



[History Chart](#)

Happy Fourth Week of the 2026 Georgia Legislative Session!

On Thursday, February 5th, The House passed [HB 973](#), the supplemental appropriations for Fiscal Year July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026. The Amended FY2026 budget is now on the Senate side, where Appropriations Subcommittee hearings will continue next week until the upper chamber passes their version of the bill.

Bills to Note

House Appropriations, Amended FY2026 (HB 973 [House Track Sheet link](#))
Department of Education

- 24.6.3: Curriculum Development
 - \$1,381,361 for PSAT, AP, and IB tests
 - Will likely increase this for the big budget
- 24.22.3: School Security Grants
 - \$550,000 one-time funds for an emergency response system pilot program
 - Across four high schools during the next year
 - 3D mapping and drones (Campus Guardian Angel)
- 25.4.1: Employees' Retirement System, System Admin
 - \$50M for improving long-term financial viability of pension system

Secretary of State

- 43.2.5: Elections
 - \$15M for grants for county election offices

Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security

- 27.8.6
 - \$500,000 for emergency services

Department of Transportation

- 47.1.3: Airport Aid
 - \$15M for airport aid
- 47.2.3: Capital Construction Projects
 - \$85M for rehabilitation and replacement of rural bridges
 - Gov's recommendations had this item in Capital Maintenance Projects, but GDOT has asked to move this to the Capital Construction for better administration
 - \$15M lower than the Gov's request
 - 47.3.1: Capital Maintenance Projects
 - Zeroes out Gov's \$100M request for rural bridges
- 47.11.4: Rail
 - \$4.245M for repairs, replacements, and upgrades for state-owned Shortline Rail
- 47.16.1: Payments to Stall Road and Tollway Authority
 - \$1.715B for extension and bi-directional expansion of I-75 express lanes in Clayton and Henry counties
 - Approximately \$80M reduction to the Gov's original increase (\$1.796B)

Department of Community Affairs

- GEFA (16.8.2)
 - \$50M for rural infrastructure for economic development

Environmental Protection Division

- 34.3.3
 - \$1M for one time funds to support air emissions program operations to allow preservation of existing revenue to delay a fiscal shortfall

Department of Natural Resources

- 31.1.4: Coastal Resources

- \$1M for Tybee Island North Beach dune emergency stabilization
- 31.1.5: Coastal Resources
 - \$250,000 for a new center to promote conservation of Altamaha River and Coastal Georgia
- 34.7: Parks Recreation and Historic Sites
 - \$5.811M for “recreational activities”
 - \$100,000 for Fort Yargo dock replacement
 - \$1M for Vince Dooley Battlefield Fund pursuant to HB 454 (2025 Session)
- 34.9: Wildlife Resources
 - \$8.182M to expand, improve, and update wildlife management areas statewide
 - \$150,000 to mitigate the spread of invasive plant species in southwest Georgia

Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disorders

- 15.3.3: Adult Developmental Disabilities Services
 - \$500,000 for behavioral health provider rate study (comp waivers)

Department of Community Health

- 17.1.6: Departmental Administration
 - \$2.5M to support spinal injury services
- 17.4: Healthcare Access and Improvement
 - \$4.8M for grant program to support the creation of new rural medicine and dental clinics
 - \$800,000 for one-time funds for hospital infrastructure and emergency power
 - \$155,251 for one-time funds for two portable training ultrasound machines
 - \$250,000 for rural colorectal screenings
- 17.7.9: Medicaid - Aged, Blind, and Disabled
 - \$3M for supplemental quality incentive payments at skilled nursing facilities
- 17.12: Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce: Graduate Medical Education
 - -\$6.844M reduction due to delayed approval of a State Plan Amendment
 - \$1.166M for Rural Surgery Initiative and child/adolescent psychiatry slots

at Augusta University

- \$17.8M for one-time funds to expand graduate medical education programs in South Georgia

Department of Human Services

- 28.3.1: Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention
 - \$15M for an integrated child welfare reporting system
- 28.12.1: Out-of-Home Care
 - \$82.741M for increased costs of care and utilization growth, prioritizing reunification services, assessments, and specialized services for highacuity youth
 - Increased from Gov's original recommendation of \$41.543M
- 28.13.1: OOH Care - Special Projects
 - \$1.599M to restore the cancellation of state office contracts for supportive services (\$1.349M) and implement funds to place foster youth closer to their biological families as directed in the FY2026 budget
- 28.25.3: Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency - Vocational Rehabilitation Program
 - \$125,000 to supply new and used durable medical equipment and assistive technology
 - Friends of Disabled Adults, Children, and Youth

Department of Public Health

- 38.1.3: Adolescent and Adult Health Promotion
 - \$150,000 for charitable dental care
- 38.3.3: Departmental Administration
 - Department is directed to develop a strategy to promote awareness and prevention measures for colorectal and prostate cancer and report findings to House/Senate by September 1, 2026

Department of Public Safety

- 39.10: Georgia Public Safety Training Center
 - \$900,000 for simulated firearms training
 - \$750,000 for hearing protection equipment grants for law enforcement officers

[HB 1193](#) - Rep. Chris Erwin: Georgia Early Literacy Act of 2026: has been introduced into the House Chamber. The purpose of this bill is to promote statewide literacy and reading education efforts and to revise the “Georgia Early Literacy and Dyslexia Act”. Speaker Burns outlined provisions of the Act, **[HB 1193](#)**, which is sponsored by Erwin, Burns, and other House leaders. These provisions include:

- QBE formula adjustment to fund literacy coaches at every K-3 school.
- **Literacy coaches at every K-3 school.**
 - Streamlined grade placement guidelines. Kindergarten will be the first school step.
 - **Mandatory Kindergarten.**
- Kindergarten and first-grade students determined to be at risk by a variety of measures, including parental input, will repeat that grade.
- **Moves first grade readiness annual report to Office of Student Achievement from State Superintendent.**
- School systems will be required to adopt a unified literacy plan.
- Higher education institutions will be engaged to prepare the next generation of educators.
- The Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) will help ensure that educators are prepared to teach reading and will evaluate each institution's reading program every four years.
- Upon the birth of every child, Georgia families will receive a book to help emphasize the importance of literacy.

HB 1193 was assigned to the House Education Committee and is expected to be heard soon. Identical literacy legislation, **[SB 459](#)**, was also introduced in the Senate by Hickman.

[SB 402](#) - Senator Blake Tillery: This bill passed through the Senate Chamber unanimously and will head to the House. This bill establishes a five-year pilot program within Georgia’s Division of Family and Children Services to improve autism spectrum disorder screening, diagnosis, and support for children in foster care. Subject to funding, the program would provide screenings, clinical evaluations, and autism-specific training and resources for DFCS staff, caregivers, and healthcare providers, beginning in three regions and expanding statewide over time. The goal is earlier identification and better support for foster children with developmental needs, with a final report to guide future policy decisions.

[SB 382](#) - Senator Chuck Hufstetler: This bill passed through the Senate Chamber and is headed to the House Ways and Means Committee. The bill is a mandatory statewide

homestead exemption and removes the 581 opt out provision.

[SB 463](#) - Senator Greg Dolezal: This bill got dropped on Wednesday and is referred to the Economic Development and Tourism Committee, chaired by Drew Echols, a sponsor of the bill. This bill forbids corporations from owning an interest in more than 500 single-family residential properties to be used as rental homes and vehicles. The bill also prohibits rental properties from being owned by foreign entities.

Healthcare Specific Legislation

[SB 367](#) - Senator Bill Cowsert: Certificate of Need Exemption: This bill was heard in Senate Regulated Industries and will offer specific exemptions for development, expansion, acquisition, relocation, or operation for healthcare facilities, services, and equipment dedicated exclusively to the treatment of cancer.