



March 3, 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 through Thursday for legislative days 24-27. Today, March 3, is a scheduled committee workday leading up to Crossover Day, scheduled for Monday, March 6. The legislature will be in session through next Thursday, Day 31.

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

Buckhead City Fails

Yesterday the Senate considered [SB 114](#), a proposal to incorporate the city of Buckhead. After heated debate from proponents and opponents, the [Senate failed to pass the measure](#) due to receiving only 23 out of the 29 required votes to pass a bill on the floor.

The Senate vote, along with [Governor Kemp's concerns](#) highlighted this week, sends a strong message that Buckhead City has no path forward at the Georgia General Assembly.

GHLA applauds the many groups that fought this legislation and raised various issues throughout the process.

GHLA's Priority Bills Coming to the Floor



GHLA's Chris Hardman testifies in support of HB 223 at the Ways & Means Committee along with Lee Hughes representing the Georgia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus

[SB 127](#) by Sen. Billy Hickman (R-Statesboro) was placed on the Rules Committee list for a floor vote on Monday, Crossover Day.

This 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.

The companion bill, [HB 223](#), by Rep. Ron Stephens (R-Savannah), passed House Ways and Means this morning and will be eligible for a vote on Crossover Day.

Bills of Interest

Sen. Ed Setzler's (R-Acworth) [SB 180](#), the Religious Freedom Act, failed to receive a hearing in time to be eligible for a vote by Crossover Day.

Sen. Billy Hickman's (R-Statesboro) [SB 57](#) on sports betting, to include horseracing, failed on the Senate floor this week and will not be eligible to move forward in the process. There are several other sports betting bills still eligible that GHLA will continue to monitor.

City of Atlanta and Short-Term Rentals

This week Atlanta City Council heard more testimony on short-term rental regulations. Under the proposal, owners of rentals listed on platforms like Airbnb and VRBO would have to obtain a city permit to operate. It also puts limits on how many

single and two-family vacation homes can operate within a certain distance of each other. No action was taken and the proposed regulations are still under consideration by the council. [Read more here.](#)

Legislative Tracking Update

[SB280](#) by Senator Sonya Halpern (D-Atlanta) - This bill will prohibit tourist courts from offering rent accommodations at an hourly rate. It will also require landlords to conduct background screening on employees. It requires a landlord to maintain a log for issuance and return of keys and to develop policies and procedures regarding unissued keys, and to provide for rights and duties of landlords regarding entry into dwelling units.

[SB282](#) by Senator Brian Strickland (R-McDonough) prohibits employers from preventing an employee from engaging in certain protected activities related to the reporting of violations or of noncompliance with law, rule, or regulation. It prohibits retaliation against employees, and provides for a cause of action and remedies.

[SB283](#) by Senator Brian Strickland (R-McDonough) provides for reasonable accommodations to job applicants and employees related to pregnancy, childbirth, and related conditions.

GHLA Full Legislative Tracking Update

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