

Fraternal Order of Police (FOP)

January 22, 2021

January 18th – 22nd was a very busy week at the State Capitol in Atlanta. There were no official legislative days this past week, but the Capitol had all-day hearings on the state budget with every state agency head coming before the Joint House and Senate Appropriations Committees to present the proposed budget for their agency. Some appeared in person before the Committee, and some appeared virtual before the Committee Chairs and Committee members.

It is essentially the budget presented to the agency heads from the Governor's Office. They present their agency's budget. The House Appropriations Committee will then take the proposed budget and make recommended increases, reductions and changes. The House will then vote on the amended budget on the House Floor. It will then go to the Senate for the same process. The House and Senate will then form a Conference Committee to work out any differences and send that budget to the Governor's Office for signature or veto from the Governor.

Governor Kemp did keep our economy going as much as possible during COVID-19, which allowed for many businesses to stay open that closed in other states and people to keep their jobs with those jobs being lost in other states. It also allowed for the state's tax collections to stay up as far as Sales Tax and Income Tax collections, which has allowed the Governor's Office to not offer drastic cuts to the budget so far like other states have had to do.

Another major development over this past week has been the announcement from the Lieutenant Governor and Senate leadership of new Committee Chairs in the Senate and the announcement from the Speaker and House leadership of new Committee Chairs in the House.

In the Senate, there were changes made with new Chairs for important Committees such as Transportation (Frank Ginn), Insurance (Dean Burke), Reapportionment and Redistricting (John Kennedy), Agriculture (Larry Walker), Banks and Banking (Matt Brass), Economic Development and Tourism (Bruce Thompson), Education (Chuck Payne), Judiciary (Brian Strickland), Retirement (Randy Robertson), Science and Technology (Greg Dolezal), and more.

In the House, there were changes made with new Chairs for important Committees as well in Committees such as Judiciary (Chuck Efstoration), Agriculture (Robert Dickey), Education (Matt Dubnik), Judiciary Non-Civil (James Burchett), Public Safety, Retirement (John Carson), Transportation (Rick Jasperse), Ways and Means (All tax matters – Shaw Blackmon), and more.

The Legislature will go back in for official legislative days starting January 26th. Stay tuned, as we will see what happens with COVID test results for House and Senate members and staff twice a week, as this may trigger House and Senate Leadership to call for a delay in legislative session until late Spring or Summer. The legislature does have to pass a budget, as that is their only requirement under the State Constitution.

The Chair of the Georgia Senate's Finance (tax) committee said Friday that he wants the state to do a two-year modernization review of its tax structure in hopes of both possibly raising revenue and getting rid of some special-interest tax breaks. We will be working with him and others on this.

As always, Thrash-Haliburton is diligently watching and working to stop any detrimental legislation to our industry and push the legislation we support. Our governmental affairs team continues every day to work on, look out for and

answer requests, needs and interests, as we act at the direction of the group's leadership.

2021-2022 Regular Session

This is the first year of the two-year (2021-2022) biennial session. As a reminder, any bills introduced this year will be considered “alive” for the 2022 legislative session. We are monitoring the following legislation, and watchful for any bills that may impact our industry.

Bill	Summary	House Comm	Sen Comm	House Sponsor	Sen Sponsor	Keywords	Link
HB 18	Police Accountability Act; enact			Sandra Scott		body-worn camera	https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/58803
HB 69	State government; certain immunities from actions of certain state officers or employees; remove	Judiciary		Dar'shun Kendrick			https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/58885
HB 2	Georgia Constitutional Carry Act of 2021; enact			Philip Singleton		guns	https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/58787