

Under the Gold Dome



District 149 Legislative Update – Week 3 — 2018



Monday, January 22, we returned to Capitol Hill to resume the 2018 legislative calendar as we completed days 7 - 10. Can you believe we have already made it through one fourth of this year's legislative session? Each passing day means our schedules become more and more hectic by the minute. Between committee meetings, legislative meetings, the House floor session, and dinner meetings, my typical day generally begins before daylight and goes well into late evening hours. During week 3, we focused on measures recommended by our various House study committees. We also worked with the Senate to pass an adjournment resolution, which maps out our remaining thirty days on Capitol Hill. As we continue to move forward, there is no shortage of committee meeting work, issue debate and Capitol day events.

Rural Revitalization Efforts

Although Georgia's economy has grown over the last few years, there are many rural communities in our state still suffering effects from the great recession. To revitalize the less populated areas of our state, we have been working on finding ways to improve economic opportunities for our rural communities. Being born and raised in a small town, I am excited to see what bills will come forth for the benefit of our rural communities.

House Resolution 389

Last session, we adopted House Resolution 389, which established the House Rural Development Council (RDC). During the off session, members of the RDC traveled every corner of the state, making visits to rural communities to meet with local leaders, study issues specific to rural areas while exploring ways to encourage economic growth. Policy areas, such as education, infrastructure, access to health care and economic growth incentives are of major concern. In December, the RDC released reports outlining several policy recommendations in hopes of boosting economic opportunity in non-metro areas.

House Bill 735

The first of many rural development-related bills came in the form of House Bill 735. HB 735 would create a tax credit for short line railroad track maintenance to incentivize investment in rail infrastructure in rural Georgia. This bill will now make its way through the committee process, and I will update you as it moves through the House.

Transit

Over the last few years, we have focused largely on further development of our state's transportation network. Georgia is not only home to the world's busiest airport, it also plays host to the 4th largest port system in the nation. Therefore, we must ensure we have a connected, efficient transportation network.

House Resolution 848

In 2017 we passed HR 848, which established the House Commission on Transit Governance and Funding. Like the RDC, the transit commission held hearings across the state to study our transportation needs in hopes to resolve issues plaguing our current system. Improving Georgia's infrastructure will greatly improve our economy, especially in rural areas.

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National Guard Day

Last week we also celebrated National Guard Day! Several men and women of the Georgia National Guard joined us in the chamber where they were presented with House Resolution 902. The Georgia Department of Defense provides military-ready forces to the president and disaster response forces to the governor. The department employs over 10,891 Army National Guard Soldiers, 2,746 Air National Guard Airmen, 583 State Defense Force members and over 600 state employees. Since 9/11, over 18,000 Georgia National Guard members have been deployed. It was an honor to recognize those who bravely serve in protecting the freedoms we hold dear.

Adjournment Calendar

We also worked with the Senate to adopt the final adjournment resolution, which determines our calendar for the remainder of the session. Legislative Day 40, also known as Sine Die, is the final day and it is set for Thursday, March 29.

Until then, we look forward to an aggressive schedule which includes the passage meaningful legislation for the betterment of our home district! As always, I will continue to update you each week of all that's happening under the Gold Dome. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out anytime. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your voice under on Capitol Hill and I look forward to seeing those of you who plan on coming up to Atlanta for a visit.