



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF GEORGIA  
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

## WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

March 19, 2021

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Week 10 (Legislative Days 32-35)

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The tenth week of the legislative session began on Monday, March 15 (LD 32) and the legislature met for four days before standing in recess today, Friday, March 19.

Following Crossover Day last week, there was a brief lull in floor votes as bills restarted the committee process in their second chamber. As is common, both chambers made, and will continue to make, changes to certain bills after they crossed over. Since the House and Senate must eventually agree to an identical version of a bill for it to achieve final passage, the remaining weeks of the legislative session will be devoted to working out these final positions.

Two bills supported by the Judicial Council advanced this week. [SB 163](#), which provides for tolling of statutory speedy trial requirements following a judicial emergency if compliance with such requirements is impracticable, passed the House on Thursday, March 18 (LD 35). Since the House passed a Substitute version of this bill, it now returns to Senate, which will consider the House changes. [SB 234](#), the Uniform Mediation Act, passed its full committee on Wednesday and now awaits consideration by the Senate Rules Committee.

Chief Justice Melton delivered his third and final State of the Judiciary address before a joint session of the General Assembly on Tuesday, March 16 (LD 33). In this address, Chief Justice Melton spoke to the effects of the pandemic on Georgia's court system and praised the resiliency and creativity shown by judges and court staff as they worked to adapt and continue the administration of justice. The Chief Justice also spoke to the challenges facing the judiciary ahead and asked for legislative support for measures aimed at addressing the backlog of cases that resulted from the pandemic. The full text of the State of the Judiciary can be found [here](#) and the recording can found [here](#).

The [FY 2022 Budget \(HB 81\)](#) will appear before the full Senate Appropriations Committee this Monday, March 22 (LD 36). The current tracking document can be found [here](#).

Adjournment Resolution [HR 264](#) sets the legislative calendar for the remainder of the session. Both chambers stand adjourned until Monday, March 22, at 1:00 PM for Legislative Day 36.

This report is a compilation of items acted on this week affecting Georgia's judiciary. To view more legislation pertaining to the judiciary, as well as bill summaries, previous reports, and committee meeting schedules, please visit [legislation.georgiacourts.gov](http://legislation.georgiacourts.gov).

## **Floor & Committee Action**

### **Judicial Council Supported Bills**

#### **[SB 163 - Judicial Emergency; suspension of statutory speedy trial requirements; provide](#)**

Senate Author: Sen. Brian Strickland (R – McDonough)

House Sponsor: Rep. Stan Gunter (R – Blairsville)

**Action:** SB 163 received a Do Pass by Committee Substitute from the House Judiciary Civil Committee (3/15/2021); was placed on the House Rules Calendar for LD 35 (3/17/2021); and passed the House by a vote of 157-6 (3/18/2021).

#### **[SB 234 - "Georgia Uniform Mediation Act"; enact](#)**

Senate Author: Sen. John Kennedy (R – Macon)

**Action:** SB 234 received a Do Pass from the House Judiciary Civil Scoggins Subcommittee (3/16/2021); and received a Do Pass from the House Judiciary Civil Committee (3/17/2021).

### **Other Bills**

#### **Final Passage**

#### **[HB 112 - Torts; provide certain immunities from liability claims regarding COVID-19; extend applicability for one year](#)**

House Author: Rep. Trey Kelley (R – Cedartown)

Senate Sponsor: Sen. Brian Strickland (R – McDonough)

**Action:** HB 112 was placed on the Senate Rules Calendar for LD 34 (3/16/2021); and passed the Senate by a vote of 36-17 (3/17/2021). **Final Passage.**

#### **[HB 497 - Code Revision Commission; revise, modernize and correct errors or omissions](#)**

House Author: Rep. Chuck Efstration (R – Dacula)

Senate Sponsor: Sen. Brian Strickland (R – McDonough)

**Action:** HB 497 was placed on the Senate Rules Calendar for LD 34 (3/16/2021); and passed the Senate by a vote of 54-0 (3/17/2021). **Final Passage.**

#### **[HB 623 - Cohutta, City of; provide new charter](#)**

House Author: Rep. Jason Ridley (R – Chatsworth)

**Action:** HB 623 passed the Senate by a vote of 49-0 (3/15/2021). **Final Passage.**

#### **[HB 634 - Wilkinson County; Magistrate Court; provide one-year terms of office for magistrates](#)**

House Author: Rep. Danny Mathis (R – Cochran)

**Action:** HB 634 passed the Senate by a vote of 49-0 (3/15/2021). **Final Passage.**

#### **[HB 684 - Troup County; board of elections and registration; provide new five member board](#)**

House Author: Rep. Randy Nix (R – LaGrange)

**Action:** HB 684 was placed on the Senate Local Consent Calendar LD 33 (3/15/2021); and passed the Senate by a vote of 43-0 (3/16/2021). **Final Passage.**

[HB 693 - Motor vehicles; operation of farm tractors on interstate highways; prohibit](#)

House Author: Rep. Steven Meeks (R – Screven)

Senate Sponsor: Sen. Lee Anderson (R – Grovetown)

**Action:** HB 693 was placed on the Senate Rules Calendar for LD 34 (3/16/2021); and passed the Senate by a vote of 51-2 (3/17/2021). **Final Passage.**

[HB 705 - Bleckley County; Probate Court; charge technology fee](#)

House Author: Rep. Danny Mathis (R – Cochran)

**Action:** HB 705 was placed on the Senate Local Consent Calendar for LD 34 (3/16/2021); and passed the Senate by a vote of 49-0 (3/17/2021). **Final Passage.**

[HB 707 - Coolidge, City of; provide new charter](#)

House Author: Rep. Sam Watson (R – Moultrie)

**Action:** HB 707 was placed on the Senate Local Consent Calendar LD 34 (3/16/2021); and passed the Senate by a vote of 49-0 (3/17/2021). **Final Passage.**

[SB 34 - Domestic Relations; name change; victims of human trafficking may petition; provide](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Clint Dixon (R – Gwinnett)

House Sponsor: Rep. Josh Bonner (R – Fayetteville)

**Action:** SB 34 received a Do Pass from the House Judiciary Civil Committee (3/15/2021); was placed on the House Rules Calendar for LD 35 (3/17/2021); and passed the House by a vote of 162-0 (3/18/2021). **Final Passage.**

[SB 143 - Mechanics and Materialmen; waiver of lien and labor or material bond rights; conform a reference within a statutory form](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Lindsey Tippins (R – Marietta)

House Sponsor: Rep. Todd Jones (R – South Forsyth)

**Action:** SB 143 received a Do Pass from the House Judiciary Civil Committee (3/15/2021); was placed on the House Rules Calendar for LD 35 (3/17/2021); and passed the House by a vote of 156-0 (3/18/2021). **Final Passage.**

**Floor Votes**

[HB 208 - State holidays; second Wednesday of February of each year as National Swearing-in Day in Georgia; provide](#)

House Author: Rep. Mike Cheokas (R – Americus)

Senate Sponsor: Sen. Jeff Mullis (R – Chickamauga)

**Action:** HB 208 was placed on the Senate Rules Calendar for LD 34 (3/16/2021); and passed the Senate as Amended by a vote of 53-0 (3/17/2021).

[HB 703 - Bleckley County; probate judge; provide nonpartisan elections](#)

House Author: Rep. Danny Mathis (R – Cochran)

**Action:** HB 703 was placed on the House Rules Calendar for LD 34 (3/16/2021); and passed the House by a vote of 105-64 (3/17/2021).

[HB 704 - Bleckley County; Magistrate Court chief judge; provide nonpartisan elections](#)

House Author: Rep. Danny Mathis (R – Cochran)

**Action:** HB 704 was placed on the House Rules Calendar for LD 34 (3/16/2021); and passed the House by a vote of 103-68 (3/17/2021).

**Placed on Rules Calendar**

[HB 488 - Courts; increase minimum compensation for chief magistrates and others; provide](#)

House Author: Rep. Mitchell Scoggins (R – Cartersville)

Senate Sponsor: Sen. Chuck Payne (R – Dalton)

**Action:** HB 488 received a Do Pass from the Senate State and Local Governmental Operations Committee (3/15/2021); was placed on the Senate Rules Calendar for LD 35 (3/17/2021); and was tabled by the Senate (3/18/2021).

[SB 9 - Courts; the Columbia Judicial Circuit and to be composed of Columbia County; create a new judicial circuit for the State of Georgia](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Lee Anderson (R – Grovetown)

House Sponsor: Rep. Mark Newton (R – Augusta)

**Action:** SB 9 received a Do Pass by Committee Substitute from the House Judiciary Civil Committee (3/15/2021); and was placed on the House Rules Calendar for LD 36 (3/18/2021).

[SB 32 - Public Disclosure; certain personal records of state and federal employees; exempt](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Matt Brass (R – Newnan)

House Sponsor: Rep. Joseph Gullett (R – Dallas)

**Action:** SB 32 received a Do Pass by Committee Substitute from the House Judiciary Civil Committee (3/15/2021); and was placed on the House Rules Calendar for LD 36 (3/18/2021).

[SB 114 - Professions and Businesses; grounds for refusing to grant or revoking a license; revise](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Randy Robertson (R – Cataula)

House Sponsor: Rep. Martin Momtahan (R – Dallas)

**Action:** SB 114 was placed on the House Rules Calendar for LD 36 (3/18/2021).

**Passed out of Full Committee**

[HB 97 - Courts; oath for certain clerks of the probate court; require and provide](#)

House Author: Rep. Rob Leverett (R - Elberton)

**Action:** HB 97 received a Do Pass from the Senate Special Judiciary Committee (3/16/2021).

[HB 141 - Criminal procedure; requirements for awards made from Georgia Crime Victims Emergency Fund to medical service providers; provide](#)

House Author: Rep. Houston Gaines (R – Athens)

**Action:** HB 141 received a Do Pass by Committee Substitute from the Senate Health and Human Services Committee (3/17/2021).

[HB 146 - Public officers and employees; paid parental leave for eligible state employees and eligible local board of education employees; provide](#)

House Author: Rep. Houston Gaines (R – Athens)

**Action:** HB 146 received a Do Pass from the Senate Insurance and Labor Committee (3/16/2021).

[HB 154 - Domestic relations; protection of children; strengthen, clarify, and update provisions](#)

House Author: Rep. Bert Reeves (R – Marietta)

**Action:** HB 154 received a Do Pass by Substitute from the Senate Judiciary Committee (3/15/2021).

[HB 165 - Motor vehicles; use of mounts on windshields for the support of wireless telecommunications devices and stand-alone electronic devices under certain circumstances; allow](#)

House Author: Rep. Timothy Barr (R – Lawrenceville)

**Action:** HB 165 received a Do Pass from the Senate Transportation Committee (3/18/2021).

[HB 236 - Domestic relations; additional monitoring of victim after granting of a temporary protective order; provide](#)

House Author: Rep. Yasmin Neal (D – Jonesboro)

**Action:** HB 236 received a Do Pass from the Senate Public Safety Committee (3/18/2021).

[HB 258 - Crimes and offenses; response to State v. Williams, 2020 Ga. LEXIS 85; provisions](#)

House Author: Rep. Steven Sainz (R – Woodbine)

**Action:** HB 258 received a Do Pass from the Senate Judiciary Committee (3/15/2021).

[HB 286 - Local government; restrict ability of county governing authorities to reduce funding for county police departments](#)

House Author: Rep. Houston Gaines (R – Athens)

**Action:** HB 286 received a Do Pass by Committee Substitute from the Senate Public Safety Committee (3/18/2021).

[HB 353 - Motor vehicles; clarify what constitutes an obstruction for purposes of exceptions to when a vehicle is to drive on the right side of roadway](#)

House Author: Rep. Todd Jones (R – South Forsyth)

**Action:** HB 353 received a Do Pass from the Senate Public Safety Committee (3/18/2021).

[HB 371 - Evidence; certain proceedings may be conducted by video conference; provide](#)

House Author: Rep. Stan Gunter (R – Blairsville)

**Action:** HB 371 failed to receive a Do Pass motion from the Senate Judiciary Committee (3/15/2021); and received a Do Pass by Committee Substitute from the Senate Judiciary Committee (3/17/2021).

[HB 470 - Property; no plans are required when units are not designated by physical structures; provide](#)

House Author: Rep. Dale Washburn (R – Macon)

**Action:** HB 470 received a Do Pass from the Senate Judiciary Committee (3/15/2021).

[HB 479 - Criminal procedure; revise certain arrest powers; provisions](#)

House Author: Rep. Bert Reeves (R – Marietta)

**Action:** HB 479 received a Do Pass from the Senate Judiciary Committee (3/17/2021).

[HB 534 - Crimes and offenses; promoting illegal drag racing and laying drags; provide for offense](#)

House Author: Rep. Josh Bonner (R – Fayetteville)

**Action:** HB 534 received a Do Pass from the Senate Judiciary Committee (3/17/2021).

[HB 548 - Social services; reasonable access to records concerning reports of child abuse to the Administrative Office of the Courts; provide](#)

House Author: Rep. Katie Dempsey (R – Rome)

**Action:** HB 548 received a Do Pass from the Senate Judiciary Committee (3/15/2021).

[HB 553 - State government; participation in hearings by electronic communications; provide](#)

House Author: Rep. Stan Gunter (R – Blairsville)

**Action:** HB 553 received a Do Pass by Substitute from the Senate Judiciary Committee (3/15/2021).

[HB 562 - Criminal procedure; add DFCS case managers to people for whom arrest warrants may be issued only by certain judicial officers](#)

House Author: Rep. Kasey Carpenter (R – Dalton)

**Action:** HB 562 received a Do Pass by Committee Substitute from the Senate Judiciary Committee (3/17/2021).

[HB 645 - Crimes and offenses; medical cannabis; update and revise provisions](#)

House Author: Rep. Micah Gravley (R – Douglasville)

**Action:** HB 645 failed to received passage from the Senate Health and Human Services Committee (3/17/2021).

[SB 20 - Child Advocate Advisory Committee; composition; revise](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Chuck Payne (R – Dalton)

**Action:** SB 20 received a Do Pass from the House Juvenile Justice Committee (3/18/2021).

[SB 28 - Juvenile Code and Domestic Relations; provisions relating to the protection of children; strengthen, clarify and update](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Bo Hatchett (R – Cornelia)

**Action:** SB 28 received a Do Pass by Substitute from the House Juvenile Justice Committee (3/18/2021).

[SB 33 - Torts; cause of action against perpetrators for victims of human trafficking; provide](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Clint Dixon (R – Gwinnett)

**Action:** SB 33 received a Do Pass from the House Judiciary Civil Gunter Subcommittee (3/16/2021); and received a Do Pass from the House Judiciary Civil Committee (3/17/2021).

[SB 75 - Termination of Residential Lease; victims of stalking; provide](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Kim Jackson (D – Stone Mountain)

**Action:** SB 75 received a Do Pass from the House Judiciary Civil Committee (3/15/2021).

[SB 95 - State Government; conditions for meetings and public hearings to be held by teleconference in emergency conditions; provide](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Frank Ginn (R – Danielsville)

**Action:** SB 95 received a Do Pass by Committee Substitute from the House Governmental Affairs Committee (3/17/2021).

[SB 105 - State-Wide Probation System; conditions and procedures under which probation may be terminated early; revise](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Brian Strickland (R – McDonough)

**Action:** SB 105 received a Do Pass from the House Judiciary Non-Civil Reeves Subcommittee (3/16/2021); and received a Do Pass from the House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee (3/17/2021).

[SB 195 - Hemp Farming; definition; revise](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Jeff Mullis (R – Chickamauga)

**Action:** SB 195 received a Do Pass from the House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee (3/17/2021).

[SB 218 - Vacation of Office; suspension of compensation for certain public officers who are suspended because of indictment for a felony; provide](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Larry Walker, III (R – Perry)

**Action:** SB 218 received a Do Pass from the House Judiciary Civil Gunter Subcommittee (3/16/2021); and received a Do Pass from the House Judiciary Civil Committee (3/17/2021).

[SB 238 - Code Of Georgia; enactment of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated; revise provisions](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Brian Strickland (R – McDonough)

**Action:** SB 238 received a Do Pass from the House Code Revision Committee (3/17/2021).

**Committee and Subcommittee Hearings**

[HB 94 - Crimes and offenses; provide for the crime of theft by possession of stolen mail](#)

House Author: Rep. Bonnie Rich (R – Suwanee)

**Action:** HB 94 received a hearing from the Senate Judiciary Committee (3/17/2021).

[HB 138 - Property; certain landlords shall provide certain notices to existing and prospective tenants with regard to certain crimes occurring on the premises being leased; provide](#)

House Author: Rep. Mesha Mainor (D – Atlanta)

**Action:** HB 138 received a hearing from the Senate Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee (3/15/2021).

[HB 194 - Criminal procedure; term of probation shall follow mandatory term of imprisonment for persons convicted of a sexual offense; clarify](#)

House Author: Rep. Steven Sainz (R – Woodbine)

**Action:** HB 194 received a hearing from the Senate Judiciary Committee (3/15/2021).

[HB 231 - Crimes and offenses; victims of stalking; expand applicability of protective orders](#)

House Author: Rep. Houston Gaines (R – Athens)

**Action:** HB 231 received a hearing from the Senate Judiciary Committee (3/17/2021).

[HB 248 - Motor vehicles; local governing body to apply for a permit to operate a traffic enforcement safety device which enforces the speed limit in a school zone by recorded image; authorize](#)

House Author: Rep. Alan Powell (R – Hartwell)

**Action:** HB 248 received a hearing from the Senate Government Oversight Committee (3/16/2021).

[HB 333 - Ethics in Government Act of 2021; enact](#)

House Author: Rep. Chuck Efstoration (R – Dacula)

**Action:** HB 333 received a hearing from the Senate Ethics Committee (3/15/2021).

[HB 531 - Elections; no election superintendents or boards of registrars shall accept private funding; provide](#)

House Author: Rep. Barry Fleming (R – Harlem)

**Action:** HB 531 received a hearing from the Senate Ethics Committee (3/15/2021); received a hearing from the Senate Ethics Committee (3/16/2021); and received a hearing from the Senate Ethics Committee (3/17/2021).

[HB 601 - Crimes and offenses; low THC oil, marijuana, and tetrahydrocannabinols do not include certain federally approved products; provide](#)

House Author: Rep. Ron Stephens (R – Savannah)

**Action:** HB 601 received a hearing from the Senate Regulated Industries Committee (3/16/2021).

[SB 120 - Solicitors-General of State Courts; honorary office of solicitor-general emeritus; provide](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Lindsey Tippins (R – Marietta)

**Action:** SB 120 received a hearing from the House Judiciary Civil Committee (3/17/2021).

[SB 202 - Elections and Primaries; persons or entities that mail absentee ballot applications shall mail such applications only to eligible registered electors; provide](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Max Burns (R – Sylvania)

**Action:** SB 202 received a hearing from the House Special Committee on Election Integrity Committee (3/17/2021); and received a hearing from the House Special Committee on Election Integrity Committee (3/18/2021).

[SB 235 - Offenses Against Public Order; offense of wearing a mask, hood, or device which conceals the identity of the wearer; revise](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Ben Watson (R – Savannah)

**Action:** SB 235 received a Do Pass by Committee Substitute from the House Judiciary Non-Civil Reeves Subcommittee (3/16/2021).

[SB 236 - Alcoholic Beverages; food service establishments to sell mixed drinks for off-premises consumption in approved containers under certain conditions; allow](#)

Senate Author: Sen. Matt Brass (R – Newnan)

**Action:** SB 236 received a Do Pass from the House Regulated Industries Alcohol and Tobacco Subcommittee (3/15/2021).



## Committee Meeting Schedule\*

**Monday, March 22, 2021 – Legislative Day 36**

9:15 AM	Senate Ethics	310 CLOB
9:15 AM	Senate Rules	450 CAP
9:15 AM	Senate Judiciary <a href="#">HB 363</a> - Crimes and offenses; protection of elder persons; revise definitions HB 306 - Corporations, partnership, and associations; corporations may hold shareholders' meetings by means of remote communication; provide <a href="#">HB 94</a> - Crimes and offenses; provide for the crime of theft by possession of stolen mail <a href="#">HB 327</a> - Organized Retail Crime Prevention Act; enact <a href="#">HB 272</a> - Juvenile Code; juvenile court to include children who are under 18 years of age; change jurisdiction <a href="#">HB 443</a> - Torts; transfer of structured settlement payment rights; provide new requirements	307 CLOB
9:30 AM	House Rules	341 CAP
10:00 AM	House Judiciary Non-Civil	132 CAP HYRBID
10:00 AM	House Industry and Labor <a href="#">SB 156</a> - Labor and Industrial Relations; appointment, oath, bond, power, duties, and authority of a chief labor officer; provide <a href="#">HB 181</a> - Labor and industrial relations; provide new employees with copies of any notices required to be posted in the workplace; require employers <a href="#">HB 356</a> - Labor and industrial relations; prohibition of age discrimination in employment; change age of individuals protected	515 CLOB

10:30 AM	Senate Appropriations <a href="#">HB 81</a> - General appropriations; State Fiscal Year July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022	341 CAP
12:00 PM	House Public Safety and Homeland Security	606 CLOB HYBRID
1:00 PM	House Floor Session	House Chamber
1:00 PM	Senate Floor Session	Senate Chamber
3:30 PM	House Regulated Industries; <a href="#">SB 236</a> - Alcoholic Beverages; food service establishments to sell mixed drinks for off-premises consumption in approved containers under certain conditions; allow	406 CLOB HYBRID

**Tuesday, March 23, 2021 – Legislative Day 37**

8:00 AM	Senate Ethics	307 CLOB
8:30 AM	Senate Science and Technology <a href="#">HB 98</a> - State government; conditions for meetings and public hearings to be held by teleconference in emergency conditions; provide	310 CLOB
9:00 AM	House Rules	341 CAP
10:00 AM	House Floor Session	House Chamber
10:00 AM	Senate Floor Session	Senate Chamber
ADJ	Senate Rules	450 CAP
2:15 PM	Senate Public Safety	Mezz 1

**Wednesday, March 24, 2021 – Recess/Committee Work Day**

8:00 AM	Senate Judiciary	307 CLOB
9:00 AM	House Rules	341 CAP
10:00 AM	House Floor Session	House Chamber
10:00 AM	Senate Floor Session	Senate Chamber
ADJ	Senate Rules	450 CAP

**Thursday, March 25, 2021 – Legislative Day 38**

6:30 AM	Senate Ethics	307 CLOB
9:00 AM	House Rules	341 CAP
10:00 AM	House Floor Session	House Chamber
10:00 AM	Senate Floor Session	Senate Chamber
ADJ	Senate Rules	450 CAP
1:00 PM	Senate Public Safety	Mezz 1

**Friday, March 26, 2021 – Recess/Committee Work Day**

No Relevant Meetings Scheduled

*\*This meeting schedule is up to date at the time of this report, but meeting dates and times are subject to change. Please visit the [General Assembly Events Schedule](#) page for a complete list of meetings, livestream links, the most current schedules, and agendas.*

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