



Legislative Report – Week 8

The Georgia Legislature met four days this week running the clock through day 35. This was a critical week as bills that crossed over the chamber of origination need to be favorably reported out of committee. With the exception of Rules, many committee chairmen have indicated this week would be their final meeting so the schedule was packed.

A notable development over the weekend were welcomed comments from Governor Nathan Deal stating his opposition to any RFRA legislation that would impact Georgia's standing as the #1 place to do business. These comments quickly cast doubt on the future of Senate-preferred FADA language defining a "person" as a business or organization, which has generated opposition from advocacy groups, business associations, individual CEOs and the New York Times editorial page. We will continue to follow these developments and the impact on other legislation.

Qualifying week began Monday at 9am and ran through noon on Friday. As you know, every member of the State Legislature is up for re-election this year. In the State Senate, Senators Mike Crane (running for Congressman Westmoreland's vacated seat), Bill Jackson and Tommie Williams have announced retirements. In the State House, 12 incumbents have announced they will not seek re-election, including House Majority Whip Matt Ramsey, Rep. Tom Rice, Rep. BJ Pak, Rep. Carl Rogers, Rep. Barbara Sims, Rep. Stephen Allison, Rep. Alex Atwood, Rep. Mike Dudgeon, Rep. LaDawn Jones, Rep. Hugh Floyd, Rep. Margaret Kaiser (running for Mayor of Atlanta) and Rep. Ronnie Mabra.

There are MANY incumbents that drew challengers – over 30 in the House and 15 in the Senate. This further inspires Legislators to wrap up business in Atlanta and head home to start campaigning. We will be providing a spreadsheet outlining the races and who will have opposition.

Priority Legislation

HB 838 – (Representative Shaw Blackmon) A substitute provided that a 5% commission on regular enrollment small-group plans and they added to the bill a minimum of 4% on individual health benefit plans. The bill with the addition passed the committee unanimously. The bill passed the House and is now in the Senate Insurance and Labor Committee. Chairman Meadows has indicated this bill continues to be a top priority for him this year. He believes it is one of the best small business bills moving this year. The bill was heard in the Senate Insurance Committee on Thursday but the Chairman indicated the committee needed more time to look at a new sub. The committee did not vote on the bill but plans to do so on Monday.

HB 866 – (Representative Shaw Blackmon) This bill exempts multiple employer self-insured health plans from premium taxes. The bill passed the Senate Insurance Committee and is now in the Senate Rules Committee.

HB 965 – (Representative Mike Cheokas) Titled the “Jimmy Carter Cancer Treatment Access Act,” this bill requires the appropriate level insurance coverage for patients with advanced metastatic, Stage Four cancer. It prohibits exclusion of a drug if approved by the FDA and the patient is not required to first fail another drug in a step therapy in order to access such drug. This bill passed the Senate Insurance Committee and is now in the Senate Rules Committee.

SB 158 – (Senator Dean Burke) This bill regulates rental networks in Georgia by requiring them to register with the DOI. The bill passed the House 158-0. The bill will now go back to the Senate for an agree.

SB 302 – (Senator PK Martin) Requires carriers to maintain accurate provider directories. This bill is scheduled for a vote on the House floor on Monday.

SB 382 – (Senator Unterman) *The “Surprise Billing and Consumer Protection Act.” The bill provides disclosure requirements of providers, hospitals and insurers. It also provides for billing and reimbursement of out-of-network services. It lays out procedures for dispute resolution for surprise bills and nonemergency services. This bill failed to pass the Senate this year and is no longer eligible for consideration in 2016. This is certainly the beginning of a conversation and not the last we will see of this type legislation.*

Senator Unterman has indicated that she is focusing her efforts on a study committee (SR 974 - <http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/display/20152016/SR/974>)

Schedule

Monday, March 14 – Wednesday, March 16: Days 36-38

Tuesday, March 22: Day 39

Thursday, March 24: Day 40

Below you can find a tracking sheet with all the legislation we are following for the Session. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Tracking

Bill #	Title	Date	Status	Sponsor
HB 0034	Georgia Right to Try Act; enact	3/10/16 11:08	Senate Read Second Time	Dudgeon, Mike 25th
HB 0047	Prescription drugs; certain refills of topical ophthalmic products under certain conditions; authorize	2/12/15 10:04	Senate Read and Referred	Cooper, Sharon 43rd
HB 0193	Life Insurance Consumer Disclosure Model Act; enact	2/16/16 9:54	Senate Read and Referred	Rogers, Carl 29th
HB 0429	Insurance; no health benefit plan shall restrict coverage for prescribed treatment based upon insured's diagnosis with a terminal condition; provide	7/1/15 0:00	Effective Date	Stephens, Ron 164th
HB 0473	Insurance; pharmacy benefits manager owes a fiduciary duty to a covered entity; provide	2/26/15 11:23	House Second Readers	Knight, David 130th
HB 0501	Health care data system; authority of Department of Community Health to use existing systems in establishing and operating a state-wide health care data system; remove	3/2/15 10:13	House Second Readers	Stover, David 71st
HB 0694	Disclosure of Health Care Fees Act; enact	1/11/16 10:47	House Second Readers	Brockway, Buzz

				102nd
HB 0703	Georgia Captive Insurance Company Act; enact	1/12/16 10:34	House Second Readers	Shaw, Jason 176th
HB 0776	Insurance; no health benefit plan shall refuse to pay or reimburse for a peroral endoscopic myotomy procedure; provide	1/21/16 10:21	House Second Readers	Beasley-Teague, Sharon 65th
HB 0783	Controlled substances; Schedules I and IV; change certain provisions	2/19/16 0:00	Senate - Senate Read and Referred	Broadrick, Bruce 4th
HB 0784	Insurance; advertising and promotional items not exceeding \$100 will not be considered an unfair trade practice; provide	3/10/16 10:14	Senate Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute	Carson, John 46th
HB 0810	Health; imposition of costs for providing copies of health records; revise provisions	1/26/16 9:48	House Second Readers	Frye, Spencer 118th
HB 0823	"Expand Medicaid Now Act"; enact	1/26/16 9:48	House Second Readers	Abrams, Stacey 89th
HB 0826	Medical practice; physicians; provide for certain requirements for advertisement or publication of representations of board certification	2/19/16 9:52	Senate Read and Referred	Price, Betty 48th
HB 0838	Insurance; carriers that sell certain health plans through an agent shall compensate such agent a minimum of 5 percent of collected premiums; provide	2/25/16 10:02	Senate Read and Referred	Blackmon, Shaw 146th
HB 0866	Insurance; multiple employer self-insured health plans; exempt from premium taxes	3/10/16 0:00	Senate - Senate Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute	Blackmon, Shaw 146th
HB 0875	"Patient Access to Specialty Tier Drugs Act"; enact	2/2/16 9:50	House Second Readers	Hawkins, Lee 27th

HB 0884	Insurance; company action level event to include a health organization with certain total adjusted capital levels; revise definition	3/10/16 10:14	Senate Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute	Taylor, Darlene 173rd
HB 0886	Pharmacy licenses; employing mails or common carriers to sell, distribute, and deliver prescription drugs; revise a provision	3/8/16 10:13	Senate Read Second Time	Cooper, Sharon 43rd
HB 0900	Crimes and offenses; electronic data base of prescription information; authorize the retention of data base information for 2 years	2/24/16 10:38	Senate Read and Referred	Cooper, Sharon 43rd
HB 0965	"The Honorable Jimmy Carter Cancer Treatment Access Act"; enact	3/10/16 10:14	Senate Committee Favorably Reported	Cheokas, Mike 138th
HB 0971	Human Services, Department of; medical assistance and health insurance coverages to kinship caregivers and children in their care; provide	2/16/16 10:08	House Second Readers	Benton, Tommy 31st
HB 0975	Commerce and trade; assets and liabilities; provide certain updates to the standard valuation law	3/10/16 11:08	Senate Read Second Time	Shaw, Jason 176th
HB 0997	Income tax; deduction for certain physicians, nurses, and physician assistants; delete and create new credit	2/17/16 10:22	House Second Readers	Duncan, Geoff 26th
HB 1000	State employees' health insurance plan; annual independent audit of pharmacy benefits managers; provide	2/17/16 10:22	House Second Readers	Taylor, Darlene 173rd
HB 1017	"Georgia Civil Practice Act"; general provisions governing discovery; change provisions	2/25/16 17:43	House Committee Favorably Reported	Fleming, Barry 121st
HB 1095	"Patient Compensation Act"; enact	2/26/16 8:56	House Second Readers	Cheokas, Mike 138th

HR 1054	House Study Committee on Policing and Mental Health; create	1/22/16 10:00	House Second Readers	Kendrick, Dar'shun 93rd
HR 1254	Medicaid care management organizations; cover certain attention deficit hyperactivity disorder medications; encourage	2/8/16 11:12	House Second Readers	Stephens, Mickey 165th
HR 1576	House Study Committee on the Pricing of Prescription Drugs; create	3/8/16 10:17	House Second Readers	Hawkins, Lee 27th
SB 0001	Insurance; provide for certain insurance coverage for autism spectrum disorders	2/3/15 10:28	House Second Readers	Bethel, Charlie 54th
SB 0007	"Controlled Substances Therapeutic Relief Act"; repeal provisions; provide for medical use of marijuana; definitions	2/11/15 10:07	Senate Read and Referred	Thompson, Curt 5th
SB 0009	Community Health, Board of; reopen the 2014 open enrollment; major medical facility declared out of network; define certain terms	12/18/14 10:51	Senate Prefiled	Seay, Valencia 34th
SB 0038	Medicaid; authorization of appropriations; medical assistance payments to providers of Medicaid expansion	1/26/15 9:57	Senate Read and Referred	Fort, Vincent 39th
SB 0040	Health; repeal Code Section 31-1-40	1/26/15 9:57	Senate Read and Referred	Fort, Vincent 39th
SB 0086	"Patient Compensation Act"; establish	2/9/15 11:05	Senate Read and Referred	Beach, Brandon 21st
SB 0143	Insurance; require insurer providing services under state health benefit plan to include certain trauma centers in provider network	3/19/15 9:47	House Second Readers	Hufstetler, Chuck 52nd
SB 0145	Board of Community Health; provide that one member of the board is member of the state health benefit plan	3/19/15 9:47	House Second Readers	McKoon, Joshua 29th

SB 0158	%26quot;Consumer and Provider Protection Act%26quot;; provide certain consumer and provider protections regarding health insurance	3/10/16 13:53	House Postponed	Burke, Dean 11th
SB 0265	%26quot;Physician Direct Pay Act%26quot;; definitions; provide physician agreements are not insurance; exempt agreements from regulations as insurance	1/13/16 10:45	Senate Read and Referred	Hill, Judson 32nd
SB 0290	Insurance; clarify those individuals not required to be licensed as insurance agent	3/10/16 14:02	House Passed/Adopted	Bethel, Charlie 54th
SB 0291	%26quot;Georgia Affordable Free Market Health Care Act%26quot;; provide definitions; physicians agreements are not insurance	1/27/16 10:43	Senate Read and Referred	Hill, Judson 32nd
SB 0299	Georgia Health Care Transparency Initiative; create; definitions; purpose	1/27/16 10:43	Senate Read and Referred	McKoon, Joshua 29th
SB 0302	Insurance; require health carriers to maintain accurate provider directories	3/10/16 0:00	House - House Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute	Martin IV, P. K. 9th
SB 0347	'Georgia Captive Insurance Company Act'; provide extensive changes; provisions	3/10/16 0:00	House - House Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute	Bethel, Charlie 54th
SB 0368	Medical Assistance; eligible individuals to obtain health care coverage;	2/11/16 10:24	Senate Read and Referred	Rhett, Michael 'Doc' 33rd
SB 0382	%26quot;Surprise Billing and Consumer Protection Act%26quot;; provide for consumer protections regarding health insurance	2/17/16 10:19	Senate Read and Referred	Unterman, Renee 45th
SR 0722	Mental Illness, Initiative, Reform, Public Health, and Safety; create Joint Study Committee	1/21/16 10:08	Senate Read and Referred	James, Donzella 35th
SR 0940	Medicaid; encouraged to cover certain attention deficit	2/10/16 10:12	Senate Read and Referred	Watson, Ben 1st

	hyperactivity disorder medications			
SR 0974	Senate Surprise Billing Practices Study Committee; create	2/16/16 9:54	Senate Read and Referred	Unterman, Renee 45th
SR 1029	Health and Social Services Integrated Data Platform; create joint study committee	3/2/16 10:32	House Second Readers	Hufstetler, Chuck 52nd
SR 1043	Expansion on Autism Insurance Mandate; create Senate Study Committee	3/10/16 11:08	Senate Read Second Time	Mullis, Jeff 53rd
SR 1055	Expansion of Autism Insurance Mandate; create Joint Study committee	2/24/16 10:36	Senate Read and Referred	Mullis, Jeff 53rd
SR 1165	Senate Opioid Abuse Study Committee; create	3/10/16 12:33	Senate Hopper	Miller, Butch 49th
SR 1166	Senate State Sponsored Self-insured Group Health Insurance Plan Study Committee; create	3/10/16 12:56	Senate Hopper	Harbin, Marty 16th