



Legislative Updates as of 03/27/2026

Week Eleven Report

Week eleven marks the final countdown to Sine Die, shifting focus from high-volume bill passage to negotiating final outcomes in the Georgia General Assembly. The most significant action came early in the week when the Georgia House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a \$38.5 billion FY 2027 state budget, sending it to the Georgia Senate and setting up the primary framework for end-of-session negotiations. The Senate is expected to pass its version of the budget on Friday, March 27, marking the next major step in the process. Once both chambers have approved their respective versions, the House and Senate will need to reconcile differences between the two proposals—likely through a conference committee—before a final budget can be adopted. Lawmakers spent the rest of the week advancing remaining bills while committees worked quickly to amend, refine, or stall legislation. Key issues still in play include income tax reduction efforts, healthcare and medical cannabis expansion, and election-related policies, alongside broader budget negotiations around education, mental health, and potential tax relief. Overall, activity during this period has been defined less by headline votes and more by behind-the-scenes dealmaking that will determine which policies ultimately reach final passage before adjournment.

Healthcare Update

Healthcare activity this week was largely centered around continued progress of key legislation and increasing focus on final negotiations. Much of the attention remains on refining bills that advanced earlier in the session, with ongoing work around medical cannabis expansion, mental health funding, and broader healthcare regulatory issues. Budget discussions also continue to play a central role, particularly regarding investments in behavioral health, rural healthcare, and workforce development, as the Georgia Senate prepares to advance its version of the state budget.

Notably, the Senate Health and Human Services Committee has been highly active, advancing several healthcare-related measures. Among the most significant was HB 1393, which would allow rural hospitals to collaborate for greater purchasing power while maintaining independence and includes provisions related to certificate of need (CON) reform and limited antitrust immunity; the bill passed the committee with a divided vote following extensive testimony from economists, policy groups, insurers, and hospital representatives. Other bills moved forward with strong bipartisan support, including HB 350, which expands safe haven protections for newborns; HB 291, establishing certification for community health workers; HB 334, creating the Sickle Cell Disease Protection Act; HB 657, addressing qualifications for recovery community organizations and incorporating public health cleanup provisions; and HB 1211, expanding guidelines for colorectal cancer screening coverage.

Overall, this week's healthcare activity has been less about headline floor votes and more about strategic committee action and behind-the-scenes negotiations, as lawmakers and stakeholders work to position priority legislation for final passage before adjournment.

Georgia Life Sciences

This week, the legislature moved closer to establishing a bipartisan Life Sciences Caucus to provide a focused legislative platform supporting biotechnology, medical manufacturing, and research-driven businesses. The caucus bills are making their way through the final steps of the legislative process in both chambers. Additionally, broader tax reform discussions are ongoing, which could influence life sciences incentives such as the Life Sciences Manufacturing Job Tax Credit. We have also heard rumors of last-minute efforts to add 340B language to remaining bills, but the Topspin team is remaining vigilant and will actively defend against any such efforts. Overall, the creation of the caucus and ongoing budget, tax, and legislative developments underscore both opportunities and areas to monitor closely for Georgia's life sciences industry.

Tracked Bills Moved this Week

[SB111 \(House Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute, 03/25/2026\)](#)

[SB427 Physicians; limited provisional licenses and a pathway to licensure for certain internationally trained physicians; provide \(Senate Agreed House Amend or Sub, 03/23/2026\)](#)

[SB428 Medical Assistance; Department of Community Health to submit a waiver request to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; direct \(House Passed/Adopted, 03/23/2026\)](#)

Tracked Bills

[HB1302 Education and Workforce Strategy Act; enact \(Senate Passed/Adopted, 03/18/2026\)](#)

[HR1474 Georgia House of Representatives; creation of a life sciences caucus; encourage \(House Committee Favorably Reported, 03/18/2026\)](#)

[HR948 House Study Committee on Pharmacy Benefits Managers and Consumer Access to Prescription Medications; create \(House Passed/Adopted By Substitute, 03/09/2026\)](#)

[HB980 Georgia-Ireland Trade Commission; create \(Senate Read and Referred, 02/09/2026\)](#)

[HB101 State employees; annual public report on the amount of prescription drug rebates and other price concessions applied to premium reductions; provide \(House Withdrawn, Recommitted, 04/04/2025\)](#)

[SB91 State Employees' Health Insurance Plan; Board of Community Health from entering into, executing, or renewing a contract with any pharmacy benefits manager that owns or has an ownership interest in any retail pharmacy; prohibit \(House Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute, 03/18/2026\)](#)

[SB399 \(House Passed/Adopted, 03/18/2026\)](#)

[SB402 Children and Youth; pilot program provision for screenings, clinical evaluations, training for autism spectrum disorder to children in foster care; establish \(House Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute, 03/12/2026\)](#)

[SR851 Georgia Senate; creation of a life sciences caucus; encourage \(Senate Read and Referred, 02/25/2026\)](#)

Congress: Both the House and Senate are in a two week recess for the Easter holiday.

- **Appropriations:** The FY 2027 President's Budget is expected to be published at the end of this week on April 3. It is expected to request a **significant increase in defense spending**. In the meantime lawmakers have still not resolved FY 2026 funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The Senate unanimously passed a bill to fund most of DHS. However, House Republicans refused to back the Senate proposal, and passed their own stopgap DHS funding measure.
- **SBIR/STTR:** The bill reauthorizing SBIR/STTR programs that passed Congress has yet to be formally presented to the President. A veto threat linked to unrelated matters appears to be holding up this procedural step.
- **U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPTF):** A group of 19 Democratic Senators [sent a letter](#) last week to HHS Secretary Kennedy, calling for the USPTF to restart its work in reviewing evidence in preventive medicine, after not having met for a year.
- **Surgeon General:** Nominee **Casey Means appears to lack votes from at least three Republican Senators**. If Health Education Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee Chair Bill Cassidy also comes out against her, the nomination will fail.
- **Insulin:** A bipartisan group of Senators have introduced a [bill](#) to **cap the cost of insulin at \$35 per month** for individuals with insurance, and create a pilot to provide it at the same cost to the uninsured.
- **Reconciliation:** Congressional Republicans may pursue a second party line package on tax and spending items, that could potentially include measures to address Medicaid and Medicare fraud. This comes as Administration officials including Vice President JD Vance and CMS Administrator Mehmet Oz have announced actions investigating states for healthcare fraud.
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- **Administration & Agencies:**
 - **CDC**
 - The Administration has **missed the deadline to name a CDC Director nominee**, a statutory 210 days after the firing of former Director Susan Monarez. NIH Director Jay Bhattacharya will continue to helm the agency "acting in the capacity of the director". In a town hall with agency staff last week, he indicated that he **did not expect further reductions in force** and hinted at the unveiling of a **new strategic plan for the agency**.
 - **Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP):** Dr. Robert Malone, an ally of Secretary Kennedy will leave ACIP after a federal judge halted the panel's changes to childhood vaccination schedules.
 - **CMS**
 - **The agency is receiving substantial criticism** from health and patient advocacy groups over a [proposed rule](#) the agency released last month that would **change the structure of essential health benefits** under the ACA and require states to shoulder greater financial burdens. Coverage for screenings, chronic disease management and fertility treatments may be impacted if the rule goes into force. Concurrently, a group of Democratic Senators including Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) [sent a letter](#) to Administrator Oz demanding he withdraw the rule citing among other things the potential proliferation of "junk coverage" plans.
 - **White House, Other HHS Divisions & Departments:**
 - HHS Secretary Kennedy announced the formation of an 18-person volunteer panel intended to help the administration in "improving, strengthening and modernizing U.S. healthcare." It will convene later this year.
 - **President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST):** President Trump [announced the appointment](#) of technology leaders to this panel, including Jensen Huang, Mark Zuckerberg and Larry Ellison. PCAST will focus on opportunities and challenges that emerging technologies present for the American workforce.

- **340B Program:** A coalition of drug makers have asked a federal court to reverse an order that prevented them from joining the government in defending the now withdrawn rebate pilot program, against a lawsuit brought forth by hospital groups. This comes as over 90 Members of Congress from both parties have signed a letter to appropriations leaders asking that they prohibit funds from being used to support a future rebate program.
- **MFN Pricing:** The Administration has reportedly developed draft text to codify pricing policy that is aligned with deals it has made with pharmaceutical companies.