



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



January 12, 2024

Welcome to GHLA @ the Capitol, your weekly update about news you need to know related to Georgia's lodging industry and the 2024 General Assembly.

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

2024 Legislative Session Begins

Georgia lawmakers are officially back at the State Capitol as the Georgia General Assembly convened for the 2024 Legislative Session on Monday, January 8 and were in through today, January 12 for Days 1-5.

Annual Eggs and Issues Breakfast

The annual Eggs and Issues Breakfast hosted by the Georgia Chamber featured several legislative priorities to watch in 2024:

Governor Brian Kemp:

- Governor Kemp plans on introducing legislation to stabilize the market for insurers, stabilize premiums for Georgia's families, and leveling the playing field in the courtroom.

Lieutenant Governor Burt Jones:

- **Workforce Development** – Top priority is the future of the labor force, with a focus that starts in the K-12 school system and featured teaching of skill-based learning.
- **School Choice Bill** – Reinforcing the importance of public education, while ensuring parent choice.
- **Red Tape Rollback** – Prioritizing Georgia's booming business scene by creating a regulatory environment promoting competition while encouraging the startup and expansion of new business.

Speaker Burns:

- **Healthcare** – Priorities will be increasing access, lowering costs, and improving outcomes. He also touched on gathering more facts around Medicaid expansion.

- **Public Safety** – He is targeting the continuation of building investments in law enforcement and training programs, as well as working on the prison system to retain correctional officers and crack down on contraband.
- **Education** – Ensuring that every student has the opportunity to learn. He announced that every public school system will be receiving \$45,000 per school to increase security.
- **Elections** – There are plans to strengthen the security of ballots by moving away from the existing ballot QR code system. There will also be strong efforts to crack down on anything used to interfere in elections, specifically the use of AI.
- **Economic Success** – This will take the form of accelerating tax cuts to Georgians, increasing the child deduction on state taxes, and working to uplift the middle and working class so that opportunities are created for all people to achieve their dreams in Georgia.

State of the State Address

This week the Governor delivered his [State of the State address](#) highlighted here:

- Georgia saw the creation of more than 171,000 new private sector jobs and roughly 74.5 billion dollars of investment over the last five years.
- Governor Kemp plans decrease the state income tax this year, which will save 3 billion dollars for Georgia taxpayers over 10 years.
- The Governor's amended FY24 budget and FY25 budget proposals includes a 1.4 billion dollars in additional funds allocated to education, for a total of 12.8 billion dollars.
- The brave men and women in law enforcement will receive a \$6, 000 raise and an additional \$3,000 for State Patrol Officers.
- The Governor's budget proposal also calls for a 205 million dollar increase in funding for the DBHDD and other mental health entities, increasing overall mental health spending to 1.6 billion dollars.

2024 Legislative Schedule

This week the legislature released the [2024 schedule](#) which lays out the complete calendar. The Georgia General Assembly will take the following week to begin the appropriations process. They will reconvene on Monday, January 22 for Legislative Day 6. The final day of the session (Sine Die) will be Thursday, March 28th.

Sports Betting Update

This week the Senate Regulated Industries Committee discussed [SB 172](#) sponsored by Sen. Bill Cowser which seeks to legalize, regulate and tax sports betting in the state. The committee discussed a number of the bills provisions, which is intended to serve as enabling legislation and will require a constitutional amendment to follow. The committee passed the bill on a 8-4 vote. SB 172 was brought up for a vote on the Senate Floor today, however, was promptly tabled without discussion.

Legislative Tracking Update

House Bills

[HB843](#) – Representative Ron Stephens (R-Savannah) - Alcoholic beverages; Sunday sales for consumption on the premises in locally designated special entertainment districts; provide

[HB862](#) - Homestead option sales tax (HOST); levying tax while levying a joint county and municipal sales and use tax; repeal prohibition

[HB863](#) - Representative Joe Campbell (R-Camilla) - Bainbridge, City of; levy an excise tax

[HB870](#) - State government; observe standard time; provide

[HB890](#) - Laws and statutes; artificial intelligence and automated decision tools; provide for protections against discrimination

[HB904](#) - Professions and businesses; contractors; change certain provisions

[HB905](#) - Zoning procedures; provisions authorizing administrative officers to exercise zoning powers; repeal

[HB908](#) - Representative Jordan Ridley (R-Woodstock) - Food service establishments; certain food products be disclosed as containing cell cultured meat and plant based meat alternatives; require

[HB921](#) - Representative Rhonda Burnough (D-Riverdale) - Forest Park, City of; levy an excise tax

[HB925](#) - Representative Steven Sainz (R-St. Marys) - Protecting Religious Assembly in States of Emergency (PRAISE) Act; enact

House Resolutions

[HR768](#) - House Study Committee on the Elimination of State Income Tax; create

[HR779](#) - Adjourning Resolution

Senate Bills

[SB332](#) - Prosecuting Attorneys Qualifications Commission; promulgate standards of conduct and rules for the commission's governance; provide (PF)

[SB340](#) - Sales and Use Taxes; firearm safes and firearm safety devices; exempt

[SB344](#) - Sales and Use Taxes; firearms, ammunition, gun safes, and related accessories during an 11 day period each year; exempt

[SB349](#) - Ad Valorem Taxation of Property; setting of millage rates; revise provisions

GHLA Full Legislative Tracking Update

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