



[History Chart](#)

Two days remain in the 2026 legislative session and lawmakers are pushing to get their bills to the floor. Next week, there will be no Committee Work Days, meaning that Tuesday and Thursday are the final chances for bills introduced during the 2025-2026 biennium.

The Senate Appropriations Committee released their version of the FY 2027 budget, [HB 974S](#). It passed out of the Senate on Friday, March 27th and lawmakers are expected to form a Conference Committee to work out the many differences between the chambers' versions.

Major Bills to Note

[HB 1116](#) had a new substitute (LC 59 0475S) that passed out of Senate Finance and is in Senate Rules now. The biggest change to the bill was that the sales tax is not optional and not mandated by creating an LHOST option to the FLOST. [Attached](#) is ACCG's section by section breakdown of the new bill.

[SB 382](#) was recommitted to House Ways and Means and a new substitute (LC 33 9912S) was passed out. The new substitute takes out the 581 floating homestead exemption. The floating homestead exemption got replaced with a flat 10% exemption and each year it increases until its 50% at 5 years. With the new substitute there is no longer a referendum for this. [Attached](#) is ACCG's section by section breakdown of the new bill.

Both bills however have a property tax revenue cap for the local government's annual budget. This cap will increase with the CPI but not more than that unless a local act or local referendum is passed.

[HB 1344](#) - Rep. Matt Reeves: 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.

- Passed out of the full Insurance and Labor Committee on Tuesday, March 24th bipartisan with only one dissenting vote; is pending in Senate Rules

Healthcare Specific Legislation

[HB 54](#) - Rep. David Clark: 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.

- The Senate agreed to the House amendments from last year that were added on Sine Die 2025 and is ready to go to the Governor

[HB 947](#) - Rep. Martin Momtahan: This bill tightens Georgia's administration of SNAP eligibility, verification, and oversight requirements. Passed out of the House on Crossover and is referred to the Senate Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee; was not heard in the committee meeting again this week. This bill is effectively dead because it would have needed to pass committee to make it on to the floor in time for Sine Die.

- 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.
- 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
- 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: This bill is effectively dead because it did not pass committee in time. However, the language of this bill was now added to [HB 506](#) which has already passed the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and is currently pending in Senate Rules. This bill amends Georgia's Surprise Billing Consumer Protection Act to address out-of-network ground ambulance services. The President Pro-Temp has indicated that this is a priority for him.

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 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.

- Assigned to Senate Insurance and Labor Committee; heard in subcommittee on Monday, March 23rd
- This bill was not heard in the full Senate Insurance and Labor Committee this week

[HB 1295](#) - Rep. Sharon Cooper: Relating to physician assistants, so as to enter into an interstate compact known as the "PA Licensure Compact"

- On Senate Rules calendar for Friday, March 27th, but was not acted upon

[SB 220](#) - Sen. Matt Brass: 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.

- Passed the House 138-21 on Thursday, March 12th
- Senate agreed to the House Amended version on Wednesday, March 19th
- House agreed to the Senate Amended version on Monday, March 23rd

[SB 254](#) - Sen. Bill Cowsert: This bill was introduced last year. Passed out of the House Regulated Industries Committee by substitute on March 18th and has been pending in House Rules.

- 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 367](#) - Sen. Bill Cowser: Deals with Certificate of Need and provides an exemption for healthcare facilities, services, and equipment dedicated primarily or exclusively to the treatment of cancer. Outlines conditions and provides for an exception to the exemption for facilities within 35 miles of certain facilities.

- Passed the Senate 32-17 on March 6th, 2026
- Currently sitting in House Health Committee; there was a hearing only on Monday, March 23rd

[SB 411](#) - Sen. Shawn Still: 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.

- House pulled it off the general calendar and recommitted it to House Health Committee on Monday, March 16th; was passed out of Committee on Monday, March 23rd by substitute
- Currently pending in House Rules

[SB 427](#) - Sen. Ben Watson: Senate agreed to the House Substitute on Monday, March 23rd

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. The House recommitted the bill from House Health to House Insurance. Passed out of the House Insurance committee on Friday, March 20th. Has been sitting in House Rules.
