would be made during the state of a national emergency. SR 371, which is companion legislation to SB 206, was adopted by the Senate by a vote of 39-13. –**SR 371**

Guests and Events

MONDAY, MARCH 4

Sen. Johnny Isakson Addresses Senate

On Monday, March 4, U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson addressed the Senate about the current sequester in Washington. “I came to tell you the truth,” he said. “Sequestration is in place. And as it goes into effect, people are going to realize that cutting across the board isn’t going to be a good idea because you’ll reward those who aren’t doing a good job and punish those who are.” Senator Isakson told the Senate he appreciates the work they do by balancing the budget in 40 days. “The people of Georgia get a heck of a bargain for their money,” he said.

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The Senate Press Office is located at 201 Paul D. Coverdell Legislative Office Building, 18 Capitol Square, Atlanta, Georgia 30334. We can be reached at 404.656.0028 or outside the Atlanta area 800.282.5803