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# This Week in the Senate

## January 18 - 22, 2016



### Securing Georgia's Fiscal Future

This week we took off Monday to observe and celebrate the life of a great Georgian, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a religious leader whose church based social movement helped transform every facet of American life. Although derided as a "social radical" by the business and political leadership of his day, any thoughtful appraisal of his life leaves no doubt as to the critical importance of the role of men and women of faith play in public life.

Tuesday we hit the ground running with a joint budget hearing of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees. After hearing directly from the Governor and a number of agency and department heads at the joint meeting, the committees broke out into subcommittees, which met throughout the week to begin line by line scrutiny of the proposed budget.

A number of interesting pieces of legislation were introduced and assigned to committee. Work in earnest on these bills will begin next week when our standing committees will have their first meetings.

Friday ended early with the Governor's order to close state buildings at noon but a handful of staffers continued working to finish this update. My thanks to the many men and women who serve the Senate in staff capacities and help make our legislative function as efficiently as possible.

**Sen. David J. Shafer**

*President Pro Tempore, Georgia State Senate*

### MONDAY, JANUARY 18

#### Celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

The General Assembly took a long holiday weekend in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on Monday, January 18. Hundreds attended the annual commemorative service held at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta including Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle, U.S. Sen. Johnny Isakson (R - GA) and U.S. Rep. Sanford D. Bishop, Jr. (GA - 02). *Photo credit: www.history.com*



### TUESDAY, JANUARY 19

#### Budget Hearings

In response to Gov. Nathan Deal's budget recommendations, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees held hearings focused on economic trends and forecasts in order to adequately fund essential state services. Senators received briefings from various heads of state agencies, including Richard Woods, Superintendent of the Georgia Department of Education, and Clyde Reese, Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Community Health.

## WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20

### Together Georgia Day at the Capitol

Sen. Fran Millar (R - Atlanta) sponsored Senate Resolution 708 establishing January 20 as “Together Georgia Day” at the Capitol. Sen. Millar commended Together Georgia and its partners for their diligent work in providing care to Georgia’s children and families. Along with Sen. Millar, Together Georgia President John Blend spoke to senators about the importance of protecting Georgia’s youth. - **SR 708**



## THURSDAY, JANUARY 21

### Joint Appropriation Subcommittee Meetings

The House and Senate Appropriation Subcommittees concluded joint hearings today that began on Wednesday, January 20. Over the two-day period, state agencies presented their additional funding requests to legislators, who will use this information to finalize the FY 2016 amended budget and the FY 2017 general budget.

More information on Governor Deal’s budget recommendations for AFY 2016 and FY 2017 can be found online at [opb.georgia.gov](http://opb.georgia.gov).

[CLICK HERE](#) for a direct link to the Governor’s budget report for AFY 2016.

[CLICK HERE](#) for a direct link to the Governor’s budget report for FY 2017.

## FRIDAY, JANUARY 22

### Atlanta Metropolitan State College Day at the Capitol

The Senate passed a resolution recognizing January 22 as Atlanta Metropolitan State College Day at the Capitol. Sen. Vincent Fort (D – Atlanta) commended the college on their growth and success. Atlanta Metropolitan State College currently enrolls more than 3,000 students, most of which are Georgia residents. Atlanta Metropolitan State College President Gary A. McGaha was presented with the resolution by Sen. Nan Orrock (D - Atlanta). - **SR 706**



### Adjournment Date Set

The Senate, in conjunction with the House of Representatives, set the final adjournment date of the second session of the 153rd Georgia General Assembly for Thursday, March 24, 2016. Crossover day is scheduled for Monday, February 29. The Senate will also break for several committee-only days. - **SR 1114**

### Sen. Michael Williams Thanks the Senate for Their Support Through Son’s Injury

Sen. Michael Williams (R - Cumming) thanked the Senate for their continual outpouring of prayer, love and support when his eldest son, Ammon, fell from a longboard and was in critical condition last July. Ammon made a full recovery and joined his father in the Senate today as a page.





**The Georgia State Senate will reconvene at 10:00 a.m. on  
MONDAY, JANUARY 25.**