



Senate District 15 – Session Update – 2021

We have been very productive this session as we continue to work for the betterment of Georgia. This week brought us one step closer to closing out our 2021 legislative session as we successfully completed Crossover Day. Here is a look of what we have been up to in your Georgia State Senate over the last few days.

I am pleased to report that Senate Bill 140 passed unanimously on the Senate floor and has since been passed over to the House for consideration. To recap, this bill would approve the construction of a monument to honor former Georgia Governor Zell Bryan Miller on the grounds of the State Capitol. Gov. Miller was a dedicated public servant to our state for many years and his contributions continue to be felt through all that we do here. I am proud to help honor his legacy in this way.

Education has remained a top priority in the Senate this year and recent legislation we passed demonstrates our dedication to providing each student, in both public and private schools, with a quality education. Senate Bill 204, which I co-sponsored, would enable the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia to grant high school diplomas to students who are 16 years or older and have completed the necessary coursework to graduate. My fellow Senators and I believe that this bill will provide more options to students as they make their way through secondary school, as well as provide the opportunity for them to graduate from high school, regardless of age. This opens new doors for professional opportunities.

Further, the Senate passed Senate Bill 142, a bipartisan measure supporting funding for education through the legalization of sports betting, so long as the Constitutional Amendment is approved. The betting will be run by the Georgia Lottery Corporation (GLC), which was originally created to support Georgia's HOPE Scholarship and has been responsible for making higher education financially attainable for thousands of Georgia students. The bill takes special care to set specific regulations for sports wagering, including who is qualified to place a bet and how the bets may be placed. Bets may be placed on professional athletic events, collegiate events where Georgia teams are not involved, Olympic sporting events or other authorized events. Further, the bill requires the GLC to work with local and national organizations to support awareness of gambling addiction and produce annual reports on gambling disorders. I was proud to be a co-sponsor on this bill knowing that this measure will bring economic prosperity into Georgia and will further provide for the students of our state.

In an effort to assist those impacted by our criminal justice system, the Senate recently passed Senate Bill 105. This bill would allow for the termination or shortening of probation in certain cases in order to provide these citizens with more pathways for early release. The defendants must adhere to various conditions in order to receive a shortened or terminated probation, but it would have a tremendous impact on changing the lives of many for the better. Not to mention, SB 105 would also have a positive fiscal impact on our state, as it now costs around \$34 million to keep people on probation. I am proud to see the bipartisan support surrounding this issue and my colleagues' dedication to addressing the ways in which our criminal justice system works.

As you can see, we have been hard at work. Please be on the lookout for future updates regarding your government at work!