

FY 2020 Budget Overview

House Bill 31, the Fiscal Year 2020 budget, is set by a revenue estimate of \$27.5 billion – an increase of \$1.05 billion, or 3.95%, over the FY 2019 current budget. Of the funds appropriated in the FY 2020 budget, 55% is for education; 22% for health and human services; 8% for public safety; 8% for transportation and economic development; and 7% for general government agencies.

Economic Development

- HB 31 provides \$300,000 in the FY 2020 budget for the creation of the Blight Removal and Code Enforcement (BRACE) program in the Department of Community Affairs. This program will provide grants to communities with a population of 2,500 or less to initiate a free, neighborhood-level cleanup for their areas with the most code violations and blight. This program is a recommendation of the House Rural Development Council.
- The FY 2020 budget includes \$2 million for the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative. This initiative allows for a more detailed map to be developed in order to indicate which areas of Georgia need broadband services as recommended by the House Rural Development Council.
- The House and Senate agree to add \$400,000 to create the Savannah Logistics Technology Corridor. These funds will require a local match, and the corridor will work with the Georgia Cyber Center, the Georgia Ports, and other supporting institutions in order to bring more high-wage, high-tech jobs to the state.
- In an effort to assist Georgia's water resources, HB 31 restores \$423,495 to the Georgia Rural Water Association and \$200,000 to the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District. The FY 2020 budget also adds \$55,000 for resource conservation and development district grants to increase each individual district's funding by \$5,000. 2 March 28, 2019
- HB 31 provides \$300,000 in the Department of Economic Development to establish a facilities grant program for local arts organizations. Grants are to be matched with local funds and applicants must operate full time as community arts programs.
- \$150,000 is included in the FY 2020 budget to increase grant funding to local visitor information centers in rural areas of the state. This allows local visitor centers to be able to better promote their area.
- Bonds in the FY 2020 budget include \$1.3 million for facility repairs at farmers markets statewide; \$2.95 million for updates and repairs to the Georgia Poultry Laboratory Network in Gainesville; \$22 million for a pedestrian mall and bus depot at the Georgia World Congress Center; and \$13.7 million for the Savannah International Trade and Convention Center.

Education

- HB 31 includes a \$3,000 pay raise for certified teachers and certified personnel, including counselors, social workers, psychologists, special education specialists, speech and language pathologists, media specialists and technology specialists starting July 1, 2019. The pay raise maintains one state salary schedule for certified teachers and certified employees, as stated in Georgia Code.
- The 2018 House School Security Study Committee highlighted the need for school safety threat assessment trainers to work with local school systems to develop threat assessment plans. The final version of the FY 2020 budget includes \$274,920 within the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA) to hire three trainers.

General Government

- The FY 2020 budget includes \$119.4 million across all departments to provide for a 2% merit-based salary adjustment for state employees to address recruitment and retention. Please note that the superior court judges received this 2% cola this year, those counties who have salaries tied to the superior court judge will be impacted.
- House Bill 31 provides \$418,184 to the Special Fraud division of the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance for nine positions and two vehicles to aid in insurance fraud investigations. The budget also includes \$243,617 for two safety engineers, one plan review engineer, and one building inspection engineer. These positions will aid the agency in performing mandated safety inspections, conducting permit plan reviews, and inspecting buildings to complete permits for new construction.
- The Department of Revenue receives \$3.5 million in HB 31 to facilitate upgrades to the Integrated Tax System. These upgrades will allow for the department to apply new tax policy changes and efficiently serve Georgia's taxpayers. The budget also includes \$995,540 for eight auditors and 12 revenue agents for audit and compliance reporting related to online retail sales tax collection.
- HB 31 contains \$228,859 for three new criminal investigator positions within the Secretary of State's office to investigate complaints, including election fraud. The budget also includes \$150 million in the bond package to replace election voting systems statewide.
- The FY 2020 budget provides \$134,171 to the Environmental Protection Division of the Department of Natural Resources for two environmental compliance specialists who will be tasked with responsibilities for drinking water systems and solid waste landfill inspections.
- The FY 2020 budget includes \$1.5 million for a targeted marketing campaign to increase Census participation in hard-to-count areas.

Health

- The FY 2020 budget includes \$55.8 million in the Department of Community Health for Medicaid growth as well as an additional \$95.7 million to replace federal funds in the Medicaid programs due to a reduction in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) and the enhanced FMAP.
- HB 31 includes funding for two new Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), one for primary care in Screven County and one for behavioral health in Chatham County.
- The FY 2020 budget provides \$513,000 for the Champions for Children program, which is in addition to the \$128,250 provided for the program in the Amended FY 2019 budget.
- HB 31 includes \$250,000 for grants to rural hospitals to meet the federally-required upgrades to emergency rooms for behavioral health patients.
- To support Georgia's nursing homes, the FY 2020 budget funds \$13.7 million for a 3% rate increase; \$716,614 for a 1% increase in the add-on rate for nursing homes with over 45% of their population with cognitive impairment; \$330,000 to support enhanced background checks; and \$109,342 for a 3% increase in the ventilator reimbursement rate. The budget also includes \$401,524 in the Department of Community Health to fund a \$5 increase in the personal needs allowance, which is the second installment of a two-year plan to increase the personal needs allowance by \$20 for nursing home residents.
- The House and Senate agree to provide \$828,042 to fund 54 OB/GYN residency slots, bringing the total number of slots to 104, with 36 slots at Emory University School of Medicine, 20 slots at Medical College of Georgia, 16 slots at Memorial University Medical Center, 16 slots at Morehouse School of Medicine, and 16 slots at Navicent Health Care Macon.
- HB 31 supports undergraduate and graduate medical education with \$1.9 million for new primary care residency slots; \$572,670 for student capitation rates at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) Georgia and PCOM South Georgia; \$500,000 for a three-year primary care residency track, \$381,470 for child and adolescent psychiatry residency slots, \$352,968 for the Rural Surgery Initiative, and \$115,500 for pediatric residency slots at Augusta University; \$300,000 for additional student housing for community-based rotations; and \$180,000 for a start-up grant to begin a residency program at South Georgia Medical Center.
- The General Assembly supports Morehouse School of Medicine by providing \$5 million to offset a reduction in federal matching funds as well as \$500,000 for a Center of Excellence on Maternal Mortality in order to advance maternal health in Georgia.
- HB 31 includes additional support for maternal health by providing \$1.05 million to screen, refer, and treat maternal depression and related behavioral disorders in rural and underserved areas; \$200,000 for

additional nurse abstractors for the Maternal Mortality Review Committee; and \$600,000 for three satellite perinatal support sites in Jenkins, Randolph, and Wilcox counties.

- Within the Department of Public Health, the FY 2020 budget includes \$150,000 for a nurse peer assistance program to support nurses recovering from substance abuse; \$300,000 for regional cancer coalitions to enhance screening, awareness, prevention education, care coordination, and navigation; \$150,000 for three additional sickle cell outreach offices; \$500,000 for county health departments to provide feminine hygiene products to low-income clients; \$275,000 for five ‘Coverdell-Murphy Act’ remote stroke readiness grants; and \$40,000 for five new Level IV trauma centers to support rural Georgia access to emergency trauma care.

Human Resources

- The FY 2020 budget includes \$4.9 million in the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) for residential treatment of addictive diseases, which will add six new facilities across the regions in Georgia. The Senate adds, and the House agrees, to provide \$50,000 to expand comprehensive treatment, prevention, and recovery support services to pregnant and postpartum women living with substance use disorder. The budget also recognizes more than \$26 million in new funds for behavioral health services to increase bed capacity and outpatient services, as well as to annualize the cost of crisis centers around the state.
- The Senate and House agree to provide funding for the developmentally disabled population in Georgia, including \$120,417 to increase supported employment provider rates by 10% and \$50,000 in one-time funds for permanent supported housing in Forsyth County which will assist in creating a model plan for statewide utilization.
- HB 31 provides \$9.5 million to meet the funding needs of the Administrative Services Organization (ASO) to increase efficiency and support services delivered by DBHDD. The budget also includes \$1.8 million for an additional eight forensic community coordinators, five forensic evaluators, and one community integration home; \$7.9 million to annualize and add an additional 125 New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) slots for the intellectually and developmentally disabled; and \$1.5 million to annualize supported employment and education services for 500 young adults.
- The Senate agrees to the House addition of \$500,000 in state-matching funds for the HomeFirst public-private partnership to provide behavioral health services for permanent homeless supported housing in Fulton County. HB 31 also includes an increase of \$250,000 for Mercy Care Health Systems to provide mental and primary health care for indigent Georgians.
- The FY 2020 budget provides the Department of Human Services \$501,796 to meet the demands of the 4.2% growth in adoption services.
- HB 31 provides funding for some of the most vulnerable Georgians including: an increase of \$1.4 million to reduce the waitlist for home-delivered meals to serve an additional 665 Georgians; and \$1.3

million to fund 17 additional adult protective services caseworkers, bringing the total to 172. This addition will lower the caseload to 1:24; national standards are 1:15. The House and Senate agree to an increase of \$2 million for 1,053 additional slots for non-Medicaid home and community based services and an increase of \$157,000 for assistive technology to assist older Georgians in their homes and communities. The budget also includes \$849,951 for 50 additional Medicaid-Aged, Blind and Disabled eligibility caseworkers.

- With more than 13,000 children in the state's care, providing adequate resources for children in foster care remains a priority of the House and Senate. The budget includes \$9.8 million for Out of Home Care to meet the growth in utilization as well as \$940,000 for a pilot program to follow-up on closed foster care cases. 8 March 28, 2019
- The House led the way two years ago on providing an increase in the per diem rate for foster care providers; in the FY 2020 budget, the House recommends, and the Senate agrees, to add \$2.6 million to raise the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) relative caregiver daily rate by \$1. Furthermore, the budget utilizes \$808,210 in existing funds to support retention initiatives for eligible relative and foster caregivers and an increase of \$867,058 to replace federal funds to continue child care placement for priority families. The budget also provides \$375,000 in the Judicial Council to provide grants for civil legal services for kinship care families.
- HB 31 includes \$366,752 for five additional public guardianship caseworkers; an increase of \$250,000 to the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to enhance the statewide capacity of volunteers; and \$427,550 for new quality assurance and ongoing monitoring of child welfare support service providers.
- The FY 2020 budget provides the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency with \$149,733 to expand the outreach of independent living for disabled citizens in underserved areas and \$106,500, matched with federal funds, for Academic Transition Teachers in Inclusive Post-Secondary Education (IPSE) programs.
- Within the Department of Veterans Service, the FY 2020 budget provides \$128,946 to establish an additional field service office in Clayton County. The bond package includes \$2.1 million for improvements at the Georgia War Veterans Nursing Homes in Milledgeville.

Public Safety

- HB 31 provides the Department of Community Supervision with \$552,359 for 10 new positions to expand the Georgia Prisoner Reentry Initiative (GA-PRI) to five new locations. The GA-PRI program has reduced reconviction rates by 14% among participants transitioning back into society.
- Within the Department of Corrections, \$14 million is provided for increased dental and mental healthcare; and **\$3.6 million in new and existing funds is provided for a 10% increase in the daily rate for the 22 County Correctional Institutions which partner with the state to house the inmate population.**

- HB 31 appropriates \$563,380 to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation for five additional scientists and one lab technician for the chemistry division to address the crime lab backlog. The Fiscal Year 2020 budget provides \$938,691 for eight positions for the GBI unit at the Cyber Crime Center and \$500,000 to implement a GBI Gang Task Force to help local governments prosecute gang activity. House Bill 31 provides \$709,721 for the increased operations for the expanded “See Something Say Something” app for use in schools and seven positions to staff the 24 hour watch desk to monitor incoming school safety related tips.
- Within the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, \$80,472 is provided for one fidelity coordinator position to ensure accountability courts remain evidence-based.
- The FY 2020 bond package for public safety agencies includes \$101.8 million for maintenance and repairs to state facilities, equipment, and new law enforcement vehicles.
- The FY 2020 budget includes \$558,963 within the Superior Courts, Prosecuting Attorneys and Public Defender Council to create two additional Superior Court judgeships, one in the Griffin Judicial Circuit and one in the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit.
- The budget includes \$343,005 for five law clerk positions for the Superior Courts; and \$399,448 for four additional assistant district attorneys for the Tallapoosa, Ogeechee, Middle and Alcovy Circuits.
- The FY 2020 budget appropriates \$1.1 million for salary scale adjustments for assistant district attorneys and investigators for the Prosecuting Attorneys Council in addition to the 2% merit increase for recruitment and retention; \$672,745 is budgeted for salary scale adjustments in the Public Defender Council to maintain parity on the salary scale between assistant public defenders and assistant district attorneys.

Transportation

- HB 31 includes \$2.48 million to establish the initial budget of the Atlanta-Region Transit Link (ATL) Authority; the authority was created in HB 930 (2018 Session) to plan and govern transit projects in the 13-county Atlanta region.
- The General Assembly instructs the Department of Transportation to utilize \$500,000 in existing funds in the Traffic Management and Control program to initiate a pilot demonstrating the latest technology to advance transportation improvements.
- The FY 2020 Intermodal budget includes an addition of \$1 million for the state airport aid program. This brings the total program budget to \$14.6 million for aid to airports across the state.
- The budget also includes \$221,882 in cash to fund bridge inspections of state-owned rail and \$35 million in bonds for seven projects on the Department of Transportation priority list as the first installment to bring currently used state-owned rail lines up to Class II Standards (25 mph speed/286,000 lbs. car loadings) to help reduce truck traffic on state highways.