

2014 GA-SPAC Legislative Agenda

HEALTH:

[HB 428](#), the Foster Children's Psychotropic Medication Monitoring Act, was introduced by Keisha Waites (D-Atlanta) on February 21, 2013. This bill would require the Department of Human Services to create procedures to ensure that the psychotropic medication administered to children in foster care is appropriate, delivered with informed consent of the parent and the child if the child is 14 or over, and is monitored for side effects and continued efficacy. The bill would also require the Department of Human Services to keep records of the medications and other therapies received or recommended for a child.

[HB 428](#) is assigned to the House Health and Human Services Committee.

[SB 195](#) A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Part 3 of Article 16 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A., relating to student health in elementary and secondary education, so as to authorize public and private schools to stock a supply of auto-injectable epinephrine; to provide for definitions; to provide for requirements and reporting; to provide for arrangements with manufacturers; to provide for rules and regulations; to provide for limited liability; to amend Chapter 4 of Title 26 of the O.C.G.A., relating to pharmacists and pharmacies, so as to authorize licensed health practitioners to prescribe auto-injectable epinephrine for schools; to authorize pharmacists to fill such prescriptions; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

AID and PROTECTION

[HB 674](#) was introduced by Representative Andy Welch (R-McDonough) on March 26, 2013. This bill would amend O.C.G.A. 15-18-14 and 17-12-27 to provide for the appointment of additional assistant district attorneys and assistant public defenders to specifically serve in juvenile court. The formula for how many would be appointed for each judicial circuit would be driven by the number of superior court judges authorized for the circuit. [HB 674](#) is assigned to the House Juvenile Justice Committee.

[HB 305](#)- The End to Cyberbullying Act

A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Code Section 20-2-751.4 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to policies in public schools prohibiting bullying, so as to enact "The End to Cyberbullying Act"; to prohibit cyberbullying; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date and for applicability; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

<http://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/en-US/Display/20132014/HB/305>

[SB 233](#)

This bill would amend O.C.G.A. 16-6-3, relating to the affirmative defense available to human trafficking victims charged with sexual crimes, to create a presumption that if a child under 18 suspected of prostitution or related offenses that the child is a victim of human trafficking and the affirmative defense should apply. The bill would also create a "Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund" and a commission to administer the fund. An additional fine of \$2,500 would be imposed on all offenders convicted of human trafficking, pimping, pandering, sexual exploitation of a child, or related crimes, and the additional fine would be paid into the fund and used for services for sexually exploited children.

[SB 233](#) is assigned to the Senate Non-Civil Judiciary Committee.

Companion Bill Introduced in the Senate....

[SR 416](#) was introduced by Senator Mike Crane (R-Newnan) on Thursday, February 28, 2013 as a

companion to [SB 233](#). This resolution proposes a constitutional amendment to allow the fines proposed by [SB 233](#) to be dedicated to the Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund that bill would create. [SR 416](#) is assigned to the Senate Non-Civil Judiciary Committee.

Safe Harbor Legislation is a nation wide effort to strengthen Human Trafficking Laws - which would further prevent the criminalization of child victims.

Protect child victims of sex trafficking by providing them with specialized services.

Child victims of sex trafficking and some child victims of labor trafficking who have been sexually abused have needs that may include: safe housing, long-term housing, mental health care, access to GED or other remedial education, and life skills learning. Experienced practitioners have found that mainstream programs of the child abuse and neglect system routinely fail these children. The law should require protection and recovery programs for child victims such as:

- *Placement in programs that treat such children with respect and dignity and do not stigmatize these victims because of their involvement in commercial sex;*
- *Mentorship by survivors of the same crime or, when that is not possible, by other caring professionals who are familiar with the special trauma associated with commercial and non-commercial sexual abuse.*
- *Protocols that ensure immediate placement of these victims in appropriate, pre-identified locations, without undue questioning from untrained law enforcement officers or other officials.*

[HB 804](#) was introduced by Representative Edward Lindsey (R-Atlanta) on January 23, 2014. The bill proposes to amend O.C.G.A. 17-8-55 to provide a procedure by which a child may testify outside of the physical presence of the accused if the court finds that the child is likely to suffer serious psychological or emotional distress as a result of testifying in the presence of the defendant. Out-of-court testimony may occur through various methods of transmission, including a two-way closed circuit television broadcast, an Internet broadcast, or other simultaneous electronic means.

[HB 804](#) is assigned to the House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee.

EDUCATION...*to strengthen and reform the education of Georgia's children.*

[SB 329](#) (Wilkinson-50th) and [HB 766](#) (Lumsden-12th) "Work Based Learning Act." Changes the Youth Apprenticeship Program with the goal of increasing the number of students and employers in the work based learning programs. Status: Senate Hopper and House Education Committee.

Companion Bill with

[HB 766](#) A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elementary and secondary education, so as to provide for work based learning programs; to provide for a short title; to provide for legislative findings; to provide for requirements for work based learning programs; to provide requirements for local coordinators; to revise provisions for purposes of conformity; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

[HB 826](#) was introduced by Representative Ed Setzler (R-Acworth) on January 24, 2014. This bill would amend O.C.G.A. Title 16, relating to dangerous instrumentalities, to prohibit any person from carrying, possessing or having under their control a firearm, as defined, on a bus or within a school safety zone, defined with limitation to public schools or postsecondary institution. The bill further amends Title 20, Chapter 2, relating to public school disciplinary tribunals, to eliminate the existing requirement for expulsion of any student determined to have brought a weapon to school and instead, to require that local boards of education establish policies regarding a student's possession of a firearm, dangerous weapon, or hazardous object at school. [HB 826](#) assigned to the House Juvenile Justice Com.

[SB 167](#) Declare certain actions void ab initio relating to adoption of certain curricula and requires public hearing for new or modified curriculum.

Releasing Georgia from its participation in the Common Core State Standards Initiative and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC).

The Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) were adopted on July 8, 2010 under Governor Sonny Perdue's administration as part of the state's efforts to comply with the Federal Race to the Top (RTTT) grant. The Common Core represents the first attempt at nationalized curriculum standards in math and English language arts (ELA) for grades K – 12. The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is responsible for the development of assessments that will be aligned to the Common Core.

Primary Sponsor: Sen Ligon “Though I am sure the previous administration had the best of intentions when deciding to apply for Race to the Top, the lack of accountability to the parents and taxpayers of this state is stunning,” said Sen. Ligon. “First of all, there has been no thorough cost analysis of what the unfunded mandates will cost Georgia's taxpayers at either the state or the local level to implement and maintain the terms of the grant.”

“Secondly, allowing a consortium of states to work with non-profits and other unaccountable parties to develop our standards without open public oversight is untenable in a country of free people, especially considering that Georgia's taxpayers support K-12 education with approximately \$13 billion of hard-earned dollars every year,” Sen. Ligon explained. “Georgia needs to have a transparent, democratic process of developing curriculum standards and a means to ensure more direct accountability at the local level. Our educational system should not be accountable to Washington bureaucrats, but to the people of this state who pay the taxes and to the parents who have children in our public schools.”

Lending his voice of support to the effort, Lt. Governor Casey Cagle stated, “...I look forward to working with Sen. Ligon on this important issue to ensure that we are able to continue making decisions about the education of our children right here in Georgia rather than having curriculum standards enforced from Washington, D.C.”