

# UPDATE

## Final Legislative Report for the 2011 Session

The Georgia General Assembly finished its business for the 2011 Legislative Session on Thursday, April 14th.

The following bills were tracked for NASW throughout the session:

House Bill 17, to repeal the Department of Human Services was read for the second time in the House Health and Human Services Committee on January 24 and did not advance.

House Bill 23, the Foster Children's Psychotropic Medication Monitoring Act was read for the second time in the House Health and Human Services Committee on January 25 and did not advance.

House Bill 39, which would provide that unexcused school absence notices be made by the United States mail was read for the second time in the Senate Education and Youth Committee on March 30 and did not advance.

House Bill 89, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, was read for the second time in the House Health and Human Services Committee on January 31 and did not advance.

House Bill 97, which would reform provisions of the minimum wage law, was read for the second time in the House Regulated Industries Committee on February 1 and did not advance.

House Bill 162, which would prohibit those on the sexual offender registry from taking photographs of a minor without parent permission, was passed and adopted in the Senate on April 12.

House Bill 185, The Runaway Youth Safety Act, was attached to Senate Bill 94, formerly a firearms bill. Senate Bill 94 was passed and adopted in the House on Thursday, March 31 as a vehicle for the Runaway Youth Safety Act. It has been sent to the Governor to sign.

House Bill 200, which changes provisions for human trafficking crimes and offenses, was passed and adopted in the Senate on March 29.

House Bill 231, the Mental Health Addictive Disease Community Recovery Act, was read for the second time in the House Health and Human Services Committee on February 15 and did not advance.

House Bill 258, which would extend peace officer requirements to crisis response team members in regard to mental health, was read for the second time in the House Health and Human Services Committee on February 17 and did not advance.

House Bill 310, The End to Cyber Bullying Act, was read for the second time in the House Education Committee on February 23 and did not advance.

House Bill 311, the Parent Protection Act, was read for the second time in the House Regulated Industries Committee on February 23 and did not advance.

House Bill 314 to enact Jessie's Law was passed and adopted in the Senate on February 12.

House Bill 324, which revises definitions and titles of developmentally disabled, was passed and adopted in the Senate on April 11.

House Bill 343, to provide psychiatric stabilization or detoxification services, was agreed to in the House for the Senate amended or substitution on April 14.

House Bill 434, to revise provisions for social worker licensure requirements, was withdrawn and recommitted in the House on April 14.

House Bill 630, which prohibits discrimination of public officers and employees regarding sexual orientation and gender identity, was read for the second time in the House Committee on Judiciary on April 11 and did not advance.

House Bill 633, which creates a state-wide child abuse reporting system, was read for the second time in the House Judiciary Committee on April 12 and did not advance.

House Bill 641, which substantially revises provisions regarding juvenile court proceedings was read for the second time in the House Judiciary Committee on April 14 and did not advance.

House Resolution 9 to create the Joint Teen Violence Study Committee was read for the second time in the House Committee on Children and Youth on February 2 and did not advance.

House Resolution 425, to allow public funding of social services for religious or faith based organizations, was read for the second time in the House Judiciary Committee on March 2 and did not advance.

Senate Bill 4, the Federal Abortion-Mandate Opt-Out Act, was withdrawn from the Senate consideration on January 27.

Senate Bill 14, which raises the age of mandatory education from 16 to 17, was read and referred to the Senate Committee on Education and Youth on January 26 and did not advance.

Senate Bill 29, the Federal Abortion- Mandate Opt-Out Act, was read in the Senate on January 31 and did not advance.

Senate Bill 39, which creates mental health court divisions, passed the Senate on April 19 and was sent to the Governor to sign.

Senate Bill 43, which raises the age of mandatory education, was read and referred to the Senate Committee on Education and Youth on February 7 and did not advance.

Senate Bill 49, which raises the age of mandatory education for purposes of adult literacy, was read for the second time in the Senate Committee on Education and Youth on March and did not advance.

Senate Bill 68, the Parent Trigger Act, was read and referred to the Senate Committee on Education and Youth on February 10 and did not advance.

Senate Bill 87, to rename the Georgia Educational Freedom Act and to expand the eligibility for the program, was tabled in the Senate Committee on Education and Youth on March 16.

Senate Bill 127, which revises provisions of juvenile proceedings, was read and referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee on February 23 and did not advance.

Senate Bill 164, to expand mandatory reporting of child abuse, was read and referred to the Senate Committee on Judiciary on February 28 and did not advance.

Senate Bill 165, which provides for the maintenance of forensic samples from abortions performed on children under 16 years of age, was read and referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee on February 28 and did not advance.

Senate Bill 209, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act to regulate the performance of abortions, was read and referred to the Senate Rules Committee on March 4 and did not advance.

Senate Bill 210, which provides for liability for violations of laws relating to abortion, was read for the second time in the House Rules Committee on March 22 and did not advance.

**Budget writers blunted some cuts, dealt with unforeseen problems, and left some key issues for another day.** The FY 2012 Budget for *Community Health* reduces cuts in Medicaid provider fees from 1% to 0.5%, restores adult dental, vision and podiatry services, adds 33 Independent Care slots, provides for Express Lane Eligibility to reduce duplicative paperwork at application, funds bonds for a new eligibility computer system, and adds service copayments for PeachCare children. Unfortunately, legislators did not find funds for 12-month instead of 6-month Medicaid eligibility reviews, despite widespread support. They borrowed \$78 M from Medicaid to help fill an unexpected hole in state employee health care, hoping to keep premium increases near 10%. In *Public Health*, they restored \$2.48 M for health departments, kept funds for infant and child oral health, used \$2.8 M in TANF to protect Children 1st, added \$3.5 M in state and federal funds for trauma, and added \$1 M for 3 new Federally Qualified Health Centers and a behavioral health FQHC. The *Human Services* budget protects Meals-on-Wheels, Alzheimer's and non-Medicaid community respite services, and the Center for the Visually Impaired, but eliminates contracts with Books for Children (Ferst Foundation) and for EMBRACE.

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