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Happy Women's History Month - Budget

Budget

The Senate Committee on Appropriations voted to add $2.6 billion to the state's whopper of a mid-year budget. The budget now moves to the full Senate, which is expected to pass it quickly.

- $189.8 million in matching funds for the $1.2 trillion Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, signed by President Joe Biden in November. Georgia must match 20% of the federal government's allocation to the state.
- $1.6 billion in state income tax refunds
- $382 million restored to K-12 education
- $93 million to K-12 schools due to enrollment growth
- $188 million to replace 1,747 school buses over the next three years
- $500 million to give 100,000 or so state employees and University System of Georgia employees a $5,000 raise
- $250 million more for Medicaid
- $26 million in incentive payments to nursing homes
- $4 million to provide $2,000 bonuses to school nurse—proposed by the Senate vs. $1,000 proposed by the House
- $5 million to bolster nursing school programs
- $432 million to buy a new prison and construct a new 3,000-bed prison
- Replace more than 300 Department of Public Safety vehicles

- $9,000 pay increases for correction officers—vs. $5,000 proposed by the House
- $20 million in rural downtown development grants
- $45 million to relocate state agencies from a Peachtree St. building to Capitol Hill
- $150 million to pay state worker's compensation claims dating back to 1982
- $29 million on state parks improvements—double the $14.9 million proposed by the House
- $112.6 million to purchase and develop land east of Atlanta for the Rivian electric vehicle manufacturing plant

HR842 would amend the state Constitution to raise legislators' income to 60% of the median household income in the state, beginning in 2025. The bipartisan resolution would take the issue out of the General Assembly's hands where voting themselves a pay increase is always a touchy political subject, particularly in an election year. If passed, the amendment would be on the ballot in November. Currently, legislators earn $17,342 for what is considered a part-time job. However, serving comes with long hours and usually spills over into a year-round commitment. The proposal would raise legislative pay to about $36,000 and trigger automatic pay increases as median income rises.