



House Budget and Research Office

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AMENDED FISCAL YEAR 2023 STATE BUDGET HOUSE BILL 18 HIGHLIGHTS – CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

House Bill 18, the Amended Fiscal Year 2023 budget, is set by a revenue estimate of \$32.56 billion – an increase of \$2.36 billion, or 7.8%, over the original FY 2023 budget. This is the second year in a row the state has experienced such tremendous growth in an amended budget. These additional funds are utilized to support one-time needed investments in technology and capital projects; safety and security projects; economic development projects; as well as human capital investment. Highlights of the budget are as follows:

Economic Development

- HB 18 provides \$150,000 in the Department of Agriculture for the Tifton lab to recommission accredited operations as well as \$249,800 for the Georgia Poultry Labs to upgrade robotic and emergency response equipment.
- The Amended FY 2023 budget provides \$766,812 to implement the ‘Georgia Raw Dairy Act’ (2022 Session).
- The General Assembly agrees with the governor to provide \$166.7 million in the Department of Community Affairs to fund large economic development projects in the state, including the commitments to Rivian and Hyundai.
- The General Assembly supports the governor’s recommendation to repurpose \$35.7 million in unutilized grants in the OneGeorgia Authority to establish the Rural Workforce Housing Fund.
- HB 18 provides \$15.3 million to the Georgia World Congress Center Authority (GWCCA) to renovate 21 escalators. The center averages more than 3 million visitors annually and has a yearly economic impact of \$1.6 billion.
- The General Assembly supports community and economic development across the state with the addition of \$2 million to complete the construction of the Savannah Convention Center expansion; \$650,000 for the Savannah Logistics Innovation Center to support the logistics and supply chain industry; and \$77,610 for the Georgia Historical Society to maintain markers.
- The Amended FY 2023 budget provides an additional \$1.3 million to the Georgia Forestry Commission for vehicle purchases and increased fuel expenses related to forest management and fire protection.

Education

- The Amended FY 2023 budget provides \$128.2 million to the Department of Education (DOE) for the Quality Basic Education (QBE) midterm adjustment to reflect an increase in 12,939 students (or 0.75%) over last year. The formula also funds \$322,608 in growth for charter system and local charter school grants; \$16.7 million in growth for the state charter school supplement reflecting four additional schools; and \$7.4 million in growth for the Special Needs Scholarship.
- HB 18 includes \$115.7 million in school security grants in the amount of \$50,000 per school, allowing local school systems flexibility in allocating funds system-wide to enhance security. This grant is similar to the \$30,000 provided to each school in Amended FY 2019, which funded reinforced entrances, security cameras, electronic locks, call buttons, metal detectors, gates, and radio systems.
- The Amended FY 2023 budget includes \$5 million for reimbursable grants for paraprofessionals who are enrolled, on or after January 1, 2023, and earn a certificate through a Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP) program. A paraprofessional must have a bachelor's degree and currently work in a public school to qualify. The reimbursement would cover the full cost of the GaTAPP program.
- HB 18 includes \$2.5 million for a state match for a new character education program grant at \$50,000 per school.
- The General Assembly provides \$3.3 million for heavy construction simulators in schools to allow high school students to graduate with a construction industry certificate and immediately enter the workforce.
- The Amended FY 2023 budget includes \$3.5 million for the Professional Standards Commission to overhaul its educator certification and ethics system to provide better efficiency and improved security.

General Government

- The Amended FY 2023 budget includes \$950 million to provide Georgians with Homeowner Tax Relief Grants (HTRG) and aligns the exemption benefit amount with the maximum allowed in the Georgia Constitution.
- HB 18 includes \$26.75 million for a \$500 one-time benefit adjustment for retired state employees. This is in addition to any cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) provided by the Employees' Retirement System Board of Trustees.
- The Department of Banking and Finance receives more than \$500,000 to purchase and implement software that automates the agency's licensing processes. This software will improve efficiency, alleviate employee workloads, and improve customer experience.
- The Amended FY 2023 budget includes nearly \$4.7 million in the Department of Administrative Services (DOAS) to account for projected increases in property insurance claim expenses.
- HB 18 includes \$1.1 million to supplement previously appropriated funds to build a Department of Driver Services customer service center in Douglasville due to rising construction costs.
- The General Assembly supports the governor's recommendation to add \$92 million for the reinsurance program to account for the projected increase in claim reimbursements.

- The General Assembly adds \$2.95 million to the Department of Labor to address necessary repairs and renovations at offices statewide, as well as over \$250,000 for employee recruitment and retention.
- In the Department of Natural Resources, the Amended FY 2023 budget includes \$4.2 million for repairs and renovations at state park facilities; \$1.5 million to complete the construction of the Jekyll Island Public Safety Complex; and \$4.2 million as part of an effort to implement a new statewide public safety radio network.
- HB 18 includes \$20 million appropriated to the Georgia Building Authority (GBA) for the demolition of unoccupied state properties, which will allow the state to save taxpayer dollars on maintenance and insurance expenses. GBA will also utilize more than \$8.2 million for a statewide assessment of facilities under the responsibility of the Department of Corrections and the Department of Juvenile Justice as well as \$500,000 for a space utilization assessment for the General Assembly.
- In the Amended FY 2023 budget, the General Assembly provides the Elections Division of the Secretary of State's Office with \$900,000 to implement a secure ballot image capture library and to improve the Georgia Registered Voter Information System. Additionally, the Secretary of State's Investigations Division receives \$120,000 to replace six vehicles that have maintenance expenses that exceed the value of the vehicle.
- In addition to supporting the governor's recommendation of \$120,963 for protest hearings services rendered by the Office of State Administrative Hearings, the General Assembly provides the Georgia Access to Medical Cannabis Commission with \$64,000 for vehicles and equipment as well as \$250,000 for the purchase of seed-to-sale software.

Health

- HB 18 recognizes \$505.9 million in savings in the Department of Community Health in the Medicaid programs due to a temporary 6.2% increase in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.
- The Amended FY 2023 budget provides \$278 million for growth in the Medicaid programs to meet the projected need resulting from increased utilization and enrollment during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP), the General Assembly agrees with the governor to increase the employer contribution per-member per-month (PMPM) rate for certified school employees from \$945 to \$1,580 starting January 1, 2023. HB 18 provides a total of \$424.8 million for this increase in the Department of Education and \$8 million in the Department of Early Care and Learning. Additionally, the General Assembly provides \$50 million to support the plan and reflect a two-year phase-in of a \$500 increase in the employer contribution PMPM for non-certified school employees, effective January 1, 2024, and a minimum employer contribution of \$1,580 PMPM, effective January 1, 2026, to maintain the fiscal soundness of the plan.
- The Amended FY 2023 budget recognizes \$188 million in prior and current year funds from the 'American Rescue Plan Act' of 2021 for home and community-based services to support the state spending plan through FY 2025 that includes provider rate enhancements, rate studies, expanded services, workforce development and training, and infrastructure support for case management and data reporting.

- HB 18 provides \$4.5 million in PeachCare for Kids to continue a premium suspension through June 30, 2023.
- The Amended FY 2023 budget provides \$1.2 million for St. Francis Hospital to support the new internal medicine and psychiatric residency programs and \$3.5 million for additional grants for nursing program expansions.

Higher Education

- HB 18 includes \$105 million in the Board of Regents for the Medical College of Georgia Hospitals and Clinics, Georgia's only public teaching hospital, to implement a new electronic medical record (EMR) system. A new EMR system enables doctors to electronically prescribe medications, improves hospital communication with other health systems, allows patients to access to their own medical records, provides for better telehealth integration, and increases efficiency through streamlined insurance billing and revenue collection.
- The General Assembly provides \$1.16 million in the Agricultural Experiment Station budget for the Integrated Precision Agriculture Demonstration Farm in Perry. The demonstration farm provides the agriculture industry an opportunity to showcase new innovative technologies, allowing Georgia farmers to see new products that may allow them to more efficiently respond to market and labor demands. The facility will be maintained with revenue generated through a fee paid by industry members. Additionally, \$3 million is provided to replace cabins at Rock Eagle 4-H Center to meet safety and programming needs.
- The Amended FY 2023 budget includes \$5.7 million for the Middle Georgia State University Aviation Program to purchase aircraft and build t-hangars. This funding, along with the \$2.1 million in the base for operations, will allow the program to increase enrollment in both the flight school and aircraft maintenance technical (AMT) program.
- The General Assembly provides \$5 million to match the \$65 million federal grant for the Georgia Artificial Intelligence Manufacturing (GA AIM) Project benefiting Southwest Georgia.
- HB 18 includes \$11.2 million for capital projects at University System of Georgia institutions that were requested by the Board of Regents. Additionally, the budget provides \$5 million for equipment and infrastructure at the Georgia Research Alliance and \$630,000 for updated LED-lighting technology at the Georgia Public Telecommunications Commission.
- The General Assembly provides \$405,000 for additional staff at the Georgia Student Finance Commission to support commission operations and student access to financial aid programs. The commission has been tasked with implementing and transitioning new and existing programs, such as the College Completion Grants program, the HOPE High School Equivalency Exam program, new HOPE Career Grant program areas, and the Behavioral Health Service Cancelable Loan program as established in HB 1013 (2022 Session).
- HB 18 includes \$6.25 million in the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) for the design of an electric vehicle training center in Newton County, \$56.2 million to complete an electric vehicle Quick Start training center in Bryan County, and \$10.625 million for the expansion of a Quick Start training center in Chatham County to support electric vehicle manufacturing.

- The final version of HB 18 includes \$8 million for the Technical College System of Georgia to refresh equipment statewide and \$19.9 million for design and construction of the Georgia Industrial Robotics Training Center at Ogeechee Technical College in Statesboro.

Human Resources

- In the Amended FY 2023 budget, the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) receives \$9.9 million to renovate the kitchen at Georgia Regional Hospital in Atlanta. Additionally, the General Assembly restores \$987,115 to open offline psychiatric beds at Georgia Regional Hospital.
- HB 18 includes \$2 million for contract psychiatric beds, \$825,000 to address homelessness in the Atlanta area, and \$100,000 to support grandparent-led families.
- The Inclusive Postsecondary Education (IPSE) program receives \$100,000 for technology infrastructure and environmental adaptations for enrolled students.
- The Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) receives \$10 million to provide alternative housing options for youth with complex needs in the care of the Division of Family and Children Services.
- The Amended FY 2023 budget includes \$8.4 million for staffing and technology needed for Medicaid redetermination due to the Public Health Emergency.
- The Department of Human Services receives \$4 million for technology improvements and security upgrades for federally-provided benefits and to reduce fraud.
- HB 18 includes \$750,000 for a military families' mental health clinic in Hinesville and \$250,000 to support the staffing of the sub-acute therapy unit at the Georgia War Veterans Home in Milledgeville.

Public Safety and the Courts

- The Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) receives \$3.5 million in the Amended FY 2023 budget to maintain operations of the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC) and to offset a reduction in user fee collections; \$2.4 million for a new case management and leads tracking system to increase efficiency and enhance technological investigative capabilities; and \$1.3 million to continue headquarter and regional office facility hardening.
- HB 18 provides \$68.2 million in new funding for the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) to make needed repairs, security upgrades, and renovations to its aging infrastructure. The average GDC facility is 35 years old, and a number of structural and mechanical systems have reached end of life. This appropriation provides necessary technology and security enhancements to keep both inmates and correctional staff safe. Upgrades include \$31.6 million for body scanning devices, perimeter intrusion detection systems, cell phone detection devices, license plate recognition software, and phone screening technology.
- HB 18 provides \$12.3 million to GDC for physical and pharmaceutical services to continue to provide these necessary services to inmates.
- The Amended FY 2023 budget appropriates \$1.8 million to the Court of Appeals and \$1.5 million to the Supreme Court for a new docket system. The coding for the docket system used by both courts is dated, and only one analyst at the vendor is versed and able to provide maintenance on the system.

- HB 18 provides \$485,052 to fully fund a salary increase for circuit public defenders in accordance with HB 1391 (2022 Session).
- The Amended FY 2023 budget provides \$8 million in new state funds to the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) for the Georgia Crime Victims Emergency Fund to offset lower than normal collections of probation fees. The fund is used to provide up to \$25,000 in compensation for expenses, loss of income, or support to victims of violent crime.
- The General Assembly provides \$2.4 million for domestic violence shelters for security upgrades. Security funds can be used for safety training for staff, agency safety assessments, or upgrades such as lighting, security systems, privacy fences, and bulletproof windows. An additional \$4 million in one-time funds is provided to domestic violence shelters and sexual assault centers to offset the loss of federal grant funds.

Transportation

- The Amended FY 2023 budget reflects a \$1.1 billion dollar infusion of surplus state general funds to keep the Georgia Department of Transportation whole after a 10-month suspension of motor fuel tax collections.
- The Capital Construction Projects program receives an increase of \$51.4 million in motor fuel funds, and the Routine Maintenance program is boosted by \$25 million in motor fuel funds to meet the rising costs of maintenance service contracts and equipment.
- The General Assembly funds an additional \$50 million in state general funds in the Capital Construction Projects program for costs associated with transportation infrastructure needs related to large economic development projects.
- The Transit program reflects a restoration of \$1.5 million for use as Federal Transit Administration (FTA) match money for smaller transit operators across the state to draw down federal grant dollars to enhance services, equipment, and infrastructure of their systems.
- The Airport Aid program receives an infusion of \$18.2 million for airport projects across the state, and the Rail program receives \$9.7 million to continue work on bringing all state-owned shortline railroads to Class II standards (286 pounds/25 mph) and other state-owned rail improvements.