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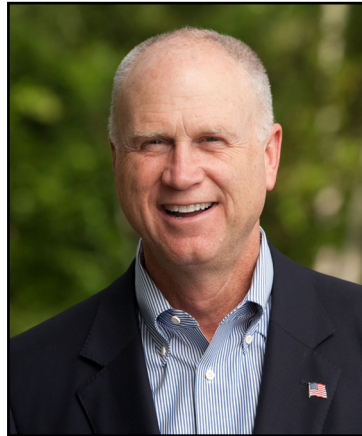
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This Week in the Senate

January 28-30, 2019



Budget Hearings and Committee Work

Last week began with a day of celebration, honoring the life and legacy of a true Georgia hero – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. While our offices were closed for business, many of us joined in ceremonies around the state celebrating Dr. King’s many achievements, including the profound impact his actions and life had, not only on our great state, but the entire nation. Following this day of remembrance, our work began on the Amended Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) and General Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) budgets. On Tuesday and Wednesday, members of the Appropriations Com-

mittee, including myself, heard from Governor Brian P. Kemp and our state agency heads on their proposals for both of these budgets.

The Amended FY19 budget – House Bill 30 – totals around \$26.9 billion and currently includes \$68.8 million for school security grants that will enable each school statewide to utilize \$30,000 to enhance school safety, and an appropriation of \$8.4 million towards the Behavioral Health for Georgia Apex Program to address mental health services in high schools by adding funding to support counselors. To further support our educators and to keep the best and brightest in our education system, the General FY20 budget – House Bill 31 – totals around \$27.5 billion and currently includes \$480 million to ensure that each public school teacher receives a permanent pay increase of \$3,000. This proposed allocation is part of the overall \$505.1 million proposal to address updates to the state base salary schedule for certified teachers and certified employees across our education institutions. These are just a few of the highlights of the Amended FY19 and General FY20 budgets. That said, the budget process is far from over and a great deal of study remains before a final budget will be reached. I can promise, though, that we in the Senate, above all else, believe in being responsible stewards of your taxpayer dollars. Whatever the final budget entails, we will work tirelessly to ensure that it is responsible, lean where it needs to be, and effective.

Along with last week’s budget proposals, this week saw our Members begin their committee work. Most of the committees met to adopt rules for the 2019-2020 Legislative Session. In addition to adopting rules, the Senate Public Safety Committee met on Wednesday and unanimously passed Senate Bill 25. This legislation, sponsored by Sen. Bill Heath (R – Bremen), would clarify existing law relating to when a driver encountering a school bus must stop if they are driving on a divided highway. Under SB 25, the vehicle does not need to stop if there is a separation by a grass median or any unpaved area or physical barrier. The goal of this legislation is to increase safety for our children while also clarifying for our citizens the appropriate time to keep driving when encountering a school bus.

Our committee work will only increase as more legislation is introduced and assigned. Next week, we will be in session for four days – Tuesday, February 5 through Friday, February 8. The pace will pick up quickly from here so please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions, concerns or feedback. Our office is always open for a visit, so please do not hesitate to come by.

Senator Butch Miller
President Pro Tempore, Georgia Senate

MONDAY, JANUARY 28

Senate Committees Convene

Committee meetings were held this week for the first time this session. In the meetings, committee members were introduced, rules were adopted and some committees began hearing bills.

During the 2019 Legislative Session, the Senate Committee meeting schedule can be found [here](http://calendar.legis.ga.gov/Calendar/?Chamber=Senate): <http://calendar.legis.ga.gov/Calendar/?Chamber=Senate>

During the 2019 Legislative Session, the Senate Committee broadcast schedule can be found [here](http://www.senate.ga.gov/spo/en-US/videobroadcasts.aspx): <http://www.senate.ga.gov/spo/en-US/videobroadcasts.aspx>

Archives for Senate Committee meetings can be found on each committee's page [here](http://www.senate.ga.gov/committees/en-US/SenateCommitteesList.aspx): <http://www.senate.ga.gov/committees/en-US/SenateCommitteesList.aspx>

TUESDAY, JANUARY 29

Secretary David Cook Brings Senate to Order

Secretary of the Senate David Cook brought the Senate to order for Legislative Day 6, acknowledging a lack of a quorum pursuant to Senate Rules. He adjourned the Senate until the next legislative day, Wednesday, January 30, at 10:00 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30

Veterinary Medicine Day Celebrated in the Senate

Sen. John Wilkinson (R – Toccoa) sponsored Senate Resolution 22, recognizing Wednesday, January 30, as Veterinary Medicine Day at the state Capitol. Georgia veterinarians protect and improve the health and welfare of the animals that provide companionship to so many Georgians. – **SR 22**

Peachtree City Little League Team Visits Senate

Senate Resolution 23, sponsored by Sen. Marty Harbin (R – Tyrone), recognizes the Peachtree City Little League baseball team for an outstanding 2018 season, including a championship victory. After winning the Little League National Championship in 2018, they represented the Southeast Region in the Little League World Series, where they were awarded the 2018 Team Sportsmanship Award. – **SR 23**

Senate Welcomes the Honorable Harsh Vardhan Shringla

Sen. P.K. Martin (R – Lawrenceville) sponsored Senate Resolution 54 honoring Ambassador of India to the United States Harsh Vardhan Shringla. Ambassador Shringla has devoted many years to bettering India's relationship with the United States and previously served as High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh, as well as Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Thailand. – **SR 54**





The Georgia Senate will reconvene at 10:00 a.m. on
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5.