



[History Chart](#)

Happy week seven of the 2026 legislative session! The [2026 Amended Fiscal Budget](#) passed out of both the House and Senate and is on the Governor's desk. Included in the Conference Committee substitute is a \$1.2 billion tax rebate, where single filers will receive up to \$250 and married couples filing jointly will receive up to \$500.

This week and next week, both chambers are taking up as much of their own respective legislation ahead of Crossover next Friday. Legislation must be favorably reported out of Committee by time of convening on Tuesday, March 3rd to be considered for the Crossover calendar. After Crossover, both the House and Senate will no longer be able to pass original legislation out of their respective chambers in time for Sine Die.

Major Bills to Note

[HB 973](#), supplemental appropriations for state fiscal year 2026, passed through the conference committee this week. On Wednesday 2/25/26 the House and Senate adopted the report. The [budget](#) is headed to the Governor's desk for final signature.

[HB 1001](#) - **Rep. Will Wade**: This bill reduces income tax from 5.19% to 4.99%.

- Passed from the [House](#) on Wednesday 2/25/26

[HR 1114](#) and [HB 1116](#) are now in House Rules and are eligible to go to the floor anytime. They have both passed out of the full Ways and Means committee. HR1114 requires a constitutional majority, a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote. House members might look at alternatives that don't require a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote.

[HB 1344](#) - **Rep. Matt Reeves**: The Speaker of the House had a press conference this week regarding the bill which included time with Commissioner King.

- Passed out of the [House](#) on Thursday, 2/26/26 with a 166-3 vote

The bill strengthens the Insurance Commissioner's enforcement powers and increases

penalties for violations, enhances insurance fraud reporting and prosecution, including funding and authority to hire prosecuting attorneys, prohibits the sale or solicitation of auto accident information for profit, creates a program to recruit and retain insurers in Georgia; sets clearer timelines for claims processing after declared catastrophic events; requires reporting on how premium tax funds are used; expands the information the Commissioner may review when evaluating insurance rates; requires at least a two-year window to file certain property insurance claims; establishes a storm damage mitigation grant program for homeowners; and updates rules related to excluded drivers and uninsured vehicles, including increased lapse and restoration fees.

SB 392 - Sen. John Albers: Waste Reduction Act of 2026, also known as the Zero-Based Budgeting Act. Under zero-based budgeting, every dollar of government spending must be justified from the ground up during each budget cycle. Rather than assuming prior-year spending automatically continues, agencies must clearly demonstrate why programs are needed and how taxpayer dollars will be used.

- Passed out of the Senate on Tuesday 2/24/26 and is assigned to House Appropriations Committee

Healthcare Specific Legislation

HB 54 - Rep. David Clark: The Senate agreed to the House amendments from last year that were added on Sine Die 2025. This bill allows advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) and physician assistants (PAs) to order home health services, create treatment plans, and determine medical necessity for equipment and supplies, roles previously limited to physicians. It updates state law to include APRNs and PAs across home healthcare oversight, adds training requirements, restricts referral conflicts of interest, and aims to expand access to home-based care in Georgia.

HB 947 - Rep. Martin Momtahan: Passed House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs. This bill tightens Georgia's administration of SNAP eligibility, verification, and oversight requirements.

- Limits expanded income and asset standards unless required by federal law.
- Requires full eligibility verification within 30 days and blocks second-month benefits until documentation is complete.

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- Shortens certification periods for certain higher-risk or unstable households.
- Expands data matching with state and federal agencies to detect changes in income, residency, incarceration, or lottery winnings.
- Prohibits work requirement waivers without legislative approval
- Adds EBT card labeling requirements and restricts SNAP purchases of certain prepared foods and beverages.
- Maintains federal (USDA) authority over retailer enforcement.

HB 961 - Rep. Alan Powell: Passed out of House Insurance on Tuesday, 2/24/26 by substitute. This bill amends Georgia’s Surprise Billing Consumer Protection Act to address out-of-network ground ambulance services.

It requires health plans to treat emergency ground ambulance transportation as a covered service when requested by a first responder or treating healthcare provider. For out-of-network ambulance providers, insurers must reimburse at the locally established rate (set by contract, ordinance, or regulation), or if no local rate exists, the lesser of 400% of the Medicare rate or the provider’s billed charges. The substitute that passed out changed the rate from 400% to 300%. To note the Senate version of the bill has the rate as 325%.

The payment must be considered payment in full, except for standard in-network cost-sharing. Patients cannot be charged more than the in-network copay, coinsurance, or deductible amount, and ambulance providers are prohibited from balance billing beyond that amount.

Insurers must pay ambulance providers directly within 30 days of receiving a complete claim.

HB 1088 - Rep. Karen Mathiak: This bill revises the term “chiropractor” to “chiropractic physician.” It has been assigned to House Health but has not been heard in Committee.

HB 1110 - Rep. Scott Hilton: The Georgia Small Business Healthcare Affordability Act supports small businesses with tax credits in the amount of \$600 per covered employee with a declining amount in the fourth and fifth year of coverage. The bill defines small businesses as composing of 50 or fewer employees and helps them include certain standard benefits to remain competitive with larger companies, including 10 days of paid leave, maternity leave, and HSA/HRA access.

- Heard again in Ways and Means, Income Tax Subcommittee on Monday 2/23/26

HB 1262 - Rep. Eddie Lumsden: This bill increases the monetary penalties the Georgia Commissioner of Insurance may impose for certain violations of the Georgia Insurance

Code. Specifically, it raises the maximum fines for violations related to mental health parity, surprise billing, prepaid legal services plans, and other enforcement matters from \$1,000 per violation (up to \$10,000 in aggregate) to \$5,000 per violation (up to \$50,000 in aggregate), unless a different amount is otherwise specified.

- This passed the House 2/26/26 and will head over to the Senate

HB 1273 - Rep. Angie O’Steen: No action taken so far in House Health; was not heard this week. The bill adds “physician podiatrist” to the code in reference to a podiatrist and contains language relating to physician assistants, so as to authorize physician assistants to receive certain delegated authorities from podiatric physicians.

HB 1295 - Rep. Sharon Cooper: Relating to physician assistants, so as to enter into an interstate compact known as the “PA Licensure Compact”

- Passed out of the House Committee by substitute on Tuesday 2/24/26

SB 220 - Sen. Matt Brass: This bill came over from last year and has already passed the Senate, and has now passed House Regulated Industries. The “Putting Georgia’s Patients First Act” updates Georgia’s medical cannabis laws by renaming “low THC oil” to “medical cannabis,” revising related criminal penalties and exemptions, and clarifying the role of the Georgia Access to Medical Cannabis Commission. It also updates qualifying medical conditions, adjusts card renewal rules, and ensures lawful possession of medical cannabis is excluded from the Georgia Controlled Substances Act.

SB 254 - Sen. Bill Cowser: Was heard last week in House Regulated Industries; was not heard again this week. This bill was introduced last year.

- Authorizes licensed retail liquor stores to obtain a consumable hemp license and sell consumable hemp products.
- Requires child-resistant, non-child-appealing packaging and prohibits advertising that mimics popular brands or suggests the product is medical marijuana.
- Prohibits hemp products from being sold as part of traditional food products or alcoholic beverages, while allowing certain forms like gummies and consumable base oils.

SB 411 - Sen. Shawn Still: This bill passed the Senate and has been assigned to House Health; was not heard in Committee this week. This bill regulates dry needling in Georgia by limiting the practice to licensed acupuncturists, physical therapists, and occupational therapists who meet specific training requirements. It also sets advertising rules, outlines consultation and education standards, and allows licensing boards to discipline violations.

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SB 427 - Sen. Ben Watson: Passed through the Senate Chamber and has bi-partisan support. Got committed to the House Health Committee. This bill creates a limited provisional license for certain internationally trained physicians, allowing them to practice medicine under supervision in rural counties, licensed hospitals, or accredited medical schools in Georgia.

To qualify, applicants must meet specified education, training, examination, English proficiency, background, and work authorization requirements, and secure full-time employment under a supervising physician. Licensees may practice only in approved settings and are subject to the same oversight, discipline, and professional standards as fully licensed physicians.

After four years of supervised practice, eligible physicians may apply for a full Georgia medical license, with a requirement to practice an additional two years in an underserved area. The Medical Board must hire staff and medical directors to oversee the program, adopt implementing rules, and submit annual reports to the General Assembly. The program is contingent on state funding and will automatically repeal if funding is not maintained.

SB 462 - Sen. Shawn Still: This bill, the “Surprise Billing Consumer Protection Act,” protects patients from unexpected out-of-network ambulance bills by requiring health plans to cover emergency ambulance services and limiting what patients can be charged. It sets minimum reimbursement rates for out-of-network ambulance providers and ensures patients pay no more than their normal in-network cost-sharing amounts.

- Passed through the Senate on 2/18/26 with a 51-1 vote; Now assigned to House Health