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FISCAL YEAR 2023 STATE BUDGET
HOUSE BILL 911 - HIGHLIGHTS

The Fiscal Year 2023 budget is set by a revenue estimate of $30.2 billion, an increase of $2.9 billion or 10.8% over the FY 2022 original budget. The rebound of state revenue presents the opportunity to make significant investments in state government that will resonate for many years. The General Assembly supports the governor's recommendation to permanently restore nearly $669 million eliminated from the budget in FY 2021 during the economic uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. The FY 2023 budget invests $758 million in the state's human capital infrastructure to stop the revolving door of state employees that, ultimately, impacts services delivered to 10.7 million Georgians. Specifically, HB 911 includes $612 million to provide a $5,000 cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for state employees, the first COLA received since FY 2008; $25.7 million to allow state employees to withdraw and be compensated for up to 40 hours of accrued leave annually; and $119.8 million to increase the employer 401(k) match up to 9% and prefund a COLA for state retirees. This total compensation package is an effort to combat the state's all-time high turnover rate of 23%, with some agencies experiencing turnover as high as 40%. The General Assembly provides $62.4 million in additional, targeted salary adjustments recognizing that for many agencies, once employees are trained, they are often recruited by other government entities and the private sector.

The budget is a powerful tool to express policy, and the House of Representatives uses the FY 2023 budget to bolster funding for mental health coordinated care and law enforcement systems with an infusion of $148.9 million in new funds. Funds are provided to law enforcement agencies for additional positions and salary adjustments to suppress crime, support the processing of evidence, and increase the safety of the public. Georgians facing crisis or struggling with addiction receive additional reinforcement through the expansion of accountability courts, suicide prevention supports, crisis bed availability, and a workforce to deliver those services maintained through various increases to ensure parity, as well as reasonable provider rates and salaries. Highlights of HB 911 are below:

Economic Development

- HB 911 provides the Department of Agriculture with $324,201 to restore funding for the Athens and Tifton veterinary labs contracts and $250,000 for the poultry diagnostic labs for the increased costs of maintaining laboratory biosafety. The legislature agrees with the governor's recommendation of $800,000 in state funds to match federal funds for the Georgia Grown Farm to Food Bank program to utilize surplus agricultural products and address fresh produce shortages in regional food banks.

- $692,300 is included for the Soil and Water Conservation Commission for five new plan review positions and five new positions for technical support. Additionally, the commission receives $80,000 to increase the base funding to each of the conservation districts to support their local efforts.
- The FY 2023 budget provides the Department of Community Affairs with $110,000 for the Resource Conservation and Development Councils, which increases each council's base funding by $10,000, for a total of $30,000 each. The Georgia Rural Water Association is appropriated an additional $250,000 to address the increasing demands of state emergency response and resource fulfillment needs.
- More than $3.7 million in additional funding is provided to the Department of Economic Development to support tourism in Georgia, including: $2.8 million to refurbish exhibits and install two new memorials at the National Infantry Museum; $470,251 for the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change for facilities improvements and educational exhibits; $250,000 for the Georgia World Congress Center Authority to begin public safety and security preparation for the Federation International de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup events and an additional $7 million for renovations.
- With the expansion of the electric vehicle industry in Georgia, HB 911 includes $448,250 for two new positions within the department to manage the emerging workforce needs.
- The FY 2023 budget restores $1 million in funds that were shifted to one-time federal grants in the State Forestry Commission; $164,570 for a new position to address strategic initiatives throughout the agency; and $117,000 to implement a multi-tiered effort to address retention and continuous technical training for all employees.
- HB 911 includes $82,250 to annualize the funds needed to maintain the Public Service Commission's e-filing system and $846,293 to restore seven positions reduced in FY 2021 that are needed to regulate utilities.

Education

- The FY 2023 budget provides the most state funds ever appropriated to K-12 education. It fully funds the Quality Basic Education (QBE) program in the Department of Education, totaling $11.8 billion in state funds, and includes a $382 million austerity restoration, thereby restoring all reductions made in FY 2021 due to the decline in state revenues from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- HB 911 provides $291.7 million to increase the state base salary schedule for certified teachers and employees by $2,000, for a total adjustment to the state base salary schedule of $5,000 since FY 2020. This adjustment is in the following programs with certified teachers and employees: Agricultural Education ($469,033); Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) ($1.5 million); Sparsity Grants ($353,615); Residential Treatment Facilities ($268,285); Preschool Disabilities Services ($918,985); QBE ($287.1 million); and Technology/Career Education ($1.1 million). The budget also includes $7.9 million for a 5.4% pay raise for school nutrition workers ($1.1 million); bus drivers ($4.7 million); school nurses ($1.8 million); and Regional Education Services Agencies (RESAs) ($310,071).
- The final version of the budget includes $43.5 million for enrollment growth and training and experience for an additional 11,926 students and 484 teachers. The budget also includes $30.3 million for growth in the State Commission Charter School supplements and state special charter schools. Charter system grants receive $38,613 in additional funding and local charter schools, pursuant to SB 59 (2021 Session), receive $2.9 million.
- The budget includes an additional $1.4 million for pupil transportation based on an increase in FTEs, and when combined with the pay raise, the total pupil transportation funding for FY 2023 is $142.7 million.

- In FY 2023, the School Nutrition program receives an additional $712,028 to assist school districts in keeping school lunches affordable; when combined with the pay raise, the School Nutrition program totals $31.3 million.
- HB 911 includes $5.1 million in restorations to other Department of Education programs that provide direct instruction or vital educational services. The adjustments represent the full restoration of the original FY 2021 reductions: Agricultural Education ($253,606); Communities in Schools ($57,124); GNETS ($2.4 million); Preschool Disabilities Services ($1.6 million); RESAs ($433,006); Technology/Career Education ($282,460); State Schools ($200,000); and Tuition for Multiple Disabilities ($62,078). The budget also restores $160,000 to RESAs for mental health training at districts and schools.
- In the Agricultural Education program, $100,000 is provided for a new young farmer position in Floyd County and supplemental young farmer positions in Banks County, Barrow County, and Pelham City. The budget includes the state share of funds for 21 new agricultural education programs across Georgia, for a total cost of $178,500; $144,000 for an urban/suburban agriculture specialist to grow agriculture education in non-rural areas of the state; $140,000 for an additional FFA staff member to accommodate program growth; and two agricultural education staff to support the Area Teacher program.
- The FY 2023 budget provides $200,000 for additional feminine hygiene grants, expanding from middle school and high school to include the fifth grade. The total funding for feminine hygiene grants of $1.45 million is provided to school systems with low property tax wealth and a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students.
- Residential Treatment Facilities (RTFs) receive an additional $931,194 based on a new formula. The new formula provides funding predictability for the RTFs, which naturally have a more transient student population.
- The budget includes $3 million for charter facilities grants in the Charter School program, increasing the total funding to $7.5 million. Facilities grants are provided to local charter schools and state charter schools at a flat amount pursuant to HB 430 (2017 Session).
- House Bill 911 includes $3.1 million in matching funds to allow the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) to draw an additional $17 million in federal Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF) to provide child care assistance to low-income families; $500,000 additional funds for the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program; and $19.4 million in lottery funds to provide Pre-K teachers and assistant teachers with a $2,000 salary increase.
- $182,617 is provided to the Professional Standards Commission for two positions specializing in technical assistance to military personnel, veterans, and their spouses to assist them transition into teaching.
- The FY 2023 budget includes $1.4 million for a $0.25 increase, from $15.75 to $16.00, to the benefit multiplier for retired members of the Public School Employees Retirement System (PSERS).
- HB 911 includes $119.6 million to increase the employer contribution rate to the Employees' Retirement System (ERS) to: provide a cost-of-living adjustment for retirees; increase the 401(k) match to 9%; and fund the employer share of accrued forfeited leave for retiring employees. The statewide adjustment will prefund a COLA for state retirees, and on July 1, 2022, retired ERS members will receive their first COLA in 14 years.
- Throughout the budget, school systems receive an additional $13.5 million for Teachers Retirement System's (TRS) annual required employer contribution rate increase. When funding for higher education is included, the total new state fund investment in TRS for FY 2023 is $15.5 million. These funds support 135,678 retired and 231,032 active members.

General Government Services

- The Fiscal Year 2023 budget provides $10 million in new funds to the Department of Audits and Accounts, which includes $2 million for independent economic analyses of tax credit proposals and $2.4 million for the statewide COLA and salary adjustments to address turnover.
- House Bill 911 includes $115,000 for the Georgia State Board of Accountancy to hire one auditor. The position will bring in approximately $200,000 in revenue and allow the board's investigator to focus on misconduct.
- The General Assembly maintains $1.2 million for the Department of Driver Services to complete the construction of a commercial driver's license testing pad, which helps the state address a national driver shortage of approximately 80,000 drivers.
- The General Assembly includes $1.5 million in the Department of Administrative Services to compensate two wrongfully convicted individuals.
- HB 911 provides $271,308 to the Office of the State Inspector General for a position, salary adjustments, and operational expenses related to the agency's new ability to hire and train POST-certified employees.
- The Fiscal Year 2023 budget recognizes $3.4 million in new revenue within the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance and directs the agency to utilize the funds for 45 positions and IT upgrades. The positions include inspectors for buildings, hazardous materials, and manufactured housing; the IT upgrades will help the agency manage reporting and complaints. The budget includes $127,177 as part of HB 1013 (2022 Session), the 'Mental Health Parity Act', to fund a mental health parity officer to oversee the implementation of parity initiatives and a violation repository.
- The FY 2023 budget provides nearly $38 million to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), including $2.1 million to restore 22 game warden positions and related operating expenses, $10.5 million for park repairs and renovations (reflected in FY 2023 bond package), and $750,000 in additional funds for fuel expenses to maintain patrol hours. The General Assembly also includes $2.2 million for the Environmental Protection Division of DNR for a market salary adjustment for environmental compliance specialists and engineers, as well as for operation expenses, to help the agency with inspections and enforcement of environmental regulations.

Health

- HB 911 recognizes $170.3 million in state fund savings in the Department of Community Health due to an extension of a temporary 6.2% increase in Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) rates during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. These funds are repurposed in the budget to fund Medicaid provider rate increases, behavioral health services, and the state's healthcare workforce.
- The General Assembly agrees with the governor to provide $85.4 million to eliminate attestation requirements for Medicaid primary care providers and to reimburse these providers at enhanced rates for 108 procedure codes. Additionally, $825,212 is provided to increase select OB/GYN delivery codes to 2020 Medicare reimbursement levels to bring them up to the same year as most of the primary care codes.
- The FY 2023 budget provides additional Medicaid rate adjustments, including: $475,603 for a 10% reimbursement rate increase for long-term acute care hospitals (LTAC) and inpatient rehabilitation facilities (IRF) to support the cost of treating high-acuity patients with traumatic injuries; $653,773 for a 10% increase in two dental extraction codes and a 7% increase for 17 select dental restorative codes; $1.7 million to provide a 20% reimbursement rate increase for mechanical ventilator providers; $268,026 to

increase reimbursement rates for medical nutrition therapy in order to increase the number of providers willing to accept Medicaid patients; and $1.2 million to increase dispensing fees for independent pharmacies under managed care.

- HB 911 provides $28.2 million to provide one year of postpartum Medicaid coverage to mothers in order to address Georgia's high incidence of maternal mortality. Extending medical coverage an additional six months beyond the current six-month limit after delivery will provide greater access to healthcare services for new mothers, and is expected to decrease and prevent maternal deaths.
- The FY 2023 budget includes $5 million in Low-Income Medicaid and directs the department to submit 1115 waivers to provide Medicaid benefits to individuals with HIV and to remove the five-year waiting period for lawful permanent residents.
- The General Assembly supports home and community-based service providers by providing $1.9 million to offset the cost of fingerprinting as part of the staff background check required by law.
- $46.5 million is provided in the FY 2023 budget for value-based purchasing in the Low-Income Medicaid and PeachCare for Kids programs.
- HB 911 provides $500,000 for two federally qualified health center behavioral health expansion start-up grants, with one at Coastal Community Health Services covering Glynn and McIntosh counties and one at South Central Primary Care covering Irwin, Ben Hill, Coffee, Atkinson, Berrien, Cook, and Lowndes counties.
- The FY 2023 budget supports frontline workers by providing $200,000 to expand the RN-reentry program to assist nurses in reentering the workforce, as well as $74,000 to expand mental health first aid training to address the need for front-line workers to identify, de-escalate, and refer persons in crisis.
- As part of the House of Representatives' behavioral health initiative, $1 million is included in the FY 2023 budget for a study on reimbursement rates for mental health care providers, as well as instruction for the Department of Community Health to begin preparation for a repository for tracking, analyzing, and reporting information resulting from complaints received by consumers and state health care entities regarding suspected mental health parity violations.
- The House and Senate continue to support graduate medical education in order to increase Georgia's healthcare workforce. The FY 2023 budget includes: $3.9 million for 199 new residency slots; $950,000 in new and existing funds for planning and start-up of residency programs at Archbold Medical Center, Memorial Health Meadows Hospital, Coffee Regional Hospital, Southern Regional Medical Center, and Southeast Georgia Health Systems; $250,000 for two new fellowships at Augusta University in gynecologic oncology and rural primary care; and $109,323 for seven new residency slots at Emory University.
- The General Assembly agrees with the governor to provide $1.1 million to support the Mercer School of Medicine's medical school campus in Columbus.
- HB 911 provides $3 million for a clinical campus expansion, as well as $376,000 to support child and adolescent psychiatry and psychiatric residency programs at the Morehouse School of Medicine.
- As part of the House of Representatives' law enforcement initiative, $565,380 is provided to the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency for two additional agents and for a data management system to track licenses, complaints, inspections, and investigations.
- In the Department of Public Health, the General Assembly provides $16.3 million for salary increases for the state's public health nurses, epidemiologists, environmental health specialists, and other targeted positions in order to address agency recruitment and retention by raising salaries to a competitive market range.

- The FY 2023 budget provides $1.8 million for additional lead inspectors and testing machines to support the recommendations of the House Study Committee on Childhood Lead Exposure and pursuant to HB 1355 (2022 Session); $538,738 for the Sickle Cell Foundation to support care coordination and expanded access to testing in rural areas; and $1.7 million support to local health departments with infrastructure grants.

Higher Education

- The final version of the FY 2023 budget includes $99.9 million for the University System of Georgia (USG), reflecting a 1.2% increase in credit hour growth and a 0.1% increase in square footage; $8.3 million for the final year of a three-year phase-in for increased medical education funding through the USG formula; and $1.8 million for Fort Valley State University to maximize the federal land-grant match requirements.
- HB 911 restores prior year reductions of $229.6 million for the purpose of eliminating the special institutional fee charged to students. The fee ranges from $170/semester at South Georgia State College to $540/semester at Georgia Institute of Technology.
- The FY 2023 budget provides $2.1 million for 11 new faculty positions at the University of Georgia's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. These positions will address blueberry breeding, vegetable breeding, viticulture, controlled environment agriculture production, and integrative precision agriculture.
- HB 911 includes an additional $500,000 for the Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC) to fund start-ups and leverage private funding; $600,000 for Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI) to provide professional development and student support for a computer science pilot program in rural Georgia; $632,230 to support advanced research in agricultural technology as part of the Agricultural Technology Research Program (ATRP); and $500,000 for the Veterinary Medicine Experiment Station to support research on cattle and poultry diseases and upgrade laboratories to improve biosafety standards.
- $750,000 is included in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget to provide funds for a Georgia Research Alliance (GRA) Eminent Scholar for Integrated Precision Agriculture and $500,000 for equipment and research and development infrastructure.
- The final version of the FY 2023 budget provides an additional $3.5 million to the Medical College of Georgia for their 3+ program for a total of $8.7 million. This program provides medical students the opportunity to complete their education in three years and begin their residency in Georgia. HB 911 includes $1.2 million to expand capacity for nursing students across the university system. The $6 million investment over five years will increase the number of nursing graduates by 500.
- The FY 2023 budget includes $1.9 million for Middle Georgia State University combined with $3.5 million in bonds for equipment to continue the aviation career path program and $92,500 for the Georgia Aviation Hall of Fame housed at Middle Georgia State University.
- $2.5 million is included in the FY 2023 budget for a pilot university summer program to enhance exposure for high school foster youth to postsecondary options.
- HB 911 includes $7.3 million for programmatic restorations of reductions from the initial FY 2021 budget: Agricultural Experiment Station ($1.9 million); Athens and Tifton Veterinary Laboratories ($324,201); Cooperative Extension Service ($1.8 million); Forestry Cooperative Extension ($42,748); Forestry Research ($132,427); GTRI ($239,361); Marine Institute ($47,804); Marine Resources Extension Center ($55,657); Medical College of Georgia Hospital/Clinic ($1.9 million); Public Libraries ($725,618); Georgia Youth Science and Technology Center ($35,822); and the Veterinary Medicine Experiment Station ($108,000).

- The FY 2023 budget provides the Georgia Public Library Service with $2.2 million in additional funds to increase the materials grant for public libraries from $.40 to $.60 per capita. This is in addition to $181,619 in enhanced funding due to an increase in state population.
- House Bill 911 includes $25 million in lottery funds in the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) to increase the minimum factor rate to 90% for the HOPE Scholarship – Public Schools program and the HOPE Grant. Depending on the institution, students will receive between $15 and $780 in additional HOPE Scholarship funds each semester; HOPE Grant students receive an additional $210 per semester.
- The General Assembly agrees with the governor's recommendation to increase funds to expand the HOPE Career Grant to include Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement programs. The HOPE Career Grant provides grants of up to $500 to students enrolled in approved programs identified by the governor as strategically important to the state's economic growth.
- The FY 2023 budget adds $4.1 million in lottery funds to increase the award amount for HOPE Scholarship – Private Schools award by 6%. This increased funding provides an additional $130 per semester to each eligible recipient. More than 11,000 students at eligible private postsecondary institutions across the state receive HOPE Scholarship – Private awards.
- House Bill 911 provides $2.6 million to increase the yearly Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG) award amount by $50. The total amount each eligible student receives increases from $850 to $900 per year. TEG was established in 1971 to provide financial assistance to eligible students attending private postsecondary institutions in Georgia. More than 26,000 students receive TEG awards each year.
- The FY 2023 budget provides an additional $923,843 to restructure the HOPE GED program in accordance with SB 397 (2022 Session). The newly named High School Equivalency Exam program transitions from providing a $500 grant upon GED completion, to covering the cost of taking a high school equivalency exam for eligible students.
- The budget for FY 2023 includes $10 million to create the College Completion Grants program (HB 1435, 2022 Session). The program provides up to $2,500 in postsecondary gap funding to allow eligible students to complete their degree programs.
- House Bill 911 reflects an additional $10 million provided to the Georgia Student Finance Commission in the Amended FY 2022 budget to establish a service cancelable loan program for Georgians enrolled in eligible degree programs for mental health or substance use professionals as established in HB 1013 (2022 Session).
- The FY 2023 budget includes $1.7 million as part of an increased focus on law enforcement to create a service cancelable loan program for active state and local law enforcement officers, as well as medical examiners employed by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. Eligible officers receive $2,000 per year, for a maximum of four years, and are eligible for one year of loan forgiveness for each year of service. As part of an overall strategy to recruit and retain medical examiners at the GBI, medical examiners are eligible for $20,000 of loan forgiveness per year of service, up to $120,000.
- In order to implement these new service cancelable loans and expand other programs, the FY 2023 budget includes $1.6 million for 13 new positions and four contractors at the Georgia Student Finance Commission. House Bill 911 also includes funds for two new compliance officers to audit high schools that participate in the state's Dual Enrollment program, which gives Georgia high school students the opportunity to earn college credit at participating postsecondary institutions while still enrolled in high school. The program served approximately 49,000 students in FY 2021.

- HB 911 includes $33 million for the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) to restore austerity reductions implemented in FY 2021. These funds are directed to expand instruction of allied health, commercial truck driving, and manufacturing program to support critical workforce needs across Georgia; $2.6 million to recognize high-cost instructional programs within TCSG; and $2.1 million to expand aviation technician programs at colleges statewide to meet the increasing aviation industry's workforce demands.
- The FY 2023 budget includes $4.7 million to implement the Dual Achievement Program pilot at five of TCSG's institutions.
- $12.2 million is included in HB 911 to support the state's expanding electric vehicle industry, including customized training and recruitment operations.

Human Services

- The FY 2023 budget provides $15.2 million to the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to increase the salaries of state psychiatric hospital nurses and health aides to improve retention and increase access to services to Georgians by maintaining existing beds.
- HB 911 appropriates funds to support the House of Representatives' behavioral health initiatives, including: $2.2 million for assisted outpatient treatment (AOT); $897,060 to expand the co-responder mobile crisis team to 10 new sites; $220,050 to establish a technical assistance coordination center for mental health accountability courts; and $281,995 for five additional caseworkers to support new accountability courts.
- HB 911 includes $6.9 million to expand capacity at crisis stabilization units in Augusta and Columbus and $9.6 million to increase capacity by 92 beds at Georgia Regional Hospital in Atlanta and other facilities throughout the state.
- The FY 2023 budget includes $3.5 million for 500 slots and administrative support to help those experiencing mental illness obtain permanent housing; $6.3 million for additional capacity at the adult medical psychiatric unit at Grady Memorial Hospital; and $1.2 million to allow for Medicaid reimbursement of psychiatric and behavioral health care management services.
- The Georgia Apex Program receives $5.6 million in the FY 2023 budget to annualize expansion funds and maintain mental health services to students; $1.45 million is budgeted for Georgia Crisis and Access Line (GCAL) to increase staffing capacity in preparation for the national '988' suicide hotline; and $4 million is appropriated to recognize the transition of two Community Service Boards (CSB) to the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHC) model.
- HB 911 provides $261,823 for the administrative infrastructure needed to implement the terms of the National Prescription Opiate Litigation settlement, the Georgia Opioid Abatement Trust funds, and the activities of the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory (ORRFA) Council; the department is directed to utilize $500,000 from the Georgia Opioid Crisis Abatement Trust to equip law enforcement, emergency medical services personnel, and probation staff with naloxone opioid overdose reversal medication.
- The General Assembly builds on the governor's recommendation and adds administrative support and 513 slots to the New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities for $10.3 million. HB 911 includes $1.4 million to support Georgians with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families with supplies and equipment, medical services, recreation activities, and employment.

- HB 911 provides $7.8 million for a 10% increase for core mental health and addictive diseases services; $4.9 million for a 2% rate increase to developmental disability providers; and $932,324 to conduct a study to analyze behavioral health provider rates.
- HB 911 adds $7.1 million to increase the hourly rate of special assistant attorneys general (SAAGs) from $57.50 to $77.50 across the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities and the Department of Human Services. Additionally, $295,126 is allocated to increase SAAG paralegal hourly rates from $25 to $40.
- HB 911 appropriates $8.2 million in new funds to the Department of Human Services for programs to support older adults and their families. Specifically, $4 million is provided for non-Medicaid home and community based services (HCBS), $1.2 million for statewide dementia screenings, and $3 million to expand Alzheimer's services statewide.
- The General Assembly adds $3 million to increase the annual clothing allowance for foster youth by $275 per child. Currently children under the age of 12 and placed in a home for less than a year receive $311. Children aged 12 and older, and all children placed longer than a year, receive $415.
- The department receives $1.5 million to establish two community action team pilot programs to address children who are in, or at risk of entering, foster care; $6.7 million in existing funds are reinvested to provide alternatives to the hoteling of children with complex needs.
- The budget provides $30.1 million in the Department of Human Services and the Department of Juvenile Justice for a 10% rate increase for Child Caring Institutions, Child Placing Agencies, foster parents, and relative caregivers.
- Georgia Family Connection receives a $418,000 restoration to cuts made in FY 2021 and an additional $397,500 to expand mental health services, raising each county's allocation from $48,000 to $52,500. An additional $200,000 is provided to Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to enhance statewide capacity.
- The Department of Veterans Services is appropriated $166,020 to hire a suicide prevention director and a cemetery grounds technician. Funding in the FY 2023 budget to establish a new veterans' cemetery in Augusta remains intact for matching funds.
- HB 911 includes $2.3 million for the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) to provide support services for people living with visual impairments and physical disabilities, and $380,785 is added to the Office of the Child Advocate to expand capacity in case investigations.

Public Safety, Criminal Justice, and the Courts

- The General Assembly appropriates nearly $16 million to fund an additional salary increase of $2,000 for state correctional officers and juvenile correctional officers above the $5,000 COLA; nearly $4.3 million is provided for correctional officer salary adjustments at private prisons to maintain pay competitive with state prisons. The budget for the Department of Corrections also includes $4.2 million to annualize the costs associated with establishing regional hubs for offender transport; $10 million for technological improvements designed to improve correctional officer safety; and $42.4 million for capital maintenance and repairs at facilities throughout the state.
- As part of the House of Representatives' law enforcement initiative, HB 911 includes $15.5 million for the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) to hire 68 new positions to combat crime and support the criminal justice system through the processing of evidence. Specifically, the budget includes: $3.8 million for 21 scientists and seven crime lab technicians, $800,000 to outsource chemistry and firearms cases, and

$170,000 to outsource training to address the current crime lab backlog; $2.1 million for 10 new positions in the medical examiner's office to address workload including three medical examiners, six death investigator specialists (DIS), and one administrative assistant; $975,000 for an additional medical examiner and three death investigator specialists (DIS) in the Macon office; $4.6 million for 15 special agents, six criminal intelligence analysts, and one help desk analyst and necessary operating expenses for the Gang Task Force; and $579,936 to annualize four positions to investigate elections complaints. The budget also includes $2.6 million for an additional salary increase for death investigator specialists and crime lab scientists to increase retention.

- House Bill 911 includes $976,918 to fund 10 SWAT Unit troopers in the Department of Public Safety, as well as $577,480 for a 10% salary increase for Troop C officers to combat crime in the metro Atlanta area. The General Assembly provides the department with $750,000 for fuel expense to maintain patrol hours during times of record-high gasoline prices and $2.6 million to fund a 75-cadet trooper school.
- The Georgia Public Safety Training Center receives $1.1 million in HB 911 for 10 proper use of force and de-escalation training positions; $379,500 is budgeted for the Office of Public Safety Officer Support for two additional peer counselors and one social worker along with the necessary operating expenses to enhance public safety officers' access to peer counselors and health clinicians.
- $3.6 million is included for 10 new accountability courts including six mental health, two adult felony drug, one veterans' treatment, and one family treatment accountability court, as well as 27 accountability court case managers to staff them. The budget also includes an additional $222,706 to provide a 5% salary increase for all accountability court case managers.
- $1.3 million is included in the Department of Law to establish a 12-member gang prosecution unit and $317,484 to expand the human trafficking unit by three positions.
- The Fiscal Year 2023 budget includes $1.1 million to fund three new judgeships created in the Blue Ridge, Mountain, and South Georgia judicial circuits, and $915,555 to annualize the new judgeships in the Cobb, Flint, and Oconee judicial circuits created in the FY 2022 budget.
- HB 911 includes nearly $5 million for the recruitment and retention of assistant district attorneys and assistant public defenders, and $1.1 million is included for eight new positions to complete the process of providing an assistant district attorney and an assistant public defender to serve juvenile courts in each circuit. The Fiscal Year 2023 budget includes $2 million to establish three additional Public Defender conflict offices for Macon-Milledgeville, Columbus-Americus-Albany, and Tifton-Waycross.
- House Bill 911 provides $3 million to restore reductions made throughout the judicial branch in the FY 2021 budget, including $675,193 for five additional superior court senior judge days and a directive to the Superior Courts to utilize 'American Rescue Plan Act' funds to provide for an additional five senior judge days. The FY 2023 budget also includes an additional $1.59 million for grants for civil legal services for victims of domestic violence and kinship care families.

Transportation

- House Bill 911 includes the first appropriations from the newly established Transportation Trust Fund and the Transit Trust Fund (HB 511, 2021 Session). These trust funds are collected and reserved for specific uses to support Georgia's transportation network. The FY 2023 budget recognizes Transportation Trust Fund revenues dedicated to the maintenance and construction of the roads in the state, as well as a 10% maximum carve out for transit, which is appropriated as $151 million across the Atlanta-Region Transit Link Authority (ATL), the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA), the State Road and Tollway

Authority (SRTA), the Transit program within the Department of Transportation, and debt service payments. The FY 2023 budget recognizes $15.9 million in the Transit Trust Fund generated by ride-share fees, and dedicates those funds to transit projects statewide, including $2.8 million for rural transit initiatives and $11.9 million to larger transit initiatives.

- House Bill 911 includes four new programs in the Department of Transportation: Airport Aid, Ports and Waterways, Rail, and Transit. Formerly the Intermodal program, these are now standalone programs and appropriations to each are clearly outlined in the budget document. The FY 2023 budget provides an increase of $9 million in Airport Aid.
- The Rail program includes an increase of $8 million to continue the upgrade of rail lines to Class II standards. The General Assembly also includes $2.96 million in the FY 2023 bond package for rail, and when combined with the Amended FY 2022 funding of $10.6 million (HB 910, 2022 Session), the total rail investment is $21.6 million during this budget cycle.
- The Capital Construction Projects program receives an additional $14.3 million in motor fuel funds and Capital Maintenance Projects receives an increase of $85.3 million for resurfacing projects.