



# The Georgia Senate This Week

Senate Press Office ♦ 201 Legislative Office Building ♦ Atlanta, Georgia ♦ 404.656.0028

## Senate passes unlicensed drivers bill

*I*n a move to curtail the growing problem of unlicensed driving in the state, the Senate passed legislation, authored by Sen. **John Wiles** of the 37<sup>th</sup>, to stiffen penalties for those who operate a motor vehicle without a license. Senate Bill 350 passed the Senate by a vote of 38 to 13 and now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

“SB 350 closes a loophole in our current code, which allows unlicensed drivers a certain amount of leniency,” said Sen. **Wiles** from the Well. “The urgent need for these tougher penalties is exemplified by the tragic death of Cobb County Sheriff’s Deputy **Loren Lilly**, who was killed by an unlicensed driver in my district on New Year’s Eve 2006.”



SB 350 will increase the penalties for those found operating a vehicle without ever having been issued a valid driver’s license or on a suspended or revoked license. Under the new law, an individual found driving without being licensed or driving on a suspended, disqualified or revoked license could be sentenced to at least two days imprisonment for the first offense. Any second or third offense within five years, and that individual would be subject to at least ten days imprisonment and a fine of at least \$1000. A fourth or subsequent offense within five years would be treated by the courts as a felony. The new penalties would not apply to drivers who forget to have a valid license on their person or those driving on an expired license.

The Governor vetoed a similar piece of legislation last year, saying he feared unintended consequences from the wording of the measure. Sen. **Wiles** revised the language that concerned Gov. **Perdue**, and reintroduced it earlier this year.

As Sen. **Wiles** presented the bill in the Senate, he recognized **Jamie Lilly**, widow of Deputy **Lilly**, who was sitting in the Senate Gallery. Deputy **Lilly**, 41, was killed in 2006 at the intersection of Powder Springs Street and Baltimore Place, after a car driven by a man who had never been issued a Georgia drivers license collided with his Honda Civic. **Lilly** was pronounced dead at the scene.

“Our current law allows those who drive a car without a license to get off with a slap on the wrist,” Sen. **Wiles** added. “I think this bill sends a message, and that message is ‘If you want to drive in Georgia, get a drivers license.’”

# *Reservoir Development and Drought Relief Act* passes Senate overwhelmingly

The Senate passed the *Reservoir Development and Drought Relief Act* this week 44-1. The legislation, authored by Sen. **Chip Pearson** of the 51<sup>st</sup> was the result of a “real, long-term solution to some of Georgia’s water issues.”

Last year, Sen. **Pearson** joined together with Lt. Gov. **Casey Cagle** and Speaker **Richardson** to underscore Georgia’s need for enhanced water storage. The *Reservoir Development and Drought Relief Act* will make the state of Georgia a partner with local governments and water authorities in enhancing the state’s water storage capacity.

Under the legislation, communities will be able to apply for funding to enlarge existing reservoirs and obtain permits to construct new ones. Additionally, the bill will make the state a true partner with local communities to secure federal permits necessary to build reservoirs by offering a one-stop shop for all of the state components of a federal reservoir application. The bill will tighten deadlines for the EPD to make a final determination of permit application for federal purposes as well as approving state permits.

“It is critically important to increase our water supply in order to avoid crisis like the one we are in today,” Sen. **Pearson** said. “By partnering with local governments and water authorities as well as cutting through some of the red tape that comes with reservoir development, we are confident we can capture more rainfall and meet the needs of our state.”

---

## **Lt. Governor Casey Cagle: Resolution Will Move Transportation Funding Forward**

Lt. Gov. **Casey Cagle** has announced that the Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (TSPLOST) resolution has been filed in the State Senate and will bring a funding solution to transportation needs of our state.

“It is time we take action, and the first step toward a funding option for transportation needs in Georgia is to allow our citizens to decide how they want their transportation dollars to be spent,” said Lt. Gov. **Cagle**.

The TSPLOST Resolution will amend the Georgia Constitution so that as of May 1, 2009 individual counties can voluntarily propose to their citizens a new 1-cent sales tax for transportation projects. Similar to previous SPLOSTs, each proposal is required to list the projects the TSPLOST will pay for, the cost of those projects, and the length of time that the tax will be in effect.

Eighty percent of revenue collected through the TSPLOST will be returned to the participating county for projects. At least ten percent of the remaining funds will be used by the state for constructing, maintaining and operating mass transit. The resolution gives the General Assembly a deadline of April 1 to establish a framework by which counties can voluntarily join together into regions and combine their tax for projects of regional significance. This will happen before counties can initiate the TSPLOST.

# Georgia State Senate First Readers

(Friday, February 1 – Thursday, February 7)

## *Senate Resolutions*

- SR 789**     **Georgia's Registered Nurses; commend;**  
Sen. **Renee Unterman** (45<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/01/08*
- SR 790**     **Rural Health day; recognize February 12, 2008**  
Sens. **Greg Goggans** (7<sup>th</sup>); **Don Thomas** (54<sup>th</sup>); **Preston Smith** (52<sup>nd</sup>);  
**Cecil Staton** (18<sup>th</sup>); **John Douglas** (17<sup>th</sup>) and **Jeff Chapman** (3<sup>rd</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/01/08*
- SR 791**     **G.W. Carver High School Football Team; congratulate**  
Sens. **Ed Harbison** (15<sup>th</sup>) and **Seth Harp** (29<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/01/08*
- SR 792**     **Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce; recognize**  
Sen. **Ed Tarver** (22<sup>nd</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/01/08*
- SR 793**     **Knox, Jr., Mayor Bob; recognize**  
Sens. **Bill Jackson** (24<sup>th</sup>); **Johnny Grant** (25<sup>th</sup>); **John Douglas** (17<sup>th</sup>)  
and **Greg Goggans** (7<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/01/08*
- SR 794**     **Hooper, Jr., Chief Roy Franklin; commend**  
Sen. **Lee Hawkins** (49<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/01/08*
- SR 795**     **Cronic, Sheriff Steve; commend**  
Sen. **Lee Hawkins** (49<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/01/08*
- SR 796**     **Ad Valorem Tax Reform; freeze valuation of real property except  
certain adjustments; procedures, conditions, and limitations for  
certain increases**  
Sens. **Chip Rogers** (21<sup>st</sup>); **Tommie Williams** (19<sup>th</sup>); **Jeff Mullis** (53<sup>rd</sup>);  
**Chip Pearson** (51<sup>st</sup>); **Dan Moody** (56<sup>th</sup>) and **David Shafer** (48<sup>th</sup>)  
*Finance Committee – 02/01/08*
- SR 797**     **Stanley, Sr., Mr. R.T.; Mr. R.T. Stanley Jr., recognize**  
Sens. **Tommie Williams** (19<sup>th</sup>) and **Jack Hill** (4<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/01/08*
- SR 798**     **Luikart, Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth; commend**  
Sens. **Jack Hill** (4<sup>th</sup>) and **Eric Johnson** (1<sup>st</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/05/08*
- SR 799**     **Mary Hines Johnson Day; proclaim February 9, 2008**  
Sen. **Mitch Seabaugh** (28<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/05/08*
- SR 800**     **Lakly, Mr. Daniel; condolences**  
Sens. **Ronnie Chance** (16<sup>th</sup>); **Valencia Seay** (34<sup>th</sup>); **Mitch Seabaugh** (28<sup>th</sup>);  
**Chip Rogers** (21<sup>st</sup>); **Eric Johnson** (1<sup>st</sup>) and **John Wiles** (37<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/05/08*

- SR 801**      **Greene, Mrs. Julie; recognize**  
 Sen. **George Hooks** (14<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and Adopted – 02/05/08*
- SR 802**      **Bland, Delbert; commend**  
 Sens. **Jack Hill** (4<sup>th</sup>) and **Tommie Williams** (19<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/01/08*
- SR 803**      **Emanuel County Institute Bulldogs; congratulate**  
 Sen. **Jack Hill** (4<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/01/08*
- SR 804**      **Atlanta Fine Arts League, Inc.; recognize**  
 Sen. **John Douglas** (17<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/06/08*
- SR 805**      **Darton College Golf Team; commend**  
 Sen. **Michael Meyer von Bremen** (12<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/06/08*
- SR 806**      **St. Philip Monumental A.M.E. Church; recognize**  
 Sen. **Regina Thomas** (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/06/08*
- SR 807**      **Savannah Community Church/ Give Kids A Smile Program; commend**  
 Sen. **Regina Thomas** (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/06/08*
- SR 808**      **Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History; recognize**  
 Sen. **Ed Tarver** (22<sup>nd</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/06/08*
- SR 809**      **Congress, Governmental Agencies, Automobile Industry; urged to substitute the term “life belt” to “seat belt” and “life bag” to “air bag”**  
 Sens. **Emanuel Jones** (10<sup>th</sup>); **Robert Brown** (26<sup>th</sup>); **Eric Johnson** (1<sup>st</sup>); **Valencia Seay** (34<sup>th</sup>); **Jeff Chapman** (3<sup>rd</sup>); **Steve Henson** (41<sup>st</sup>) and others  
*Public Safety Committee – 02/06/08*
- SR 810**      **Democracy Restored: A History of the Georgia State Capital; recognize**  
 Sens. **George Hooks** (14<sup>th</sup>); **Eric Johnson** (1<sup>st</sup>) and **Don Balfour** (9<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/06/08*
- SR 811**      **William Harvey Jewell, Sr. Memorial Bridge; Berrien-Atkinson County; dedicate**  
 Sen. **Greg Goggans** (7<sup>th</sup>)  
*Transportation Committee – 02/06/08*
- SR 812**      **Shellie W. Parrish Memorial Bridge; Berrien County; dedicate**  
 Sen. **Greg Goggans** (7<sup>th</sup>)  
*Transportation Committee – 02/06/08*
- SR 813**      **Lucious Murphy Jacobs Bridge; Berrien County; dedicate**  
 Sen. **Greg Goggans** (7<sup>th</sup>)  
*Transportation Committee – 02/06/08*
- SR 814**      **Virgil T. Barber Bridge; Berrien County; dedicate**  
 Sen. **Greg Goggans** (7<sup>th</sup>)  
*Transportation Committee – 02/06/08*

- SR 815**     **Hubert F. Comer Memorial Bridge; Berrien County; dedicate**  
 Sen. **Greg Goggans** (7<sup>th</sup>)  
*Transportation Committee – 02/06/08*
- SR 816**     **Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA); recognize**  
 Sens. **Lee Hawkins** (49<sup>th</sup>) and **Jack Murphy** (27<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/06/08*
- SR 817**     **Future Farmers of America; recognize**  
 Sens. **John Bulloch** (11<sup>th</sup>); **Ralph Hudgens** (47<sup>th</sup>); **Ross Tolleson** (20<sup>th</sup>);  
**Jack Hill** (4<sup>th</sup>); **Bill Heath** (31<sup>st</sup>); **Joseph Carter** (13<sup>th</sup>) and others  
*Read and adopted – 02/06/08*
- SR 818**     **Georgia Farmer Bureau Federation; recognize**  
 Sens. **John Bulloch** (11<sup>th</sup>); **Ralph Hudgens** (47<sup>th</sup>); **Ross Tolleson** (20<sup>th</sup>);  
**Jack Hill** (4<sup>th</sup>); **Bill Heath** (31<sup>st</sup>); **Joseph Carter** (13<sup>th</sup>) and others  
*Read and adopted – 02/06/08*
- SR 819**     **Senate Comprehensive Firearms Law Study Committee; create**  
 Sens. **Mitch Seabaugh** (28<sup>th</sup>); **Jack Murphy** (27<sup>th</sup>); **Chip Rogers** (21<sup>st</sup>);  
**Ralph Hudgens** (47<sup>th</sup>); **Dan Moody** (56<sup>th</sup>); **Jack Hill** (4<sup>th</sup>) and others  
*Judiciary Committee – 02/06/08*
- SR 820**     **Joint Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Study Committee; create**  
 Sens. **Jeff Mullis** (53<sup>rd</sup>) and **Ross Tolleson** (20<sup>th</sup>)  
*Natural Resources and the Environment Committee – 02/06/08*
- SR 821**     **Stokes, Alyssa; commend**  
 Sen. **Judson Hill** (32<sup>nd</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/06/08*
- SR 822**     **Georgia-North Carolina and Georgia-Tennessee Boundary Line Commission; create; appointment**  
 Sens. **David Shafer** (48<sup>th</sup>); **Jeff Mullis** (53<sup>rd</sup>); **Kasim Reed** (35<sup>th</sup>);  
**Chip Pearson** (51<sup>st</sup>); **Preston Smith** (52<sup>nd</sup>); **Don Thomas** (54<sup>th</sup>) and others  
*Read and adopted – 02/07/08*
- SR 823**     **Lee, Emory; condolences**  
 Sen. **Mitch Seabaugh** (28<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/07/08*
- SR 824**     **Starr, Mr. Wade; condolences**  
 Sen. **Gail Davenport** (44<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/07/08*
- SR 825**     **Excelsior Electric Membership Corporation; recognize**  
 Sen. **Jack Hill** (4<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/07/08*
- SR 827**     **U.S. Congress; urged to withdraw the United States from the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America**  
 Sens. **Nancy Schaefer** (50<sup>th</sup>); **Ralph Hudgens** (47<sup>th</sup>);  
**Renee Unterman** (45<sup>th</sup>); **Jeff Chapman** (3<sup>rd</sup>); **Cecil Staton** (18<sup>th</sup>);  
**John Douglas** (17<sup>th</sup>) and others  
*Veterans, Military and Homeland Security Committee – 02/07/08*
- SR 828**     **Jones, Miss Hannah Lee; recognize**  
 Sens. **Joseph Carter** (13<sup>th</sup>); **George Hooks** (14<sup>th</sup>) and **John Bulloch** (11<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/07/08*

**SR 829 Cordele-Crisp County Fish Fry; recognize**  
Sens. **Joseph Carter** (13<sup>th</sup>); **George Hooks** (14<sup>th</sup>) and **John Bulloch** (11<sup>th</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/07/08*

**SR 830 Shope, Mr. Grant, Mr. Jake Baudin, Mr. Cody Hall; commend**  
Sen. **Chip Pearson** (51<sup>st</sup>)  
*Read and adopted – 02/07/08*

### *Senate Bills*

**SB 383 Ga. Affordable HSA Eligible High Deductible Health Plan; Insurance Commissioner; adopt policies to promote, approve, and encourage**  
Sens. **Judson Hill** (32<sup>nd</sup>); **Ronnie Chance** (16<sup>th</sup>); **Ralph Hudgens** (47<sup>th</sup>);  
**Don Thomas** (54<sup>th</sup>); **Chip Rogers** (21<sup>st</sup>) and **Joseph Carter** (13<sup>th</sup>)  
*Insurance and Labor Committee – 02/01/08*

**SB 391 Secretary of State; authorize/procure a website service provider; public notice website; definitions; provide for certain requirements**  
Sens. **Cecil Staton** (18<sup>th</sup>); **Bill Heath** (31<sup>st</sup>); **John Douglas** (17<sup>th</sup>);  
**Chip Rogers** (21<sup>st</sup>) and **Ronnie Chance** (16<sup>th</sup>)  
*Science and Technology Committee – 02/01/08*

**SB 392 Motor Vehicle Liability Policies; provide insured includes officers, agents, and employees of artificial persons; scope of their employment**  
Sens. **Cecil Staton** (18<sup>th</sup>); **Seth Harp** (29<sup>th</sup>); **Joseph Carter** (13<sup>th</sup>)  
and **Jack Murphy** (27<sup>th</sup>)  
*Insurance and Labor Committee – 02/01/08*

**SB 393 Pawnbrokers; restrict local governments' power; payment of any fee for transactions/hours of operation**  
Sens. **Ronnie Chance** (16<sup>th</sup>); **Steve Thompson** (33<sup>rd</sup>);  
**Ed Tarver** (22<sup>nd</sup>) and **Cecil Staton** (18<sup>th</sup>)  
*Banking and Financial Institutions Committee – 02/01/08*

**SB 394 Traffic-Control Signal Monitoring Devices; send portion of funds generated to trauma care network**  
Sens. **Renee Unterman** (45<sup>th</sup>); **John Wiles** (37<sup>th</sup>); **Bill Cowsert** (46<sup>th</sup>);  
**Bill Hamrick** (30<sup>th</sup>); **Mitch Seabaugh** (28<sup>th</sup>) and **Jack Murphy** (27<sup>th</sup>)  
*Public Safety Committee – 02/01/08*

**SB 395 Indigent/Elderly Patients; establish safety net clinic grant program; provide definitions; purpose; eligibility; requirements**  
Sens. **Greg Goggans** (7<sup>th</sup>); **Eric Johnson** (1<sup>st</sup>);  
**Tommie Williams** (19<sup>th</sup>); **Bill Cowsert** (46<sup>th</sup>);  
**Lee Hawkins** (49<sup>th</sup>) and **Judson Hill** (32<sup>nd</sup>)  
*Health and Human Services Committee – 01/18/08*

**SB 396 Administrative Services Dept.; remove/transfer functions; Council of Superior Court Judges of Ga., Prosecuting Attorneys' Council**  
Sens. **Bill Hamrick** (30<sup>th</sup>); **Preston Smith** (52<sup>nd</sup>) and **Ronnie Chance** (16<sup>th</sup>)  
*Judiciary Committee – 02/01/08*

**SB 397 Bonds; issuance/validation; change certain provisions**  
Sens. **John Bulloch** (11<sup>th</sup>); **Cecil Staton** (18<sup>th</sup>)  
and **Michael Meyer von Bremen** (12<sup>th</sup>)  
*Finance Committee – 02/01/08*

- SB 398 Powder Springs, City; provide for mayor's or city councilmembers terms and qualifications for office**  
Sen. **Steve Thompson** (33<sup>rd</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/01/08*
- SB 399 Tire Disposal Restrictions; fees imposed upon retail sale of new replacement tires collected; extend the period**  
Sens. **Ross Tolleson** (20<sup>th</sup>); **John Bulloch** (11<sup>th</sup>); **Steve Henson** (41<sup>st</sup>) and **Michael Meyer von Bremen** (12<sup>th</sup>)  
*Natural Resources and the Environment Committee – 02/01/08*
- SB 400 Forestry/Fire; enforcement of laws; punishment of certain violations; forestry investigators; provide for qualifications/powers**  
Sens. **Ross Tolleson** (20<sup>th</sup>); **John Bulloch** (11<sup>th</sup>) and **Michael Meyer von Bremen** (12<sup>th</sup>)  
*Natural Resources and the Environment Committee – 02/01/08*
- SB 401 Medical; agency interpretations of rules/regulations/policies shall prevail; investigation of improper payment of claims by health care providers**  
Sens. **Cecil Staton** (18<sup>th</sup>); **Joseph Carter** (13<sup>th</sup>); **Ronnie Chance** (16<sup>th</sup>); **Chip Rogers** (21<sup>st</sup>); **Johnny Grant** (25<sup>th</sup>) and **Bill Jackson** (24<sup>th</sup>)  
*Health and Human Services Committee – 02/01/08*
- SB 402 Georgia Coordinating Council for Rural and Human Services Transportation; establish; provide for membership, meetings, expenses**  
Sens. **Tommie Williams** (19<sup>th</sup>); **Doug Stoner** (6<sup>th</sup>); **Jeff Mullis** (53<sup>rd</sup>); **Chip Pearson** (51<sup>st</sup>) and **Valencia Seay** (34<sup>th</sup>)  
*Health and Human Services Committee – 02/05/08*
- SB 403 Labor; prompt payment of wages to employee following resignation/discharge; provide for penalties**  
Sens. **Steve Henson** (41<sup>st</sup>); **Gloria Butler** (55<sup>th</sup>); **Ron Ramsey** (43<sup>rd</sup>); **Kasim Reed** (35<sup>th</sup>) and **Horacena Tate** (38<sup>th</sup>)  
*Insurance and Labor Committee – 02/05/08*
- SB 404 Georgia Health Marketplace Act; provide access to health care products for Georgia consumers; provide for definitions; membership; powers**  
Sens. **Tommie Williams** (19<sup>th</sup>); **Greg Goggans** (7<sup>th</sup>); **Ralph Hudgens** (47<sup>th</sup>); **Chip Rogers** (21<sup>st</sup>); **Mitch Seabaugh** (28<sup>th</sup>) and **Lee Hawkins** (49<sup>th</sup>)  
*Health and Human Services Committee – 02/05/08*
- SB 405 Georgia Revised Uniform Anatomical Gift Act; enactment; definitions; provide for anatomical gift**  
Sens. **Don Balfour** (9<sup>th</sup>); **John Douglas** (17<sup>th</sup>); **Jack Murphy** (27<sup>th</sup>); **Bill Cowser** (46<sup>th</sup>); **Lee Hawkins** (49<sup>th</sup>) and **Nancy Schaefer** (50<sup>th</sup>)  
*Judiciary Committee – 02/05/08*
- SB 406 Offenses; increase penalties for reproducing, transferring, selling, distributing certain recorded material; forfeiture of certain terms**  
Sens. **Bill Hamrick** (30<sup>th</sup>); **Jeff Mullis** (53<sup>rd</sup>); **Chip Rogers** (21<sup>st</sup>) and **Kasim Reed** (35<sup>th</sup>)  
*Judiciary Committee – 02/05/08*
- SB 407 Contractors; revise definition of a certain term for purposes of clarification**  
Sens. **Mitch Seabaugh** (28<sup>th</sup>) and **David Shafer** (48<sup>th</sup>)  
*Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee – 02/05/08*

- SB 408**     **Local Government Franchising Authority; change certain provisions; telephone/telegraph companies**  
Sens. **David Shafer** (48<sup>th</sup>); **Bill Heath** (31<sup>st</sup>); **Jack Murphy** (27<sup>th</sup>); **Chip Rogers** (21<sup>st</sup>); **Bill Hamrick** (30<sup>th</sup>) and **Tim Golden** (8<sup>th</sup>)  
*Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee – 02/06/08*
- SB 409**     **Motorcycles; requiring operators/riders to use protective headgear; exempt certain persons from provisions**  
Sens. **Regina Thomas** (2<sup>nd</sup>); **Jeff Mullis** (53<sup>rd</sup>); **J. B. Powell** (23<sup>rd</sup>) and **Ed Tarver** (22<sup>nd</sup>)  
*Public Safety Committee – 02/06/08*
- SB 410**     **State Road/Tollway Authority; authorize to create a state congestion relief fund; community improvement districts**  
Sens. **Doug Stoner** (6<sup>th</sup>); **Tommie Williams** (19<sup>th</sup>); **Valencia Seay** (34<sup>th</sup>); **Chip Pearson** (51<sup>st</sup>) and **Jeff Mullis** (53<sup>rd</sup>)  
*Transportation Committee – 02/06/08*
- SB 411**     **Contracts; design-build procedure; eliminate the cap for awarding**  
Sens. **Tommie Williams** (19<sup>th</sup>); **Valencia Seay** (34<sup>th</sup>); **Jeff Mullis** (53<sup>rd</sup>); **Chip Pearson** (51<sup>st</sup>) and **Doug Stoner** (6<sup>th</sup>)  
*Transportation Committee – 02/06/08*
- SB 412**     **Motor Vehicles; change nomenclature from “air bag” to “life bag” and “safety belt” to “life belt”**  
Sens. **Emanuel Jones** (10<sup>th</sup>); **Robert Brown** (26<sup>th</sup>); **Eric Johnson** (1<sup>st</sup>); **Valencia Seay** (34<sup>th</sup>); **Jeff Chapman** (3<sup>rd</sup>); **Steve Henson** (41<sup>st</sup>) and others  
*Public Safety Committee – 02/06/08*
- SB 413**     **Boxing, Wrestling, Martial Arts; licensure/regulation; substantially/comprehensively revise provisions**  
Sens. **Eric Johnson** (1<sup>st</sup>); **David Shafer** (48<sup>th</sup>); **Ross Tolleson** (20<sup>th</sup>); **Steve Henson** (41<sup>st</sup>) and **Doug Stoner** (6<sup>th</sup>)  
*Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee – 02/06/08*
- SB 414**     **2008 Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council Act; revise definitions; provide for calling of meetings/quorum**  
Sens. **Jeff Mullis** (53<sup>rd</sup>); **Eric Johnson** (1<sup>st</sup>); **Jack Murphy** (27<sup>th</sup>); **Valencia Seay** (34<sup>th</sup>); **Jeff Chapman** (3<sup>rd</sup>); **Ross Tolleson** (20<sup>th</sup>) and others  
*Public Safety Committee – 02/06/08*
- SB 415**     **Juvenile Proceedings; Dept. of Human Resources emergency care/supervision to a child without a court order; reduce allowed time**  
Sens. **Nancy Schaefer** (50<sup>th</sup>); **Tommie Williams** (19<sup>th</sup>); **Chip Pearson** (51<sup>st</sup>); **Jack Murphy** (27<sup>th</sup>); **John Douglas** (17<sup>th</sup>); **Robert Brown** (26<sup>th</sup>) and others  
*Judiciary Committee – 02/06/08*
- SB 416**     **Retirement; prohibit investment of retirement system assets in certain companies with certain business interests in certain governments**  
Sens. **Judson Hill** (32<sup>nd</sup>); **Tommie Williams** (19<sup>th</sup>); **Don Balfour** (9<sup>th</sup>) and **Renee Unterman** (45<sup>th</sup>)  
*Retirement Committee – 02/06/08*
- SB 417**     **Transportation Commissioner; required to develop/publish benchmarks; issue reports on the progress of construction projects**  
Sens. **Jeff Mullis** (53<sup>rd</sup>); **Valencia Seay** (34<sup>th</sup>); **Tommie Williams** (19<sup>th</sup>); **Doug Stoner** (6<sup>th</sup>) and **Chip Pearson** (51<sup>st</sup>)  
*Transportation Committee – 02/07/08*

- SB 418**      **Georgia Fire Safety Standard and Firefighter Protection Act; definitions; provide for standards for testing cigarettes; written certification**  
Sens. **Don Balfour** (9<sup>th</sup>); **Lee Hawkins** (49<sup>th</sup>) and **Bill Cowsert** (46<sup>th</sup>)  
*Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee – 02/07/08*
- SB 419**      **State Contracts; Administrative Services; certain contract specifications; interest payments where payments are owed and past due**  
Sen. **Curt Thompson** (5<sup>th</sup>)  
*State Institutions and Property Committee – 02/07/08*
- SB 420**      **Soil Erosion/Sedimentation; Dept. of Transportation/its contractors; exempt from civil penalties levied for violations**  
Sens. **Chip Pearson** (51<sup>st</sup>); **Jeff Mullis** (53<sup>rd</sup>); **Tommie Williams** (19<sup>th</sup>); **Chip Rogers** (21<sup>st</sup>) and **Ross Tolleson** (20<sup>th</sup>)  
*Transportation Committee – 02/07/08*
- SB 421**      **False Identification Documents; change penalties based upon the age of the convicted person/nature of crime**  
Sens. **Chip Pearson** (51<sup>st</sup>); **John Wiles** (37<sup>th</sup>); **Lee Hawkins** (49<sup>th</sup>); **Tommie Williams** (19<sup>th</sup>) and **Nancy Schaefer** (50<sup>th</sup>)  
*Judiciary Committee – 02/07/08*
- SB 422**      **Elections; establish polling places outside the boundaries of precincts**  
Sen. **Curt Thompson** (5<sup>th</sup>)  
*Ethics Committee – 02/07/08*
- SB 423**      **Mental Illness; prohibit the use of prior authorization; medications prescribed for patients under Medicaid fee for service program**  
Sens. **Johnny Grant** (25<sup>th</sup>); **Seth Harp** (29<sup>th</sup>); **Greg Goggans** (7<sup>th</sup>); **George Hooks** (14<sup>th</sup>); **David Adelman** (42<sup>nd</sup>); **Horacena Tate** (38<sup>th</sup>) and others  
*Health and Human Services Committee – 02/07/08*
- SB 424**      **Barber; obtaining license to practice; change certain requirements; provisions; provide exceptions**  
Sen. **Johnny Grant** (25<sup>th</sup>)  
*Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee – 02/07/08*
- SB 425**      **Insuring/Indemnification; Commissioner of Admin. Services; amend certain provisions; establish incentive programs**  
Sen. **Johnny Grant** (25<sup>th</sup>)  
*State Institutions and Property Committee – 02/07/08*
- SB 426**      **State-Owned Lands; prohibit construction of new private residential housing; prevent impairment of obligation of contracts**  
Sens. **Jeff Chapman** (3<sup>rd</sup>); **Renee Unterman** (45<sup>th</sup>); **Seth Harp** (29<sup>th</sup>); **Cecil Staton** (18<sup>th</sup>); **Ralph Hudgens** (47<sup>th</sup>); **Greg Goggans** (7<sup>th</sup>) and others  
*Economic Development Committee – 02/07/08*
- SB 427**      **Jekyll Island-State Park Authority; require certain restrictions in leases or deeds for certain property**  
Sens. **Jeff Chapman** (3<sup>rd</sup>); **Renee Unterman** (45<sup>th</sup>); **Seth Harp** (29<sup>th</sup>); **Cecil Staton** (18<sup>th</sup>); **Ralph Hudgens** (47<sup>th</sup>); **Greg Goggans** (7<sup>th</sup>) and others  
*Economic Development Committee – 02/07/08*
- SB 428**      **Jekyll Island-State Park Authority; define certain terms**  
Sens. **Jeff Chapman** (3<sup>rd</sup>); **Renee Unterman** (45<sup>th</sup>); **Seth Harp** (29<sup>th</sup>); **Cecil Staton** (18<sup>th</sup>); **Ralph Hudgens** (47<sup>th</sup>); **Greg Goggans** (7<sup>th</sup>) and others  
*Economic Development Committee – 02/07/08*

## *House Resolutions*

**HR 1158 Georgia BIO; commend**  
Reps. **Charlice Byrd** (20<sup>th</sup>); **Calvin Hill** (21<sup>st</sup>);  
**Jimmy Pruett** (144<sup>th</sup>); **Kevin Levitas** (82<sup>nd</sup>);  
**Hardie Davis** (122<sup>nd</sup>) and **Amos Amerson** (9<sup>th</sup>)  
*Economic Development Committee – 02/05/08*

## *House Bills*

**HB 387 Georgia Day; observe February 12; annually**  
Reps. **Barry Loudermilk** (14<sup>th</sup>); **Jerry Keen** (179<sup>th</sup>);  
**Mark Burkhalter** (50<sup>th</sup>); **Barry Fleming** (117<sup>th</sup>); **Jay Roberts** (154<sup>th</sup>)  
and **Donna Sheldon** (105<sup>th</sup>)  
*Rules Committee – 02/07/08*

**HB 422 Specialized land transactions; minimum amount for liens; provide**  
Rep. **Wendell Willard** (49<sup>th</sup>)  
*Judiciary Committee – 02/06/08*

**HB 857 Washington County; sheriff; change compensation**  
Rep. **Jimmy Lord** (142<sup>nd</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/05/08*

**HB 869 DeKalb County; office of tax commissioner; change certain provisions**  
Reps. **Billy Mitchell** (47<sup>th</sup>); **Mary Oliver** (83<sup>rd</sup>); **Stan Watson** (91<sup>st</sup>);  
**Mike Jacobs** (80<sup>th</sup>); **Jill Chambers** (81<sup>st</sup>) and **Randal Mangham** (94<sup>th</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/05/08*

**HB 881 Georgia Charter Schools Commission; establish**  
Reps. **Jan Jones** (46<sup>th</sup>); **Brooks Coleman** (97<sup>th</sup>); **Edward Lindsey** (54<sup>th</sup>);  
**Fran Miller** (79<sup>th</sup>); **Melvin Everson** (106<sup>th</sup>) and **Donna Sheldon** (105<sup>th</sup>)  
*Education and Youth Committee – 02/01/08*

**HB 926 Revenue and taxation; Internal Revenue Code; define term**  
Rep. **Larry O'Neal** (146<sup>th</sup>)  
*Finance Committee – 02/06/08*

**HB 975 County or municipal corporations; authorizing documents; provisions**  
Reps. **Mark Burkhalter** (50<sup>th</sup>); **Jan Jones** (46<sup>th</sup>); **Wendell Willard** (49<sup>th</sup>);  
**Joe Wilkinson** (52<sup>nd</sup>); **Chuck Martin** (47<sup>th</sup>) and **Harry Geisinger** (48<sup>th</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/06/08*

**HB 1007 Lawrenceville, City of; Redevelopment Powers Law; authorize**  
Reps. **John Heard** (104<sup>th</sup>) and **Mike Coan** (101<sup>st</sup>);  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/01/08*

**HB 1008 Oglethorpe County Water Authority; composition of members; change**  
Reps. **Mickey Channell** (116<sup>th</sup>) and **Bob Smith** (113<sup>th</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/01/08*

**HB 1010 Liberty County State Court; solicitor-general; change compensation**  
Reps. **Al Williams** (165<sup>th</sup>); **Terry Barnard** (166<sup>th</sup>)  
and **Ron Stephens** (164<sup>th</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/01/08*

- HB 1011**     **Liberty County State Court; judge; full-time office; establish**  
Reps. **Al Williams** (165<sup>th</sup>); **Terry Barnard** (166<sup>th</sup>) and **Ron Stephens** (164<sup>th</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/01/08*
- HB 1012**     **Darien, City of; ad valorem tax; municipal purposes; provide**  
**homestead exemption**  
Rep. **Roger Lane** (167<sup>th</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/01/08*
- HB 1013**     **McIntosh County; school district ad valorem tax; residents 65 or**  
**over; provide homestead exemption**  
Rep. **Roger Lane** (167<sup>th</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/01/08*
- HB 1014**     **Georgia Higher Education Savings Plan; certain provisions; revise**  
**and change**  
Reps. **Richard Royal** (171<sup>st</sup>); **Jerry Keen** (179<sup>th</sup>); **Brooks Coleman** (97<sup>th</sup>)  
and **Bill Hembree** (67<sup>th</sup>)  
*Finance Committee – 02/06/08*
- HB 1025**     **Garden City, City of; advisory referendum election; provide**  
Reps. **Bob Bryant** (160<sup>th</sup>); **Earl Carter** (159<sup>th</sup>); **Ron Stephens** (164<sup>th</sup>);  
**Lester Jackson** (161<sup>st</sup>); **Burke Day** (163<sup>rd</sup>) and **J. Craig Gordon** (162<sup>nd</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/01/08*
- HB 1033**     **Edgehill, City of; provide new charter**  
Rep. **Sistie Hudson** (124<sup>th</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/07/08*
- HB 1038**     **Douglasville, City of; Redevelopment Powers Law; authorize**  
Reps. **Roger Bruce** (64<sup>th</sup>); **Bill Hembree** (67<sup>th</sup>); **Tyrone Brooks** (63<sup>rd</sup>)  
and **Timothy Bearden** (68<sup>th</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/05/08*
- HB 1039**     **Douglas County; Redevelopment Powers Law; authorize**  
Reps. **Roger Bruce** (64<sup>th</sup>); **Bill Hembree** (67<sup>th</sup>); **Tyrone Brooks** (63<sup>rd</sup>)  
and **Timothy Bearden** (68<sup>th</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/05/08*
- HB 1047**     **Cobb County; office of tax commissioner; certain employees; change**  
**compensation**  
Reps. **Don Parsons** (42<sup>nd</sup>); **Rob Teilhet** (40<sup>th</sup>); **Judy Manning** (32<sup>nd</sup>);  
**Rich Golick** (34<sup>th</sup>); **Earl Ehrhart** (36<sup>th</sup>) and **Sharon Cooper** (41<sup>st</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/07/08*
- HB 1048**     **Cobb County Probate Court; certain employees; change**  
**compensation**  
Reps. **Don Parsons** (42<sup>nd</sup>); **Rob Teilhet** (40<sup>th</sup>); **Judy Manning** (32<sup>nd</sup>);  
**Rich Golick** (34<sup>th</sup>); **Bobby Franklin** (43<sup>rd</sup>) and **Earl Ehrhart** (36<sup>th</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/07/08*
- HB 1053**     **Cobb Judicial Circuit; judges; provide supplement**  
Reps. **Rich Golick** (34<sup>th</sup>); **Rob Teilhet** (40<sup>th</sup>); **Steve Tumlin** (38<sup>th</sup>);  
**Judy Manning** (32<sup>nd</sup>); **Don Parsons** (42<sup>nd</sup>) and **Terry Johnson** (37<sup>th</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/07/08*
- HB 1089**     **Cobb County Probate Court; judge and clerk; change compensation**  
Reps. **Terry Johnson** (37<sup>th</sup>); **Don Parsons** (42<sup>nd</sup>); **Rich Golick** (34<sup>th</sup>);  
**Rob Teilhet** (40<sup>th</sup>); **Earl Ehrhart** (36<sup>th</sup>) and **Don Wix** (33<sup>rd</sup>)  
*State and Local Governmental Operations Committee – 02/07/08*

# *In Committee Action . . .*

## **Administrative Affairs Committee**

The Administrative Affairs Committee did not meet this week.

## **Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee**

The Senate Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee held its first meeting of the 2008 Session on Thursday, January 31. First, Chairman **John Bulloch** of the 11<sup>th</sup> presented *Senate Bill 364*, which reclassifies ratite products, or large flightless birds such as ostrich, as poultry rather than livestock. After a few brief comments, *SB 364* passed through Committee by a unanimous vote. Representative **Bobby Reese** of the 98<sup>th</sup> then presented *House Bill 301*, which sets forth much stiffer penalties for those found to be participating in dogfighting in Georgia. Under *HB 301*, those found guilty of owning, possessing or selling any dog for the purpose of dogfighting, causing any dog to fight with another dog for amusement, wagering on the result of a dogfight and several other acts, will be subject to a felony conviction and will be punished by imprisonment of one to five years and a fine of no less than \$5000. Rep. **Reese** also presented a minor amendment to the bill, which adds those who advertise or promote a dogfight to the list of offenders. Sen. **Chip Rogers** of the 21<sup>st</sup> spoke in favor of *HB 301*, although he too has sponsored a bill to strengthen Georgia's dogfighting laws, *SB 16*. Georgia Agriculture Commissioner **Tommy Irvin** expressed his concerns on the bill, stating that it may interfere with the state's *Animal Protection Act*. After further discussion, *HB 301* passed unanimously by Substitute as amended.

## **Appropriations Committee**

The Appropriations Committee did not meet this week.

## **Banking and Financial Institutions Committee**

On Tuesday, February 5, Chairman **Bill Hamrick** of the 30<sup>th</sup> called the meeting to order and reopened discussion of *Senate Bill 358*. Known as the *Georgia Uniform Securities Act of 2008*, the bill replaces the *Georgia Securities Act of 1973* and will provide forms of registration for securities, regulation of securities professionals, fraud enforcement, as well as uniformity with current federal law. Director **Bob Terry** of the Division of Securities expressed concerns that the banking and trade industries have with certain provisions of the bill. Chairman **Hamrick** urged the members to resolve any additional issues they have with the proposed legislation, so that a vote could be held at the next meeting. Chairman **Hamrick** then introduced a substitute to *Senate Bill 361*, which is co-sponsored by Senator **Chip Rogers** of the 21<sup>st</sup>. Known as the *Georgia Credit Protection Act*, the bill permits a consumer to place a security freeze on his/her credit report, provides a method for placing and removing a security freeze, prohibits the release of a credit report that is subject to a credit freeze and allows certain fees to be charged in connection with a security freeze. Representatives from the Georgia chapter of the AARP spoke in favor of the recent changes to the bill. *SB 361* then passed by Committee Substitute unanimously.

## **Economic Development Committee**

The Economic Development Committee did not meet this week.

## **Education and Youth Committee**

The Education and Youth Committee did not meet this week.

## **Ethics Committee**

The Ethics Committee did not meet this week.

## Finance Committee

Chairman **Chip Rogers** of the 21<sup>st</sup> called the Committee to order on Thursday, January 31, to take up *Senate Resolution 687*. Senator **Mitch Seabaugh** of the 28<sup>th</sup> presented the resolution, which creates a Constitutional Amendment to limit property tax increases to the annual rate of inflation unless significant improvements are made to the property. This resolution will also give control to local governments for administering funds appropriately. After Sen. **Seabaugh** and Sen. **Steve Thompson** of the 33<sup>rd</sup> moved to amend the resolution with some minor language changes, the resolution passed through the Committee unanimously by Substitute.

The Committee reconvened on Tuesday, February 5. Senator **Cecil Staton** of the 18<sup>th</sup> and Bibb County Tax Commissioner **Tommy Tedders** explained *Senate Bill 159*, which extends the deadline for filing homestead exemption applications to mirror the closing of books for tax returns for the calendar year. *SB 159* passed unanimously. The Committee then held a hearing on *SR 796*, which calls for a change in the uniformity requirement as it applies to residential and nonresidential real property. **Clint Mueller** of the Association County Commissioners of Georgia spoke in favor of the bill, but suggested adding that assessment caps be indexed for inflation. **Gwen Hall** of the Georgia Municipal Association spoke in favor of the bill, suggesting only a minor change. **Alan Essig** of the Georgia Budget and Policy Institute mentioned a few likely unintended consequences of the bill, but was generally supportive. Finally, **Angela Palm** of the Georgia School Boards Association also testified in favor of *SR 796*, which passed unanimously. Discussion then resumed on *SR 686*, which proposes an amendment to the Constitution to require the freezing of existing residential real property values and to provide that residential real property and interests must be appraised for ad valorem taxation purposes at their fair market value at the date of acquisition. Chairman **Rogers** explained the bill's provisions, mentioning that he supports cities and counties being able to hold referendum votes on the issue. Sen. **Seabaugh** asked the Committee to consider two amendments, both of which made minor language changes. Both of the amendments passed unanimously. Thereafter, *SR 686* passed unanimously as amended.

## Government Oversight Committee

On Thursday, January 31, Chairman **Ronnie Chance** of the 16<sup>th</sup> called the first meeting of the Government Oversight Committee to order. First, Senator **David Shafer** of the 48<sup>th</sup> presented *Senate Resolution 722*, which creates a Grady Oversight Committee (GOC). This board will periodically review the success of the Fulton-DeKalb Hospital Authority in accomplishing its legislative purposes. After Sen. **Shafer** addressed several concerns of other Committee members, *SR 722* was passed unanimously. Sen. **Shafer** then brought forth *Senate Bill 353*, which coincides with *SR 722* in that no member of the GOC may have any financial tie to the hospital or any major vendors to the hospital. *SB 353* was unanimously passed by the Committee. Lastly, Sen. **Shafer** presented *SR 748*, which urges Grady to consider a change of staff model in order for the hospital to be more self-sustained. *SR 748* also passed unanimously.

## Health and Human Services Committee

Thursday, January 31, the Committee convened jointly with the House Children and Youth Committee to hold a hearing concerning childhood obesity issues. The Committee heard presentations from **Rick Lewis** of the College of Family and Consumer Sciences at the University of Georgia and **Rodney Lyn** of the Institute of Public Health at Georgia State University. Also, Surgeon General **Joe Thompson** of Arkansas testified on certain goals and initiatives that are being implemented to combat childhood obesity in the state of Arkansas.

## Higher Education Committee

The Higher Education Committee did not meet this week.

## Insurance and Labor Committee

On Wednesday, February 6, Chairman **Ralph Hudgens** of the 47<sup>th</sup> called the Committee to order. Chairman **Hudgens** announced that *Senate Bill 348* was placed back in the Committee in order to meet with affected interested parties. The Committee first took up *SB 304*, sponsored by Senator **Doug Stoner** of the 6<sup>th</sup>, which seeks to require individuals who file an application for health benefits under any state-funded health program to identify his or her employer. **Mark Trail**, director of Medicaid services for the Department of Community Health (DCH), asked that more time be given to examine the bill and address its issues. Chairman **Hudgens** created a subcommittee, made up of Senators **Stoner**, **Chip Rogers** of the 21<sup>st</sup> and **Tim Golden** of the 8<sup>th</sup>, to further review *SB 304*. Chairman **Hudgens** then introduced *SB 403*, sponsored by Sen. **Henson** of the 41<sup>st</sup>, which would require employers to pay former employees their final check on or before the next regular payday. **Roy Bowen**, president of Georgia Traditional Manufacturers Association, asked the Committee to hold *SB 403* for further review. Chairman **Hudgens** said the Committee will take up *SB 403* at the next Committee meeting.

## Interstate Cooperation Committee

The Interstate Cooperation Committee did not meet this week.

## Judiciary Committee

On Thursday, January 31, Chairman **Preston Smith** of the 52<sup>nd</sup> called the first meeting of the Judiciary Committee to order. The Committee first took up *Senate Bill 216*, presented by Senator **Ronnie Chance** of the 16<sup>th</sup>, which prohibits those under federal indictment from serving on a grand jury. District Attorney **Tommy Floyd** of the Flint County Judicial Circuit spoke in support of the bill and proposed an amendment that would include those who are accused of a crime, not just indicted. Chairman **Smith** recommended the amendment be proposed on the Senate floor. *SB 216* passed unanimously. Sen. **John Douglas** of the 17<sup>th</sup> then presented *SB 21*, which increases the penalty for murdering certain law enforcement personnel to life without parole. Several witnesses opposed the bill on grounds that it takes discretion away from judges, including Judge **Arch McGarity**, president of the Council of Superior Court Judges, and **Jack Martin** of the Georgia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. Among those who testified for the bill were representatives of the Georgia Sheriffs' Association, Georgia Association of Emergency Medical Services and Executive Director **Frank Rotondo** of the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police. After some discussion by the Committee, the bill failed by a vote of 4 to 5, with Senators **Joseph Carter** of the 13<sup>th</sup>, **Vincent Fort** of the 39<sup>th</sup>, **Seth Harp** of the 29<sup>th</sup>, **Michael Meyer von Bremen** of the 12<sup>th</sup> and **Kasim Reed** of the 35<sup>th</sup> in dissent. The Committee then considered *SB 355*, authored by Chairman **Smith**, which defines the types of negotiable instruments that a settlement agent must receive prior to making a disbursement. Representatives of the Georgia Realtors Association and the State Bar of Georgia testified in support of the bill. Other witnesses raised concerns regarding the lack of flexibility in wiring funds, including **Scott Logan** of the Georgia Real Estate Closing Attorneys Association and **Mo Thrash** of the Mortgage Bankers Association of Georgia. The bill passed unanimously by Committee Substitute.

## Natural Resources and the Environment Committee

Chairman **Ross Tolleson** of the 20<sup>th</sup> called the meeting to order on Wednesday, February 6, to take up four bills. First, Chairman **Tolleson** reviewed *Senate Bill 367*, which removes the automatic repeal provision of the Georgia Coastal Management Act. The bill was approved by a unanimous vote. Sen. **Bill Heath** of the 31<sup>st</sup> then presented *SB 382*, which expands the short-term hunting license for residents from one to three days. *SB 382* also passed unanimously. Sen. **Bill Cowsert** of the 46<sup>th</sup> then presented *SB 351*, which creates a Statewide Water Planning Oversight Committee. The bill provides the make up of the Oversight Committee and allows certain powers to override environment rules of the Environmental Protection Division (EPD). The bill also passed through Committee by a unanimous vote. Lastly, Sen. **Chip Rogers** of the 21<sup>st</sup> presented *SB 368*, which addresses the permit restrictions of surface water. This bill ensures that the EPD director cannot restrict the use or maintenance of public, private or community swimming pools. After some deliberation, Chairman **Tolleson** made a motion to table *SB 368* for further consideration.

## Public Safety Committee

On Thursday, January 31, Senator **Jeff Mullis** of the 53<sup>rd</sup> called the meeting to order to consider *Senate Bills 315 and 356*. Sen. **Preston Smith** of the 52<sup>nd</sup> presented *SB 315*, which extends the current authorization of a five percent court fee on all traffic violations to be paid into any pension, annuity or retirement funds until June 30, 2013. *SB 315* passed unanimously by Committee Substitute. Sen. **Steve Henson** of the 41<sup>st</sup> presented *SB 356*, which requires that money raised from the issuance of traffic violations by any college or university campus police department's motorcycle enforcement unit be used for the maintenance and enhancement of its motorcycle enforcement program. **Oliver Hunter** of the Georgia Sheriff's Association was in attendance to speak in opposition of the bill. *SB 356* passed by a vote of 6 to 1, with Sen. **Johnny Grant** of the 25<sup>th</sup> in dissent.

## Reapportionment and Redistricting Committee

The Reapportionment and Redistricting Committee did not meet this week.

## Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee

On Wednesday, February 6, Chairman **David Shafer** of the 48<sup>th</sup> called the meeting to order. Senator **Don Balfour** of the 9<sup>th</sup> explained *Senate Bill 384*, which limits limousine carrier fees for permitting by stating that such fees cannot exceed the airport's cost of permitting and regulating limousine carriers. **Les Snyder**, representative of the Georgia Limousine Association, testified in favor of the bill's. *SB 384* passed 8 to 1, with Sen. **Thomas** in dissent. Chairman **Shafer** then opened discussion on *SB 385*, which provides for the licensing of limousine carriers to sell alcoholic beverages for consumption only in the vehicle supplied by the limousine carrier. A permit is issued in accordance with this legislation. Sen. **Balfour** explained the bill's provisions further. *SB 385* passed unanimously.

## Retirement Committee

The Retirement Committee did not meet this week.

## Rules Committee

The Rules Committee did not meet as a standing committee this week.

## Science and Technology Committee

The Science and Technology Committee did not meet this week.

## Special Judiciary Committee

The Committee met on Tuesday, February 5, to consider *Senate Bill 217*. Senator **Curt Thompson** of the 5<sup>th</sup> presented his substitute, which more clearly defines the characteristics of a "voluntary homeowners' association group", giving such an entity the legal standing to bring forth legal action to enforce covenants. **Ron Jayson** of the Georgia Real Estate Investors Association emphasized the importance of adding a further notice provision. After some discussion and questioning, Chairman **Michael Meyer von Bremen** of the 12<sup>th</sup> stated *SB 217* would be taken up at the next Committee meeting.

## State Institutions and Property Committee

The State Institutions and Property Committee did not meet this week.

## State and Local Governmental Operations Committee

The State and Local Governmental Operations Committee did not meet this week.

## Transportation Committee

Chairman **Jeff Mullis** of the 53<sup>rd</sup> called the Committee to order on Wednesday, February 6, to hear three pieces of legislation. The Committee first heard a brief presentation from Director of Ports, Airports & Coasts **Oriol Balaguer** of Catalonia, Spain. Director **Balaguer** discussed some of the transportation issues he is facing in Barcelona, Spain, and how those issues are similar to Atlanta's transportation problems. Senator **Doug Stoner** of the 6<sup>th</sup> then introduced *Senate Bill 371*, which would require that local school districts conduct a survey of all existing school bus routes to determine which bus routes cross railroad crossings that do not have active warning devices. The school districts would then submit a list of these dangerous crossings to the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT). Sen. **John Douglas** of the 17<sup>th</sup> moved to amend the bill to provide for a July 1, 2008, start date. After brief discussion, *SB 371* passed by substitute as amended by a unanimous vote. Sen. **Chip Pearson** of the 51<sup>st</sup> presented *Senate Resolution 750*, which urges the U.S. DOT to make the funds collected under the federal motor fuel tax immediately available to individual states to fund their transportation needs and to cease collection of state motor fuel taxes in Georgia. *SR 750* was adopted unanimously. Chairman **Mullis** then presented *SR 781*, which urges the state DOT to develop a statewide strategic transportation plan. The legislation also asks the DOT to report its progress on the statewide plan to the General Assembly by December 31, 2008. *SR 781* passed by a unanimous vote.

## Urban Affairs Committee

The Urban Affairs Committee did not meet this week.

## Veterans, Military and Homeland Security Committee

Chairman **John Douglas** of the 17<sup>th</sup> called the meeting to order on Tuesday, February 5. The Committee heard a presentation from **Charley English**, director of the Georgia Emergency Management Agency, concerning current Homeland Security issues.

# *Senate Press Office Staff*

*Merri M. Brantley*

Director

*Jeremy Frish*

Deputy Director

*Chris Bailey*

Broadcast Media Specialist

*Ravae Graham*

Media Specialist

*Kallarin Richards*

Media Specialist

*Lacey McLaughlin*

Media Liaison

*Faith Benn*

Session Aide

*Ryan Burtleson*

Session Aide

*Ashley Dean*

Session Aide

*Sarah Morgan*

Session Aide

*John T. Smith*

Session Aide



*Senate Press Office*

201 Paul D. Coverdell Legislative Office Building

18 Capitol Square

Atlanta, Georgia 30334

404.656.0028 or outside the Atlanta area 800.282.5803

*This Week*

*February 7, 2008*

*Page 17 of 17*