Legislative Updates as of 02/27/2026

Week Seven Weekly Report

This week, the Georgia General Assembly advanced several major priorities centered on taxes, education, and the state budget. The Georgia House passed Governor Brian Kemp's proposal to reduce the state income tax rate to 4.99% and also approved an amended Fiscal Year 2026 budget that includes roughly $2 billion in income and property tax relief, along with funding for transportation, scholarships, and other initiatives. In education, the House moved forward with legislation to fund literacy coaches in K–3 schools statewide and approved a ban on cellphone use in high schools. The Senate debated public safety measures, including a bill on DNA collection at detention centers, while a proposal to address data center costs stalled. Additionally, one of the longest serving representatives, Representative Lynn Smith, announced plans to retire. With the Friday, March 6th Crossover Day quickly approaching — the deadline for bills to pass out of their chamber of origin to remain viable this session — legislators in both chambers are now rushing to move priority measures forward before time runs out.

Healthcare Update

Healthcare remained a central focus this week under the Gold Dome, with lawmakers advancing a broad slate of policy initiatives spanning mental health, workforce development, emerging technology, and access to care. Senate Bill 428 moved forward, directing the Department of Community Health to seek federal approval to allow Medicaid reimbursement for certain home-based mental health services for adults, expanding access to care outside institutional settings. The amended Fiscal Year 2026 state budget includes significant funding for mental health infrastructure, including support for a new facility, underscoring continued investment in behavioral health. In addition, the state received federal approval for the GREAT Health Program, a $218.8 million initiative designed to strengthen rural healthcare systems and promote innovation and value-based care. Lawmakers also advanced Senate Bill 427, aimed at streamlining licensure pathways for internationally trained physicians to help address provider shortages, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Senate Bill 444, legislation establishing guardrails for the use of artificial intelligence in healthcare and other regulated sectors, continued to move through the process as policymakers weigh innovation alongside consumer protections. On the House side, House Bill 1138, addressing access to contraceptives, progressed as part of broader discussions around reproductive health policy. A health benefit parity measure, House Bill 326, also advanced out of committee, seeking to expand non-opioid coverage options under the State Health Benefit Plan. With Crossover Day approaching, several healthcare proposals still require full chamber approval to remain viable this session.

Political Update

Georgia's higher-office races saw notable developments this week as candidates reshaped the field ahead of the 2026 election cycle. In the Democratic gubernatorial primary, State Rep. Ruwa Romman suspended her campaign, narrowing the field as candidates jockey for position and resources. On the Republican side, the governor's race drew attention following a federal court ruling that limits Lt. Gov. Burt Jones' ability to raise unlimited funds through a leadership committee, a decision that could significantly affect the financial dynamics of a competitive GOP primary that also includes other prominent statewide officeholders. The contest for lieutenant governor also shifted, with Democrat Seth Clark suspending his campaign, further consolidating that field. Meanwhile, the U.S. Senate race continues to take shape as Republicans work to unify behind a

candidate to challenge Democratic incumbent Jon Ossoff, with party leaders signaling preferences while the primary remains fluid. Altogether, the week underscored how Georgia remains a focal point for high-stakes statewide and federal contests, with fundraising, endorsements, and strategic withdrawals already influencing the trajectory of the 2026 races.

Update

This week we had a successful Georgia Life Sciences Day at the Capitol. Over 30 company representatives heard from key legislators and regulators, including Gracie Beasley with the Department of Economic Development, Senators Hufstetler and Watson, Representative Dubnik, and Attorney General Carr. The group then had multiple meetings with House and Senate members on the rope lines, followed by a lunch with a federal update from Aiken Hackett with BIO in Washington, D.C.

Tracked Bills Introduced or Moved This Week

HB1302 Education and Workforce Strategy Act; enact (House Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute, 02/26/2026)
SB399 (Senate Passed/Adopted By Substitute, 02/26/2026)
SB428 Medical Assistance; Department of Community Health to submit a waiver request to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; direct (House Second Readers, 02/26/2026)
SB427 Physicians; limited provisional licenses and a pathway to licensure for certain internationally trained physicians; provide (House Second Readers, 02/25/2026)

Tracked Bills

HB1332 Georgia Buy American Medicine Act; enact (House Second Readers, 02/19/2026)
HB810 Insurance; require that final reimbursements to pharmacies for prescription drugs are based on certain formulas (House Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute, 02/19/2026)
HR948 House Study Committee on Pharmacy Benefits Managers and Consumer Access to Prescription Medications; create (House Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute, 02/19/2026)
HB980 Georgia-Ireland Trade Commission; create (Senate Read and Referred, 02/09/2026)
HB1119 Labor and industrial relations; pharmacy care guidelines and pharmacy management networks under workers' compensation; provide (House Withdrawn, Recommitted, 02/05/2026)
HB991 Labor and industrial relations; definition of employment for certain services performed by certain healthcare technology platform contractors; provisions (House Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute, 01/29/2026)
HB1033 Georgia Access to Healthcare for Alzheimer's Disease and Dementias Act; enact (House Second Readers, 01/29/2026)
HB1039 Georgia Equitable Economic Development Act; enact (House Second Readers, 01/29/2026)
HB988 State employees; require health benefit plan to cover hormone replacement therapy for biological women experiencing perimenopause and menopause when such therapy is ordered or prescribed (House Second Readers, 01/27/2026)
HB981 Professions and businesses; expand certain advanced practice registered nurse and physician assistant prescriptive authorizations (House Second Readers, 01/27/2026)
HB968 Controlled substances; mitragynine and hydroxymitragynine (7-OH) are Schedule I; provide (House Second Readers, 01/16/2026)
HB923 Pharmacies; furnish patients with written informational material when dispensing certain prescription drugs; require (House Second Readers, 01/12/2026)
HB931 Health; control high costs of prescription drugs; establish framework (House Second Readers, 01/12/2026)
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)

HB690 Pharmacy benefits managers; duty of care to insureds, health plans, and providers; provide (House Second Readers, 03/04/2025)
HB139 Pharmacies; prohibit drug manufacturer and wholesalers from preventing a licensed pharmacy from acquiring drugs from entities that participate in a particular federal drug discount program (House Second Readers, 01/29/2025)
HB100 Prescription Drug Consumer Financial Protection Act; enact (House Second Readers, 01/28/2025)
SB487 Education Workforce Data Governance Advisory Committee; within the Office of Student Achievement; establish (Senate Read Second Time, 02/19/2026)
SB402 Children and Youth; pilot program provision for screenings, clinical evaluations, training for autism spectrum disorder to children in foster care; establish (House Second Readers, 02/10/2026)
SB455 Georgia Artificial Intelligence Commission; establishment (Senate Read and Referred, 02/04/2026)
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 Withdrawn, Recommitted, 04/04/2025)
SB111 (House Withdrawn, Recommitted, 03/27/2025)
SB60 Pharmacy Benefits Managers; managers have a duty of care to insureds, health plans, and providers; provide (Senate Read and Referred, 01/30/2025)
SB50 (Senate Read and Referred, 01/29/2025)