



2023-2025

Post Session Legislative Summary & Legislative Vision

January 2, 2025

Authored by:

Representative Viola Davis
Representative Kim Schofield
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Representatives: Viola Davis, Sandra Scott, and Kim Schofield – 2023-2024 Legislative Summary and 2025-2026 Legislative Vision (final edition)

Democratic Representatives Viola Davis, Sandra Scott, and Kim Schofield are dedicated to outlining their legislative agenda, legislative summary, and the vision for 2025. Their motivation stems from the resounding calls for justice and equity in various aspects such as education, economic development, voting rights, criminal justice reform, gun safety reform, healthcare, and housing.

These Representatives have crafted impactful legislation that can bring positive change to our community. They have also identified crucial legislation that will propel Georgia forward in the years to come. Their unwavering commitment to championing these important laws stems from their understanding of the transformative impact they can have on our community.

With a focus on drafting legislation "For the Greater Good" of all Georgians, their efforts aim to address challenges and provide solutions that create lasting benefits for every citizen.

Their tireless efforts are focused on making a tangible difference in the lives of the people they represent. They are firmly dedicated to being the voice of their constituents in their respective districts and across the entire state of Georgia. Their aim is to bring about the much-needed changes that their communities desire and deserve.



“Working Together for the Greater Good”

Education

Elevate Education & Eliminate Disparities

We filed great legislation around education to elevate education and eliminate disparities. We strive to improve the Quality Basic Education Act (QBE) to improve the formula used to fund education and provide services.

House Bill 3, or the "Support for Students Living in Poverty Act", drafted by Representative Sandra Scott will provide additional resources to certain students who may be living in poverty. The fiscal note estimates HB 3 will provide an additional \$390 million dollars for the education of "Students Living in Poverty". Georgia is 1 of 6 states yet to fund "Students Living in Poverty" while the other states provide funding.

"A student's financial status should never hinder his or her educational opportunities," said Rep. Sandra Scott. "House Bill 3 would provide a pathway for schools to receive grant funding that would launch programs that directly serve our low-income students, such as wrap-around learning interventions, additional counselors for mental health care, and even transportation for low-income students to participate in dual enrollment programs. It's time for Georgia to join the majority of states across our country that currently provide this additional funding for low-income students."

House Bill 3 would examine the program weights and funding requirements under the Quality Basic Education Act to issue grants that benefit students in poverty. Using funds appropriated by the Georgia General Assembly, the State Board of Education (BOE) would issue grant funding to local units of administration for programming geared towards these students in need. Under HB 3, students in poverty would include students whose family unit is enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and/or the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, students who are experiencing homelessness, students in foster care or migrant students.

For more information on HB3, please click <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63471>

To watch the hearing on HB3 - <https://youtu.be/vUiXAQ53dvk>

Opinion: Georgia students living in poverty left behind in Kemp's plan, by Maureen Downey, The Atlanta-Journal Constitution, February 1, 2022.

<https://www.ajc.com/education/get-schooled-blog/opinion-georgia-students-living-in-poverty-left-behind-in-kemps-plan/4DLUXUY36FGYPGKYHTNSWFH73I/>

Assessing Education Funding and Legislative Priorities

In a thought-provoking piece titled “State of Education Funding (2023): Opportunity is Knocking,” authored by Stephen Owens from the GBPI on January 26, 2023, the current status of education funding is examined. The article can be accessed here: [State of Education Funding \(2023\): Opportunity is Knocking](#)

Representative Viola Davis shares her perspective on the importance of prioritizing underfunded schools in an op-ed titled “Governor, State School Chief must make underfunded schools top priority.” Her article can be found here: OP/ED: [Governor, State School Chief must make underfunded schools top priority](#)

Fiscal Note for House Bill 3 (LC 491046) -

[file:///C:/Users/Davis/Downloads/LC%2049%201046%20Complete%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Davis/Downloads/LC%2049%201046%20Complete%20(1).pdf)

Article: Rep. Sandra Scott introduces 'Support Students Living in Poverty'

https://www.news-daily.com/news/rep-sandra-scott-introduces-support-students-living-in-poverty-act/article_9482e386-7517-11eb-b002-177663218c80.html

[Senate Bill 233 \(SB233\)](#), known as ‘The Georgia Promise Scholarship Act’, is a subject of discussion. It primarily targets schools with a majority of Black students and those with a majority of students living in poverty. The projected cost of SB233, upon full implementation, is conservatively estimated at an additional \$150 million. However, it is important to note that this voucher system would divert public funds from schools that cater to these specific student populations.

Considering the welfare of Georgia’s children, state lawmakers are urged to reject SB 233. Instead, they should explore alternative legislation such as SB 284 or HB 668, which propose additional funding for students who are most in need. It is worth mentioning that House Bill 3 aligns with this alternative approach.

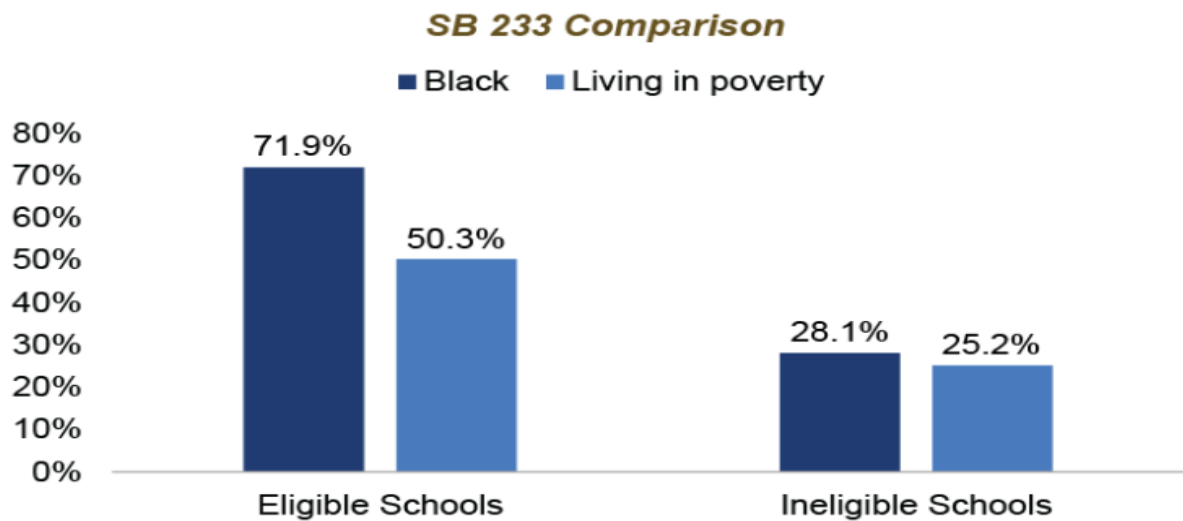
[Senate Bill 233 \(SB233\)](#) – ‘The Georgia Promise Scholarship Act’ - Targets Majority Black Schools and Those with Majority Students in Poverty:

- [Senate Bill 233](#) is conservatively projected to **cost an additional \$150 million** upon full implementation.
- This voucher would divert public funds from schools serving majority Black students and majority living in poverty.

- State lawmakers concerned about Georgia's children should reject [SB 233](#) and consider legislation like [SB 284](#) or [HB 668](#) which provide additional funding for students who need it most.
- [House Bill 3](#) included.



Rep. Doreen Carter, Rep. Kim Schofield, Rep. Viola Davis, and Rep. Sandra Scott



GEORGIA BUDGET & POLICY INSTITUTE  GBPI.org

<https://gbpi.org/bill-analysis-sb-233/>

House Bill 712 - Ensuring Adequate Funding for School Transportation

House Bill 712 (HB 712), spearheaded and authored by Rep. Viola Davis, aims to secure full funding for transportation in school districts across Georgia. This legislation seeks to amend Part 5 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A., which pertains to program weights and funding requirements under Quality Basic Education (QBE). Its purpose is to increase funding specially designated for transportation throughout the state of Georgia. For more detailed information on HB 712, please visit: [HB 712 Legislation](#)

House Bill 712 focuses on securing full funding for **transportation** in school districts across Georgia. This is a critical issue, as inadequate funding for transportation has been a recurring problem, particularly affecting rural districts. HB 712 would address this issue by increasing funding for transportation to just **over 1 billion dollars**, ensuring that students can travel safely to and from school without imposing financial burdens on local districts.

Fiscal Note House Bill 712 (LC 49 1079) -

[file:///C:/Users/Davis/Downloads/LC%2049%201079%20Complete%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Davis/Downloads/LC%2049%201079%20Complete%20(1).pdf)

Georgia Lawmakers Say the State “Must Update the QBE Formula and Fully Fund Education” by The Georgia Virtue. January 2, 2024.

<https://www.thegeorgiavirtue.com/opinion-columns/georgia-lawmakers-say-the-state-must-update-the-qbe-formula-and-fully-fund-education/>

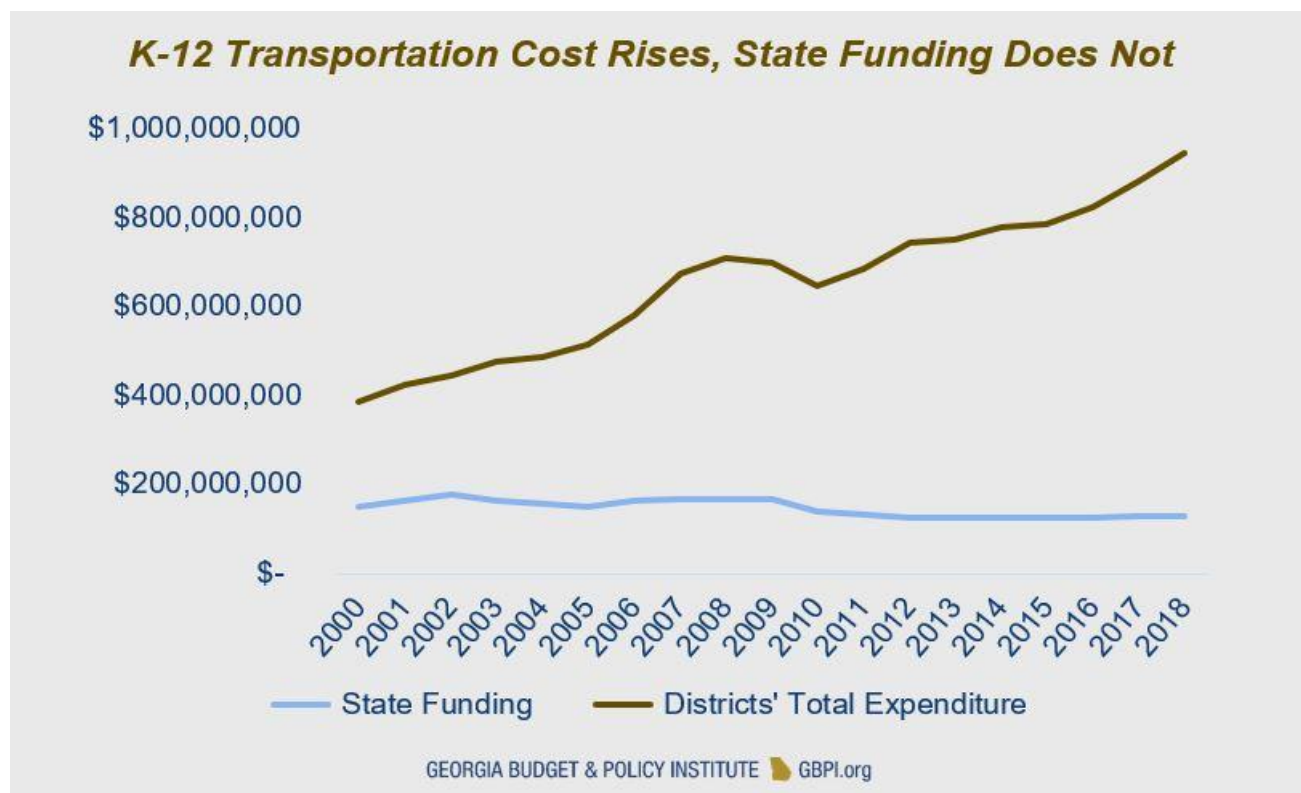
Addressing Transportation Funding Shortcomings in Georgia

Georgia has a recurring issue of inadequately funding pupil transportation, which poses safety concerns and imposes significant financial burdens on local school districts. According to the Georgia Budget and Public Institute (GBPI):

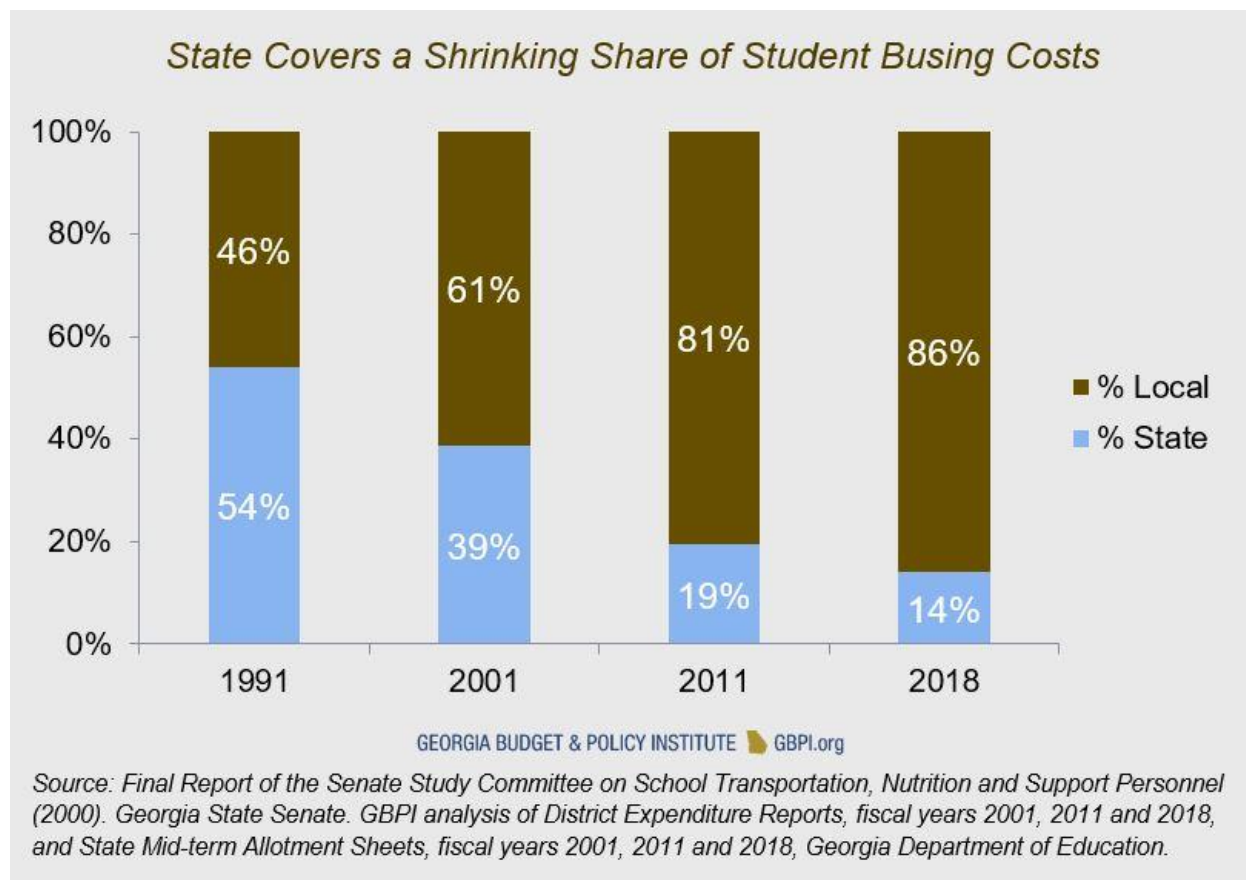
1. With no additional money planned for student transportation, local districts are again left to address the issue with little help, especially troublesome for **rural school districts**.
2. One culprit for the rising transportation costs is the failure to account for the true needs of Georgia’s schools. The Quality Basic Education (QBE) formula traditionally funds pay for driver salaries and school bus replacement. Since FY 2011 bus replacement has been financed outside QBE through the sale of bonds.

3. State policymakers shifted the responsibility for paying health insurance costs for non-teaching staff from the state to local school districts.¹³¹ This decreased further state education spending, leaving districts to cover the cost.
4. School districts saddled with health insurance and higher transportation costs, once carried by the state, are tapping money once used for other school needs. Rising fuel prices and the need for more drivers as enrollment grows also eat at local budgets. Meanwhile, state lawmakers declined to come up with enough money to replace the state's aging bus fleet.

These circumstances highlight the pressing need to address transportation funding inadequacies in Georgia's education system. [HB 712](#) serves as a crucial step toward rectifying this issue and ensuring that school districts receive the necessary financial support to provide safe and efficient transportation for students.



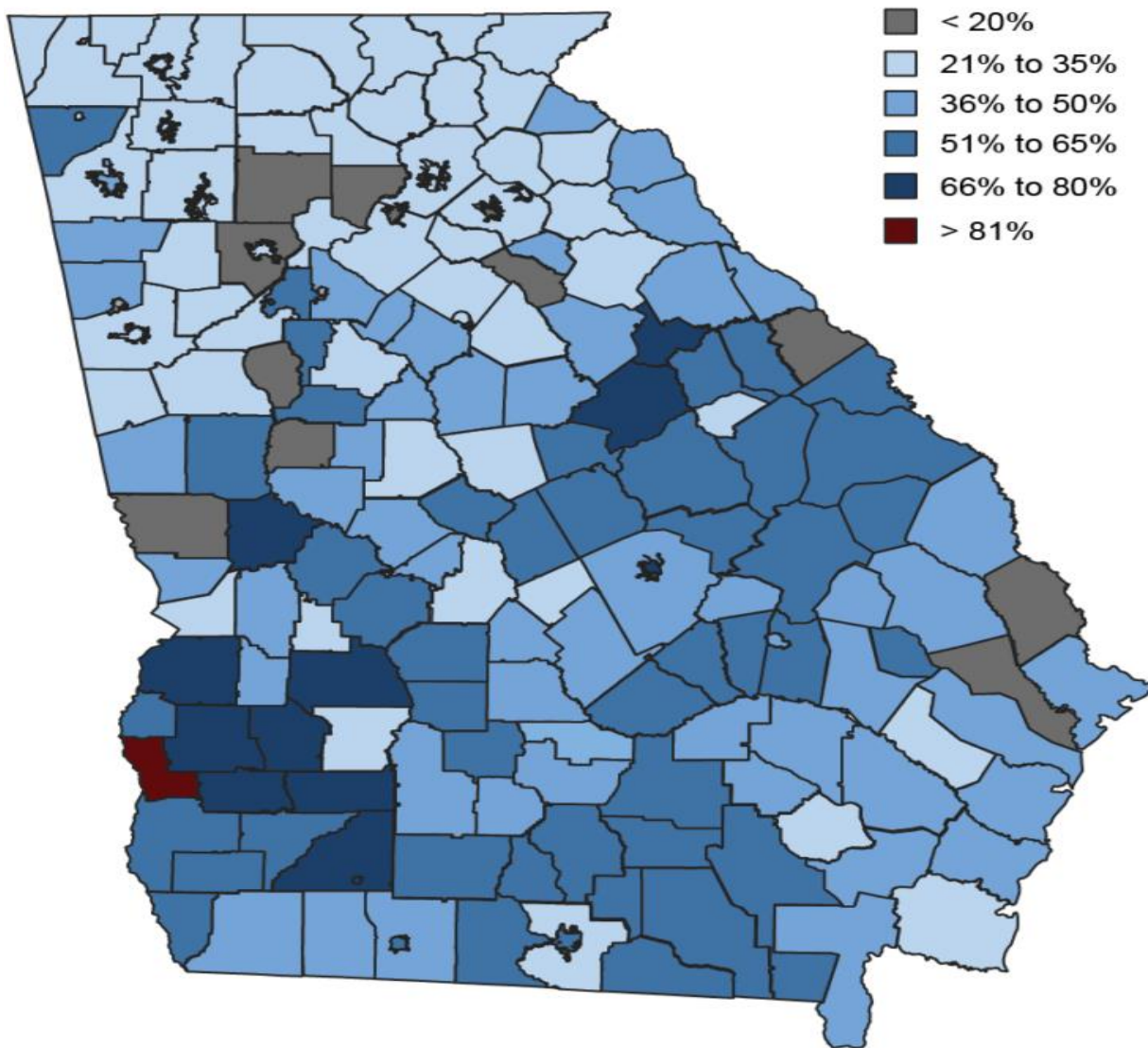
<https://gbpi.org/georgia-lawmakers-should-renew-their-commitment-to-student-transportation/>



- Georgia has one of the highest overall rates of child poverty in the nation and simultaneously provides schools with no specific funding to support these children—one of only six such states.[\[2\]](#)
- Georgia must join the rest of the nation and create an Opportunity Weight in the school funding formula to specifically address the needs of students living in poverty. This type of funding would help ensure these students are given comparable opportunities to their wealthier peers.
- As of 2020, Georgia had more children (aged 0-17) in poverty than 43 other states.[\[3\]](#) According to the most recent Georgia KIDS COUNT Data, 20 percent of children in Georgia live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level.[\[4\]](#) Black and Brown children are much more likely to live in poverty than their

white and Asian American or Pacific Islander (AAPI) neighbors. The map below shows the distribution of students in poverty by school district.

Percentage of Students Living in Poverty by District



Source: Governor's Office of Student Achievement. 2020-21 Direct Certification (District Level)

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<https://gbpi.org/state-of-education-funding-2023-opportunity-is-knocking/>

Renewing the Commitment to Student Transportation in Georgia

For a comprehensive analysis on the importance of renewing the commitment to student transportation in Georgia, please refer to the article titled, "Georgia Lawmakers Should

Renew Their Commitment to Student Transportation,” available at [Georgia Lawmakers Should Renew Their Commitment to Student Transportation](#).

Representative Roger Bruce: [House Bill 238 \(HB 238\)](#): Enhancing School Bus Safety

[House Bill 238 \(HB 238\)](#), authored by **Representative Roger Bruce**, represents a proactive and innovative approach to improving school transportation safety through the establishment of a five-year pilot program. This program, championed by Georgia's State Representative Roger Bruce, incentivizes local school districts to implement adult school bus monitors, enhancing student safety and fostering appropriate conduct during transit. These monitors ensure a safer and more conducive environment during transit by addressing disruptive behaviors and allowing drivers to focus on operating the vehicle.

The legislation was born from the efforts of Renaissance Middle School students, whose firsthand experiences on school buses inspired them to craft a solution addressing bus safety challenges. The students, part of the group "Kids With Strong Opinions Inc./Girl Kode," led by DeLonn Brown, collaborated with Representative Roger Bruce and legislative attorneys to design a bill that ensures school bus drivers can remain focused on the road while bus monitors provide additional supervision to prevent fights and other disruptive behaviors. Collaborating with Representative Bruce and legislative attorneys, these students helped craft a solution that prioritizes safety and fosters accountability.

HB 238 directs the Department of Education to create model duties, protocols, and procedures for bus monitors, ensuring consistency and effectiveness. Participating districts will receive grants to support implementation, with periodic assessments and reporting to gauge the program's impact. The bill also allows for state-level waivers to optimize program outcomes and facilitate the adoption of best practices.

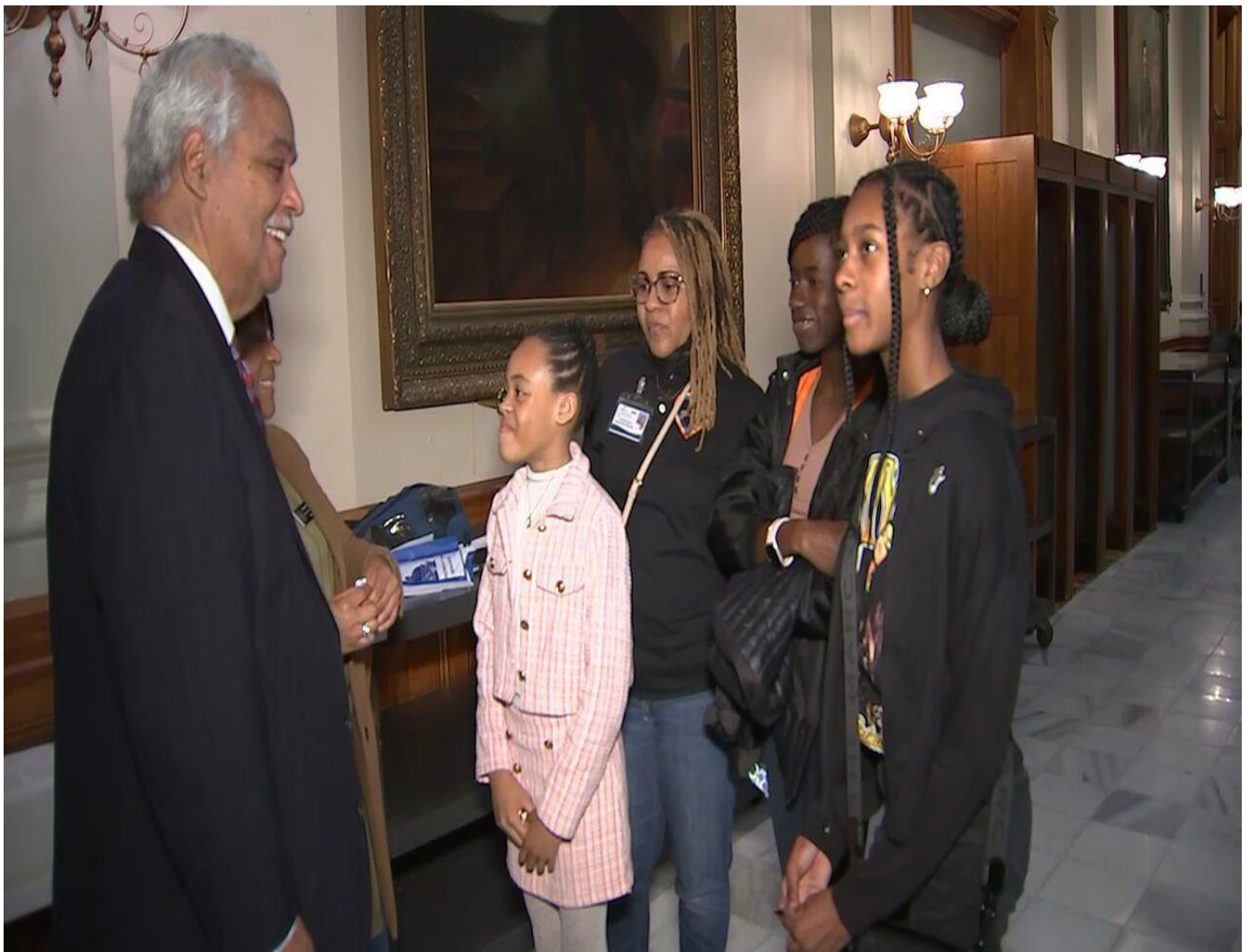
This pilot program underscores the importance of student-driven legislative action, showing how young voices can influence meaningful policy change. By prioritizing safety and collaboration, HB 238 not only addresses immediate concerns but also sets the stage for long-term improvements in school transportation systems across Georgia. By addressing immediate safety concerns and setting the groundwork for lasting improvements, HB 238 exemplifies how community-driven solutions can inspire civic participation and enhance public trust in the legislative process.

HB 238, championed by Representative Roger Bruce, serves as a powerful example of good legislation, highlighting the role of student engagement in crafting policies that benefit communities statewide. This initiative demonstrates that thoughtful, evidence-based

solutions can enhance safety, improve student experiences, and inspire civic participation at all ages.

For more on this impactful legislation:

- *"Students write bill that would place adult monitors on school buses"* by Tom Jones, WSB-TV, February 2, 2023. [Read here](#)
- *"Metro Atlanta students meet with Governor, seeking approval of bus monitor bill"* by WSBTV.com News Staff, March 17, 2023. [Read here](#)



House Bill 238: Representative Roger Bruce with Students



House Bill 899 (HB899) - School Violence Reduction and Safety Act

To bolster school safety and reduce incidents of violence in Georgia's public schools, we have drafted the "School Violence Reduction and Safety Funds Act." This legislation would amend the QBE Act to allocate funds for enhancing security measures and creating a safer learning environment. The drafted legislation includes program weight adjustments, funding assistance, eligibility criteria and maximum funding limits to ensure that schools can effectively reduce violence and improve safety (See HB 899 - LC 49 1555). The fiscal note for HB 899 indicates that the proposed measures will require an estimate of \$103 million. Governor Kemp allocated \$104 million for school security and safety.

<https://georgiarecorder.com/briefs/governors-latest-dip-into-states-surplus-aims-to-provide-school-safety-and-a-holiday-raise-for-state-workers/>

House Bill 900 (HB900) - Refugee and International Students Equalization Fund (RISE)

The legislation, “Refugee and International Students Equalization Fund (RISE),” would provide essential resources and support to refugees and international students in our public schools. This program would offer funding and wrap-around services to ensure students’ success by addressing their unique needs, including education, translators, housing, medical care, counseling, nutrition, and transportation (See HB 900 - LC 49 1549). The fiscal note for HB 900 provides insight into the anticipated cost associated with its implementation. The fiscal note was requested.

Addressing Child Poverty and Funding Disparities

Child poverty remains a pressing concern in Georgia, with one of the highest rates in the nation. Surprisingly, the state provides no specific funding to support these children, making it one of only six states lacking such provisions.

To address this issue and ensure equitable opportunities for students living in poverty, Georgia should align with the rest of the nation and incorporate an Opportunity Weight into the school funding formula. This targeted funding approach would cater to the unique needs of students facing economic hardship, enabling them to access comparable opportunities to their wealthier peers.

As of 2020, Georgia had a larger population of children (aged 0-17) living in poverty compared to 43 other states. According to recent data from Georgia KIDS COUNT, 20 percent of children in the state reside in families with incomes below the federal poverty level. It is important to note that children from Black and Brown communities are disproportionately affected by poverty compared to their white and Asian American or Pacific Islander (AAPI) counterparts. The distribution of students in poverty, by school district, can be visualized through the provided map.

These statistics emphasize the urgency of addressing child poverty and funding disparities in Georgia, advocating for proactive measures that ensure every student has an equal opportunity to thrive.



Representative Imani Barnes



Representative Imani Barnes at the Capitol

House Bill 510 - Ensuring Healthy Start for Georgia Students

House Bill 510 (HB 510), introduced by Rep. Imani Barnes, aims to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students enrolled in Georgia public schools. Additionally, the bill promotes the utilization of locally sourced Georgia-grown food in school cafeterias. This legislation proposes amendments to Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A., which focuses on elementary and secondary education. It encompasses provisions for offering breakfast and lunch programs to all public-school students, ensuring no-cost meals for students qualifying under federal and state guidelines for reduced-price meals. The bill also outlines the incorporation of school breakfast programs within the framework of the Quality Basic Education Act. For a more comprehensive understanding of HB 510, please refer to the following link: [**HB510 Legislation**](#)

An informative news story on Channel 11 provides further insight into the positive impact of this Georgia bill. To learn more, please visit: [**News Story on Channel 11**](#)

Update: Governor Kemp has vetoed the allocation of funds in the budget intended for providing low-cost breakfast and lunch to Georgia students. This veto represents a reduction of \$6,333,713 million in state general funds of the Department of Education allocated for student nutrition. More details on this veto and related statements can be found in the HB19-FY 2024 Budget – Line-Item Veto and Disregard Letter and Statements. Please refer to the following link for further information: [**HB19-FY 2024 Budget- Line Item Veto and Disregard Letter and Statements**](#)

The first question at hand is: What steps can be taken to minimize resource disparities and promote equitable funding for public education and post-secondary education in Georgia?

Regarding taxation, the DeKalb County Board of Education, along with Fulton County and Cobb County, is considered tax-rich, classifying them as “donor counties” in terms of education funding. Conversely, Gwinnett County is rated as tax-poor and falls under the category of a “receiver county.”

Representatives Viola Davis, Sandra Scott, and Kim Schofield, along with the collaboration of fellow legislators, have compiled a list of five key points to update the Quality Basic Education (QBE) formula. Their aim is to draft legislation that improves the overall QBE formula for the benefit of all students in Georgia. DeKalb County Board of Education Chairman Dijon DaCosta and Board member Dr. Joyce Morley have also contributed to this list, working towards the betterment of education in the state. The list of five key points to update the QBE formula will help improve the formula for **the “Greater Good of All Georgia’s Students.”**

To have equity in funding, we need to update the QBE formula:

In order to achieve equitable funding, it is imperative to make necessary updates to the Quality Basic Education (QBE) formula, taking into account the following key considerations:

1. **Support Students Living in Poverty (HB3):** A crucial initiative led by Rep. Sandra Scott, in which Rep. Viola Davis proudly serves as a co-sponsor. This legislation has undergone a comprehensive fiscal evaluation, revealing its potential to allocate an additional \$300 million in funding to districts with a high concentration of students living in poverty.
2. **Transportation:** Recognizing the pressing issue of underfunding in transportation for school districts across Georgia, Rep. Viola Davis has authored a bill to address this concern. Rep. Viola Davis lent support to HB712, alongside Leader James Beverly and Chairman Billy Mitchell. Notably, Rep. Sandra Scott, Rep. Kim Schofield, and Rep. Jasmine Clark have also endorsed this legislation.
3. **Increase Funding for Districts with Immigrants and Refugees:** To provide comprehensive support services for districts with significant populations of immigrants and refugees, it is imperative to augment their funding. Currently, the DeKalb County School System hosts a substantial number of immigrants and refugees, particularly in locations like Clarkston, with over 70% representation. We are in the process of developing legislation to address this critical need.
4. **Enhance State Funding for Safety and Security:** Recognizing the alarming rise in gun violence and mass shootings, we are actively working on drafting legislation to increase state funding for safety and security measures in schools.
5. **Regular Updates to Grant Allocation:** In order to ensure fairness in the distribution of Equalization Grants and Sparsity Grants, it is crucial to review and update the list of districts eligible to receive these grants every 2-4 years. Additionally, it is imperative to remove DeKalb County from the list of “donor counties,” as it no longer aligns with the current circumstances and needs of the district.

-
6. **Bridge the Gap Between Charter Public Schools, Traditional Public Schools, and Private Schools:** To foster equitable funding for public education, it is essential to find common ground between charter public schools and traditional public schools, while differentiating them from private schools and voucher systems. A comprehensive understanding of the similarities and differences in governance, accountability, and funding structures among these educational models is vital. By creating spaces for dialogue and research on these topics, policymakers and stakeholders can work together to advocate for fully funding public schools and ensure that all students, regardless of school type, have access to quality education.

By addressing these critical areas and updating the QBE formula accordingly, we can strive towards a more equitable and robust education funding system for the benefit of all students in Georgia.



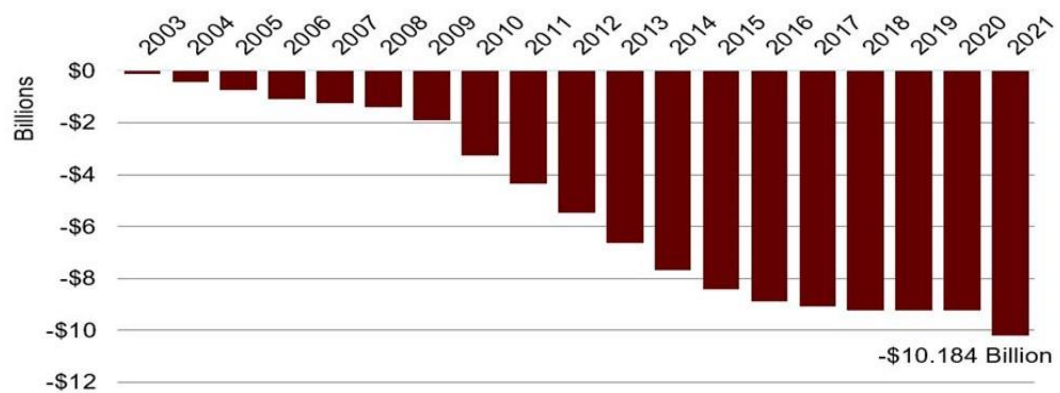
Representative Viola Davis, Representative Sandra Scott, and Speaker Jon Burns with Student Pages.



Rep. Viola Davis, Speaker Jon Burns with a Student Page.

COVID-19 GHDC SUBCOMMITTEE – BUDGET PROPOSAL – **DECREASE CORPORATE WELFARE**

*Years of Underfunding Schools Exacts a Toll: Cumulative Shortfall
FY 2003-2021*



GEORGIA BUDGET & POLICY INSTITUTE GBPI.org

Source: Georgia Department of Education. State allotment sheet FY 2003 – 2021.

Georgia School Leaders Overwhelmingly Disagree with the Claim That Schools are Overfunded

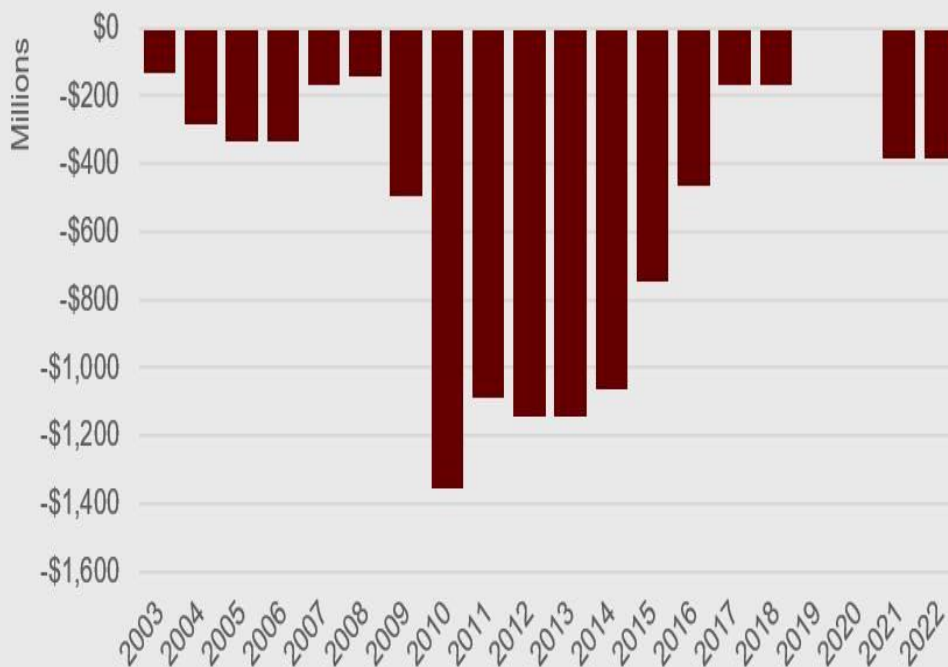


Note: Zero participants answered "Strongly Agree"

Source: Georgia Budget and Policy Institute's 2021 School District Survey.

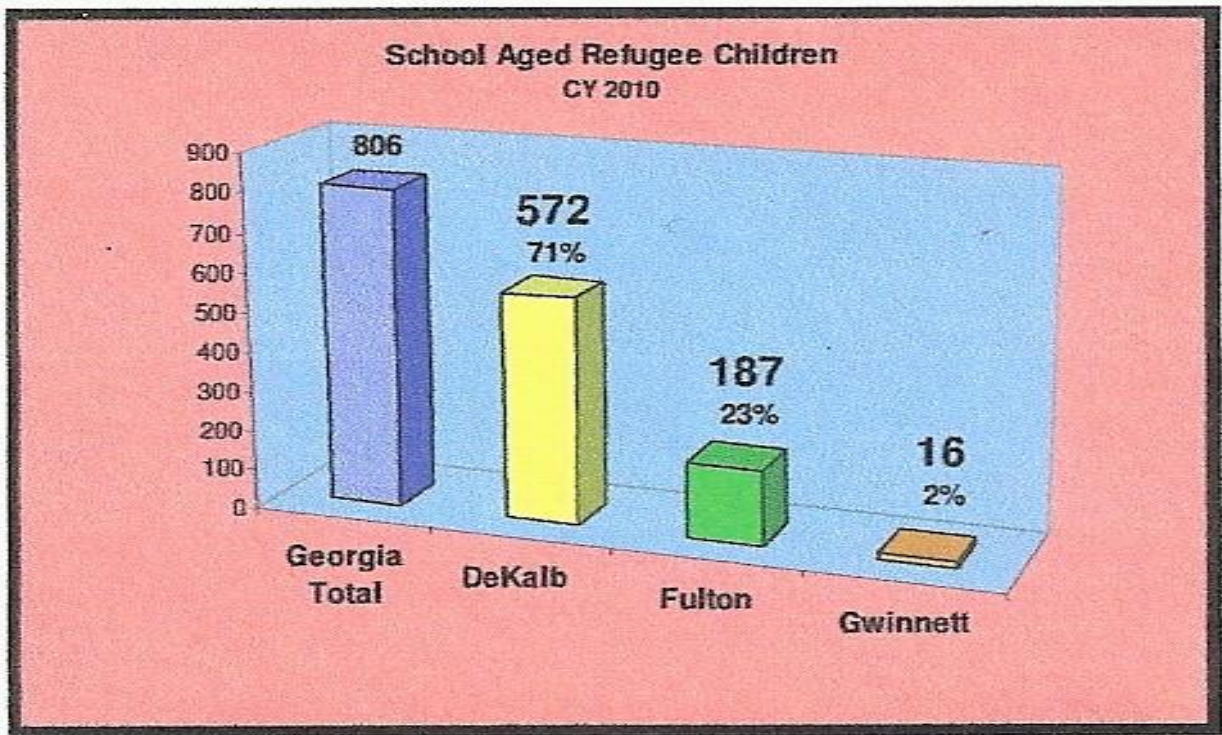
GEORGIA BUDGET & POLICY INSTITUTE  GBPI.org

Two Decades of Underfunding: Cuts to K-12 Education FY 2003 - FY 2022



Source: Georgia Department of Education. State mid-term allotment sheets FY 2003 – 2021, initial allotment FY 2022.

GEORGIA BUDGET & POLICY INSTITUTE  GBPI.org



Graphic from a presentation given in DeKalb County on Refugees & Immigrants

Economics:

Promoting Economic Development in Underserved and Under-resourced Communities

To foster a thriving economy in the state of Georgia, we must prioritize the following measures:

1. **Equity:** We need to ensure that underserved and under-resourced communities have access to the necessary funding and resources to overcome the challenges they face. This includes addressing issues such as banking and credit deserts, limited access to pharmacies and healthcare agencies, and food insecurity and food deserts.

-
2. **Economic Development:** It is essential to secure funding for the growth and expansion of small and medium-sized local businesses. Implementing a local action plan that encourages shopping locally can significantly support these businesses. Additionally, we should actively promote new business development across all industries.
 3. **Education:** It is crucial to fully fund schools throughout Georgia that have been historically underfunded for over two decades. While politicians may boast about meeting the requirements of the outdated and over 30-year-old Quality Basic Education (QBE) formula, they fail to mention that education in Georgia has been underfunded by \$10 billion since 2003. QBE has been fully funded only three times in the past 21 years, while over \$400 million in corporate welfare has been directed outside the state.

To address the issue of food deserts specifically, Representative Sandra Scott has drafted [House Bill 321 \(HB321\)](#), known as the “**Healthy Food Program Development Act.**” This legislation aims to establish a state program that expands access to healthy foods in communities facing food deserts. HB 321 seeks to amend Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, outlining provisions for the Department of Human Services. The bill includes various benefits, requirements, and the appointment of a grocery ambassador. For further information on this proposed legislation, please refer to the following links:

- [HB 321: Link to the official legislative document](#)
- Georgia Virtue article on the bill: [Link to the article](#)

By actively pursuing these initiatives and enacting relevant legislation, we can create an environment that supports economic growth and fosters equal opportunities for all communities across Georgia.



Visit to the [Georgia Ports Authority](#): Representative Viola Davis, Representative Sandra Scott, Representative Carl Gilliard, and Representative Doreen Carter in front row, Port Authority Governmental Affairs Director Lee Beckman, and Dr. Rickie C. Keys in back row.



Georgians for Resource Equity



At the request of **State Representative Carl W. Gilliard (House District 162)**, a distinguished group of Georgia State Legislators visited Carver State Bank to meet with **Carver President Robert E. James**. The visiting delegation included **State Representatives Sandra G. Scott (House District 76)**, **Doreen Carter (House District 93)** and **Viola Davis (House District 87)**. They were accompanied by **Dr. Rickie C. Keys**, a nationally recognized diversity and inclusion advocate, public health professional, social scientist, and health inequities analyst. https://www.savannahtribune.com/articles/georgia-leaders-visit-carver-state-bank/?fbclid=IwAR3OKrHZhpNOufMWpw-5_QBjWjjG1B9YITsOYhxjBaiUJvc7jpkupXMoWgg

Georgians for Resource Equity

**It's Here
5th ANNUAL
GEORGIA ECONOMIC
EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT**

Guest Speaker
Dr. Richie Keys

Guest Panelist
Rep. Doreen Carter

Guest Panelist
Rep. Viola Davis

Guest Panelist
Rep. Sandra Scott

**Georgia Rental Assistance Program
Georgia Dream Program
Georgia Port Authority
Georgia Department of Revenue Deputy Director**

**Free Gas Cards to the first 50 Attendees
from the 10:00 am - 12:00 pm Session
Career Opportunities and More**

**SAVANNAH TECHNICAL COLLEGE
5717 WHITE BLUFF ROAD
SAVANNAH, GA 31405**

**MAY 3, 2022
10:00 am - 3:00 pm**

[House Bill 433 \(HB 433\)](#) - “Equity Impact Act” – introduced by Representative Kim Schofield, aims to amend Chapter 1 of Title 28 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated. This legislation proposes the inclusion of equity impact statements for policy areas related to race, socioeconomics, health, and other relevant factors. It mandates that such statements be prepared and attached to all proposed legislation impacting these policy areas. The bill outlines the required content, procedures, surveys, reports, and compliance measures for state departments and agencies. Additionally, it includes legislative findings, declarations, and limitations. For further details, please refer to the official legislative document: **[Link to HB 433](#)**

Although **[HB 433](#)** did not cross over in 2023, it serves as a proof of concept for the potential of racially equitable policy making, as acknowledged by the Georgia Budget and Policy Institute (GBPI). By incorporating racial equity impact statements, this legislation has the potential to enhance economic development in underserved and under-resourced areas. To learn more about the impact of legislation during the crossover day in 2023, including modest safety net reforms, tax rebates, and potential budget implications, please refer to the GBPI article: **[Link to GBPI Article](#)** –

<https://gbpi.org/crossover-day-2023-modest-safety-net-reforms-advance-tax-rebates-and-school-vouchers-create-potential-budget-holes/>

[House Bill 259 \(HB 259\)](#) - introduced by Representative Kim Schofield – proposes an amendment to Part 1 of Article 4 of Chapter 2 of Title 32 of the Official Code of Georgia

Annotated. The bill aims to require the publication of the Department of Transportation’s disparity study, along with a summary of the department’s effort to increase minority business participation in department contracts. It provides definitions, addresses related matters, and repeals conflicting law. For more information, please consult the official legislative document: [Link to HB 259](#)

[House Bill 262](#) - “Georgia Racial Equity in Agriculture Act” - focuses on agricultural matters and seeks to establish the Office of Equity in Agriculture. This bill proposes amendments to Title 2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated. It outlines the purpose of the Office of Equity in Agriculture, provisions for training, the establishment of the Georgia Farmers Council, and related matters. To review the specific details of HB 262, please refer to the official legislative document: [Link to HB 262](#)



The Georgia Legislative Black Caucus (GLBC) is embarking on a “**Black Farmers Tour**” across the Southeast to visit Black family-owned farms and explore ways to enhance their success - <https://www.41nbc.com/georgia-legislative-black-caucus-launches-black-farmers-tour-to-support-farmers-of-color/>

Georgia Legislative Black Caucus renews fight to bring much-needed support for Black farmers by Itoro N. Umontuen, May 17, 2023, with the Atlanta Voice -

<https://theatlantavoice.com/georgia-legislative-black-caucus-begins-quest-to-bring-long-needed-support-for-black-farmers/>



Interstate Compact Legislation

Given my background as a former Commissioned Officer in the US Army and my familial connection to veterans, I, along with Rep. Kim Schofield and Rep. Sandra Scott are deeply committed to supporting our soldiers and their families. One area of focus is ensuring smooth transitions for military spouses. Interstate compacts play a crucial role in facilitating these transitions, not only for military spouses but also for individuals moving to Georgia with professional licenses from other states that are part of the compacts.

[House Bill 154 \(HB 154\)](#) - “**Cosmetology Licensure Compact**” – proposes revisions to certain licensing provisions and grants the State Board of Cosmetology and Barbers the authority to administer the compact in Georgia. The bill also enables the board to conduct national background checks, establish eligibility conditions, and address other relevant matters. For detailed information on HB 154, please refer to the official legislative document. **[Link to HB 154](#)**

To gain insights into the hearing on this legislation (HB 154), we invite you to watch the recorded hearing through the following link: **[Link to HB 154 Hearing](#)**

[House Bill 152 \(HB 152\)](#) – “**Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact House**” - focuses on education and seeks to adopt the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact. The bill provides a

short title, outlines the purpose and policy of the compact, and establishes licensure qualifications, requirements, and definitions. It further establishes the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact Commission, specifies its membership and duties, and addresses matters related to its powers, organization, and operations. Oversight, enforcement, and dispute resolution mechanisms are also covered. For a comprehensive understanding of HB 152, please consult the official legislative document: [Link to HB 152](#)

[House Bill 153 \(HB 153\)](#) – “**Interstate Massage Compact**” pertains to massage therapy practice and proposes Georgia's participation in the "Interstate Massage Compact." The bill grants authorization to the Georgia Board of Massage Therapy to administer the compact within the state. It includes definitions, establishes conditions, outlines eligibility requirements, and addresses related matters. For specific details on HB 153, please refer to the official legislative document: [Link to HB 153](#)

By embracing these interstate compacts through the enactment of HB154, HB152, and HB153, we can create a more streamlined and supportive environment for military spouses and individuals relocating to Georgia with professional licenses from other states. These compacts serve to enhance opportunities and remove unnecessary barriers, ensuring a smooth transition and integration into our state’s workforce.



Representative Viola Davis and Representative Sandra Scott at a Protest -
<https://georgiarecorder.com/2021/03/02/legislation-to-restrict-georgians-voting-access-draws-angry-protests/>

Voting Legislation

Senate Bill 202 (SB 202): Repeal, Revise, Restore

Senate Bill 202: Repeal the Law, Revise the Legislation, and Restore the Voting Rights of Georgians.



Photo Appeared in New York Times – Representatives Schofield, Davis, & Scott

Senate Bill 202 (SB 202) - The U.S. Justice Department announced that it filed a lawsuit against the State of Georgia, the Georgia Secretary of State, and the Georgia State Election Board over the recent voting procedures adopted by Georgia Senate Bill 202, which was signed into law in March 2021. The United States' complaint challenges provisions of Senate Bill 202 under Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-files-lawsuit-against-state-georgia-stop-racially-discriminatory>

Election Integrity reported [Senate Bill 202](https://www.election-integrity.org/sb-202): Makes it Harder for American Citizens to Cast a Ballot, Hyper-Criminalizes Voting, Encourages Vigilante Voter Caging, and Centralizes Power Over Elections in the Hands of Governing Party - <https://www.election-integrity.org/sb-202>

[House Bill 941 \(HB 941\)](#): Drafted by Representative Donna McLeod in Session 2021-2022 - A BILL to be entitled an Act to comprehensively revise elections and voting by repealing Act No. 9 (Senate Bill No. 202) approved on March 25, 2021 (Ga. L. 2021, p. 14); to amend Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the O.C.G.A., relating to elections and primaries generally, so as to revise certain definitions; to amend Chapter 35 of Title 36 of the O.C.G.A., relating to home rule powers, so as to repeal the delay of reapportionment of municipal corporation election districts when census numbers are delayed; to amend Title 50 of the O.C.G.A., relating to general provisions regarding state government, so as to repeal certain limitations on the submission and suspension of emergency rules by the State Election Board; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes. <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/61215>

The Urban League of Greater Atlanta (Atlanta, GA) revealed their first “State of Black Georgia” report. ULGA Supports [HB941](#) a bill which would completely repeal the state’s voting law Senate Bill 202 — even provisions that authorize ballot drop boxes and mandate a second Saturday of early voting statewide. The legislation would also roll back parts of the law, such as new ID requirements for absentee voting and the ability for the state to replace county election boards. Please review page 110 under Civic Engagement for HB 941- <https://ulgatl.org/wp-content/uploads/SOBG-Report-V8.2-min.pdf>

[House Bill 1096 \(HB 1096\)](#): Drafted by Representative Beth Moore in Session 2021-2022 - A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to primaries and elections generally, so as to provide for drop boxes for use in returning absentee ballots; to provide for locations; to provide for requirements and operation; to provide for ballot collection; to provide for related matters; to provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes. <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/61489>

[House Bill 77 \(HB 77\)](#) - Drafted by Representative Roger Bruce in Session 2021-2022 - A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Part 1 of Article 11 of Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general provisions regarding preparation for and conduct of primaries and elections, so as to provide that the election superintendent of a county may permit any elector of the county to vote in any precinct of the county which

such elector chooses in a primary, election, or runoff under certain conditions; to provide for certain notices; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes. <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/58895>

House Bill 1356 (HB 1356) - Drafted by Representative Bee Nguyen in Session 2021-2022 - A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to primaries and elections generally, so as to provide for disqualification of persons to serve as poll watchers under certain circumstances; to provide that poll watchers shall not view or attempt to view how an elector votes or has voted his or her ballot; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes. <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/62112>

House Bill 1612 (HB 1612) - Drafted by Representative Bee Nguyen in Session 2021-2022 - A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to primaries and elections generally, so as to provide for an additional form of identification for voting; to provide for related matters; to provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes. <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63234>

House Bill 121 (HB 121) - Drafted by Representative Bee Nguyen in Session 2021-2022 - A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to primaries and elections generally, to eliminate certain electors list maintenance activities; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes. <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/58989>

House Bill 113 - Drafted by Representative Kimberly Alexander in Session 2021-2022 - A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to primaries and elections generally, to provide for same day registration and voting; to provide for procedures and notices; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes. <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/58960>

Information to Review:

<https://fairfight.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/TOP-50-Reasons-Why-SB202-Is-Harmful-to-Voters.pdf>

<https://www.ajc.com/politics/democrats-seek-repeal-of-georgia-voting-law-including-parts-they-like/ZXZHZE6PS5ECVMDGJA5I2F5T3I/>

***Legislation above is from Session 2021-2022.**



Rep Kim Schofield, Rep Viola Davis, and Rep Sandra Scott - Democratic State Representatives (l-r) Kim Schofield, Viola Davis, and Sandra Scott, speaking to the crowd, join demonstrators and activists during a voting rights protest at Liberty Plaza across from the Georgia State Capitol on Thursday, March 25, 2021.

Photo by Dean Hesse.



Representative Sandra Scott and Representative Viola Davis



Representative Kim Schofield, Representative Viola Davis, & Representative Sandra Scott-
<https://decaturish.com/2021/03/photos-voters-protest-senate-bill-202-georgias-new-voter-suppression-law/>

Criminal Justice Reform Legislation



“I applaud Representative Schofield, Representative Scott, and Representative Davis for taking a stand for the citizens of Georgia. We can’t swear to uphold the law and not hold law enforcement accountable when they operate outside the letter of the law. This State has a police accountability problem. We must be pro-justice and pro-accountability for everyone in this State. These three pieces of legislation are a step towards backing justice and accountability for every resident of Georgia,” said **Attorney Gerald Griggs, President of the Georgia NAACP.**

“With concerns about the cost of body-worn cameras, we have no doubt that the state can locate the funding for the protection and safety of the public and law enforcement,” said Rep. Viola Davis. “We need to pass common sense legislation to restore and rebuild public trust in law enforcement without a human tragedy being the catalyst in Georgia. Georgians need their lawmakers to put the public first to ensure police officers are preventing and protecting the public from tragedies – not causing tragedies. HB 107 would balance safety and protection for the public and law enforcement.”

[House Bill 113](#) would require police departments to provide de-escalation training to law enforcement officers. [House Bill 114](#) would authorize implicit bias training for law enforcement officers. [House Bill 115](#) would prohibit racial profiling by law enforcement officers and agencies. [House Bill 107](#) would require law enforcement agencies to provide body cameras to on-duty law enforcement officers. Further, [House Bill 112](#) would provide

additional procedures and requirements for law enforcement officers and agencies to ensure “ethical policing” in Georgia and set new standards for policing in Georgia law. It would also authorize local municipalities to create and operate citizen review boards to ensure accountability for ethical police conduct, as well as direct the attorney general to create a form for local agencies to use to record complaints alleging police misconduct and disciplinary actions for such misconduct.

For more information on [HB113](https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63721), please click <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63721>

For more information on [HB114](https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63722), please click <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63722>

For more information on [HB115](https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63723), please click <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63723>

For more information on [HB107](https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63715), please click <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63715>

For more information on [HB112](https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63720), please click <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63720>



Attorney General Gerald Griggs, President of the Georgia NAACP, Representative Viola Davis (L), Representative Kim Schofield (R), and Representative Sheila Jones

Police Accountability & Ethical Policing Press Releases/Legislation



Body Cameras Can Be a Powerful Tool. But Not All Police Forces Wear Them. The New York Times - Chief Deputy Whip State Representative **Sandra Scott**, one of the bill's sponsors, said opposition to the bill stemmed from a desire to shield police forces from accountability. "We still have officers that are doing things they should not be doing," she said. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/19/us/police-body-cameras-atlanta-cop-city.html>

<https://house-press.com/rep-sandra-scott-introduces-criminal-justice-reform-package-to-address-constituents-concerns-2/>

<https://house-press.com/rep-sandra-scott-introduces-criminal-justice-reform-package-to-address-constituents-concerns-2/>

<https://house-press.com/rep-sandra-scott-introduces-criminal-justice-reform-package-to-address-constituents-concerns-2/>

Civil Forfeiture Reform Legislation

What civil forfeiture means:

Civil asset forfeiture is a tactic used by law enforcement to seize a person's money, car, or other property—including bank accounts, businesses, houses, and jewelry—based simply on the suspicion that the property was used to commit a crime or connected to criminal activity.

These three bills are a modest change to the state's civil forfeiture system. Georgia needs a better process that protects low income and innocent people from having their property

taken, especially those who do not have access or means to obtain legal representation. This legislative package would provide greater transparency and improve the process that everyday Georgians face.

House Bill 106, or the Innocent Georgian Process Improvement Act, seeks to create a pathway for an individual to retrieve his or her vehicle that was used in a crime if the vehicle was driven by a defendant without the owner's consent
<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63714>

House Bill 109 would exempt certain types of property from seizure or forfeiture under the Uniform Civil Forfeiture Procedure Act, including property that is subject to a homestead exemption, currency totaling \$541 or less and motor vehicles worth less than \$5,000 in market value. <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63717>

House Bill 110 would require the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government to establish and maintain a tracking system and searchable public website that lists property seized by law enforcement in Georgia; law enforcement agencies would be required to report its civil seizure and forfeiture cases to the public website.
<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63718>

Please watch the hearing on HB110: <https://www.house.ga.gov/Committees/en-US/CommitteeArchives146.aspx>

What is an example of civil forfeiture?

News Stories Link on Civil Forfeiture:

<https://www.wsbtv.com/news/local/atlanta/channel-2-investigation-prompts-proposed-bills-curb-problems-with-property-seizures-by-police/YSAZRC6OOVGA3CC7HU2A56QUYI/>

<https://www.wsbtv.com/news/local/south-fulton-county/ga-police-legally-seized-cars-without-proving-wrongdoing-court-failed-report-state/6WQ72EK2HFA5DDKM6KPUHQRW4U/>

<https://newschannel9.com/news/local/civil-asset-forfeiture-in-georgia-advocates-and-law-enforcement>

Civil Forfeiture Press Releases:

<https://house-press.com/rep-sandra-scott-viola-davis-kim-schofield-introduce-legislative-package-to-address-civil-forfeiture-process/>

<https://house-press.com/rep-sandra-scott-to-present-legislation-before-two-house-subcommittees-today/>



Attorney Gerald Griggs, President of the Georgia NAACP, Representative Viola Davis, Representative Kim Schofield, and Representative Sheila Jones

Gun Safety Reform Legislation

Our hearts and thoughts go out to the victims and families affected by the frequent school shootings and mass shootings that have become all too common. It is a harrowing experience every time we turn on the TV, hoping that we won't witness another tragedy. The fear and uncertainty have taken a toll on students, teachers, and the public at large. We firmly believe that an abundance of guns is not the solution, not just in Georgia, but anywhere. The ability to carry a gun without a permit opens the door for anyone to do so. It is high time for Georgia to enact common sense gun legislation, starting with a vision for a safer future.

The pleas for common sense gun legislation continue to echo throughout Georgia and across the nation. We are simply asking for the most fundamental measures, such as responsible firearm storage, comprehensive background checks, and prohibiting individuals under the age of twenty-one from purchasing assault weapons. Georgia has the opportunity to do the right thing and pass commonsense gun legislation that prioritize public safety.

[HB224](#): “Crimes and offenses - Reporting of a lost or stolen firearm; provide.” Link to [HB224](#)

[HB366](#): “Courts - Offenses of failure to store a firearm in a secure manner; provide.” Link to [HB366](#)

[HB553](#): “Crimes and offenses - Issuance of certain risk protection orders restricting possession of firearms, ammunition, and weapons carry licenses; provide.” Link to [HB553](#)

[HB554](#): “Crimes and offenses - Furnishing of a semi-automatic assault weapon to a person under the age of 21 years; prohibit.” Link to [HB554](#)

[HB555](#): “Georgia Firearms and Weapons Act; enact.” Link to [HB555](#)

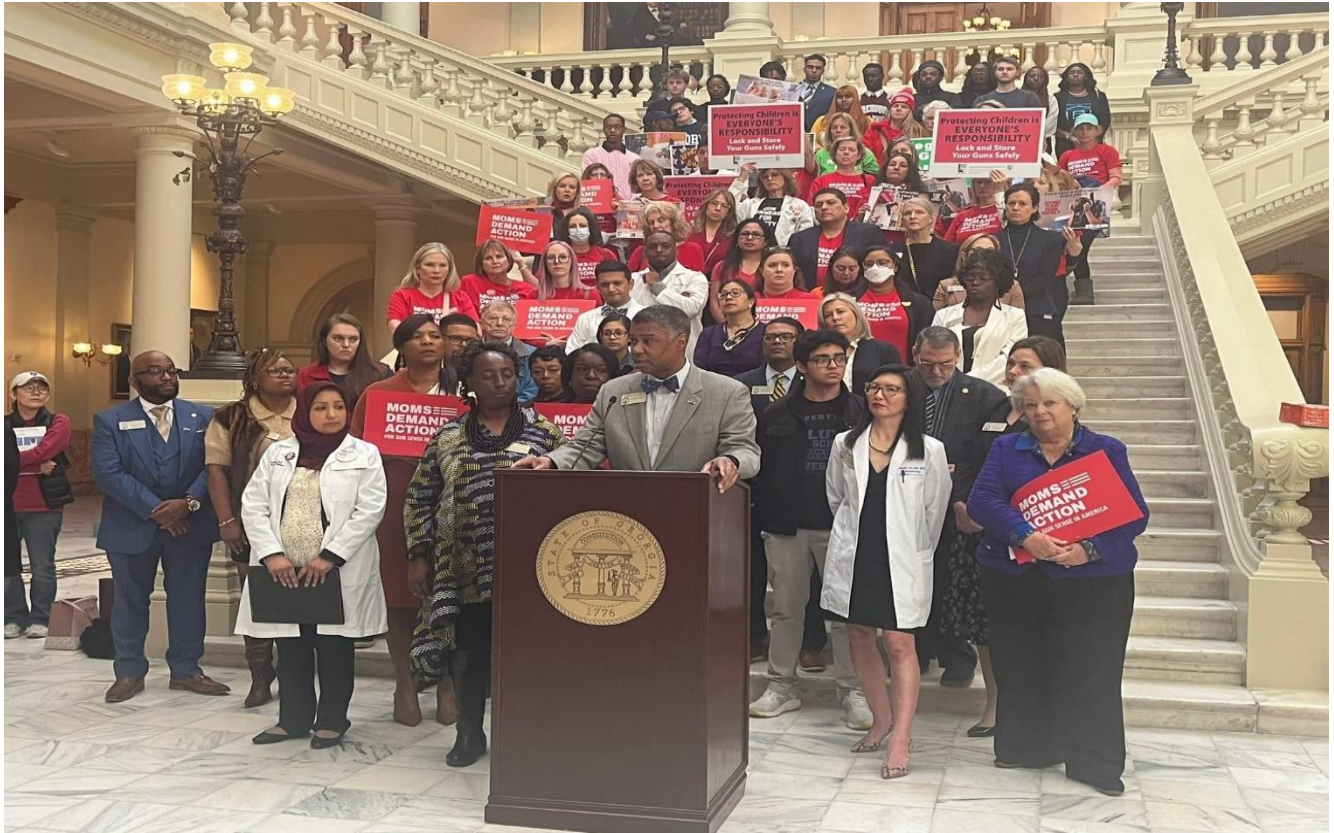
[HR56](#): “House of Representatives - Recognizing gun violence as a major public health problem and a leading cause of premature death.” Link to [HR56](#)

Representative Viola Davis’s quote: “We must pass common sense gun safety legislation to rebuild public trust, reduce fear of future mass shootings, and prioritize the safety of our communities,” stated **Rep. Viola Davis**. “Instead of solely relying on an increased police presence, lawmakers should focus on gun safety reform to prevent tragic incidents like mass shootings and homicides. As a veteran who supports the Second Amendment, I firmly believe that we can strike a balance between protecting gun owners’ rights and ensuring public safety by addressing gun violence head-on.”

Representative Kim Schofield’s quote: “My heart is grieved by the loss of three nine-year-old children and three staff members who became the newest victims in a mass shooting in Nashville,” said **Rep. Kim Schofield**. “We are 87 days into 2023, and there have been 130 mass shootings. It is a priority that we pass state laws that ensure gun safety, such as universal background checks, safe gun storage and banning AR-15 style rifles. In times like this, tragedy and senseless deaths affect us all.”

“Working Together for the Greater Good”

Gun Safety Reform Press Conference



Representative Sandra Scott's quote: "My thoughts go out to all of the victims and families of the school shooting in Nashville," said Rep. Scott. "It is hard to fathom that another horrific event happened while the country was still mourning the last shooting. Students and teachers are terrified of going to school and not knowing if they will be the next victims of gun violence. When bringing their kids to school, parents wonder if it will be the last time they see them alive. It is time for the Georgia General Assembly to protect its citizens and its children by passing gun control legislation. Let's not wait until one of Georgia's schools is the next casualty of a mass shooting."

"Working Together for the Greater Good"

“Working Together for the Greater Good”



Gun Safety Reform Bills Press Releases:

1. [Link to Press Release: Democratic Legislators Issue Statements on Midtown Mass Shooting, Urge Gun Safety Reform Legislation](#)
2. [Link to Press Release: Reps Sandra Scott, Kim Schofield, Viola Davis Condemn the Expulsion of Black Tennessee Lawmakers](#)
3. [Link to Press Release: Reps Sandra Scott, Viola Davis, Kim Schofield Issue Statements on Nashville Shooting, Urge Gun Safety Reform Legislation](#)
4. [Link to Press Release: Reps Schofield, Burnough, Scott Issue Statements on Fallen Cobb County Officers, Call for Gun Safety Legislation](#)

Gun Safety Reform Legislation and Links:

Republican Support for HB 107: Former State Patrol Commander turned lawmaker Bill Hitchens endorses a new bill sponsored by three metro Atlanta Democratic lawmakers. The bill mandates that every officer in the state wears and activates a body-

worn camera when responding to calls or during any contact with the public. [Link to Source](https://www.atlantaneewsfirst.com/2023/02/02/bill-general-assembly-would-mandate-body-cameras-police-officers-statewide/) - <https://www.atlantaneewsfirst.com/2023/02/02/bill-general-assembly-would-mandate-body-cameras-police-officers-statewide/>



Representative Sandra G. Scott featured in news report, “Devices turn firearms into instant machine guns” -

<https://youtu.be/BHznewn2mTE?si=x6u4teQ4sn1jU8WI>

Representative Sandra G. Scott featured in second news report, “Instant machine guns’ found on streets of American cities” -

<https://youtu.be/BxpJIe-mECw?si=xh6i9rvsfepVjG3N>

State Rep. Sandra Scott on Gun Legislation

<https://youtu.be/BEY3htvgH8w?si=dJQOK4R6dE0QFxmU>



Gun Safety Reform Press Conference



**Georgia's 2024 legislative session began today on January 8, 2024 – 11alive.com.
Georgia's legislative session began today with a focus on gun safety. This comes
after Rep. Sandra Scott's cousin was killed in a Forest Park shooting.**

Healthcare

In order to address the critical issues of infant and maternal mortality, improve mental healthcare and coverage, support struggling hospitals, and safeguard our healthcare workforce, we are committed to extending healthcare coverage to all Georgians through the passage of [House Bill 61 \(HB62\)](#), **Georgia Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership (HELP) Act**. Our goal is to ensure that every Georgian has access to quality healthcare. (Courtesy of the Georgia House Democratic Caucus)

According to a report by Consumers for Quality Care, the closure of Southwest Georgia Regional Medical Center in 2020 was one of the nineteen rural hospital closures that occurred, marking the highest number since 2005. Over the past decade, Georgia has witnessed the shutdown of eight rural hospitals, surpassed only by Texas and Tennessee in terms of the number of closures. These closures have had a significant impact on vulnerable communities in Georgia. (Source: <https://consumers4qualitycare.org/rural-hospital-closures-impact-vulnerable-georgia-communities/>)

[House Bill 373 \(HB 373\)](#), introduced by Representative Sheila Jones, aims to amend Chapter 4 of Title 1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated. This bill designates September 11 of each year as “First Responders Appreciation Day” in Georgia. It acknowledges the invaluable contributions of our first responders and gratitude for their selfless service. Governor Kemp has signed the bill, demonstrating our commitment to recognizing and honoring our dedicated first responders. (Source: HB373 – <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/64284>)





Reproductive Freedom Act Press Conference



Reproductive Freedom Act Press Conference

Reproductive Rights

The Georgia OBGyn Society has identified several significant bills in its 2023 Legislative update (source: <https://gaobgyn.org/advocacy/>):

1. **[SR 136](#)** by **Senator Gloria Butler** (D-Stone Mountain) - introduces the Reproductive Freedom Act. This act acknowledges that every individual has the inherent right to reproductive freedom, which should not be unjustly denied, burdened, or infringed upon unless there is a compelling state interest. It also allows for the regulation of abortion care after fetal viability.
2. **[HB 75](#)** by **Rep. Shea Roberts** (D-Atlanta)/**SB 15** by **Senator Sally Harrell** (D-Atlanta) creates the Reproductive Freedom Act. This comprehensive bill not only repeals the restrictions imposed by HB 481 but also enshrines fundamental protections for reproductive freedom in Georgia law. It aims to expand access to abortion care for all Georgians.

3. [HB 795](#) by **Rep. Viola Davis** (D-Stone Mountain) creates an “immaculate conception” clause to ensure equal application of penalties. Under this clause, a prospective father of an unborn fetus would face the same penalties as the prospective mother unless it is medically proven that the woman conceived the fetus solely by immaculate conception.
4. [HB 796](#) by **Rep. Viola Davis** (D-Stone Mountain) relates to restrictions on the performance of abortion, availability of records, and civil cause of action. It establishes a medical oath protection clause, requiring the Georgia Composite Medical Board to conduct investigations and issue determinations regarding alleged misconduct. These findings would be made available to the appropriate court prior to adjudication.
5. [HB 1](#) by **Rep. Dar’shun Kendrick** 9 (D-Lithonia) – Georgia Pro-Birth Accountability Act which provides for the compensation of a pregnant woman who would terminate a child but cannot be due to the Heartbeat Bill. This legislation aims to provide compensation to pregnant women who would choose to terminate a pregnancy but are unable to do so due to the Heartbeat Bill.

These bills reflect ongoing discussions and efforts to address reproductive rights in Georgia and protect the rights and choices of individuals regarding their reproductive healthcare.



<https://house-press.com/rep-sandra-scott-to-co-host-feminine-hygiene-product-giveaway/>



AJC Article: “Opinion: The women-led city that just rejected Georgia’s abortion ban”

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vidual's right to choose" and that the Council "has a responsibility to protect its residents from any violation of their human rights."

"There just wasn't a hesitation," Mayor Melanie Hammet said of the Council meeting where the resolution passed. "I had each individual elected member of our group read a section of the resolution aloud to the room so that every woman would have had her voice on it."

The language itself originally came from the city's Democratic state representative, Viola Davis. In addition to all its local leaders, Pine Lake's representatives in the Georgia General Assembly are also women: Davis and state Rep. Kim Jackson, who is a Democrat. Davis said she presented the resolution to the City

tors or women under House Bill 481. Leaders in Atlanta, Athens-Clarke County and the city of South Fulton all moved to adopt similar resolutions over the past two months.

Republican lawmakers have pointed out that, along with criminal prosecutions for doctors who perform illegal abortions, the law also targets doctors' medical licenses, which are controlled by the state and not affected by local prosecutions.

And in the early days after HB 481 went into effect, as local district attorneys across the state said they would not prosecute cases under the new law, Republicans in the General Assembly indicated they might consider an addition to the law to require locals to enforce it.

But the enthusiasm among Republicans for strengthening or even discussing the restrictive abortion law has drained

The leadership — all women — of the city of Pine Lake essentially decriminalized abortion in their town recently in a unanimous vote. The DeKalb County city has a population of 752 residents, according to the 2020 census. COURTESY

Davis called last week's vote, which was unanimous, "a united front of justice."

Jean Bordeaux is one of the five Council members who approved the measure. She describes herself as a "73-year-old lesbian" should never be a part of law enforcement, and we wanted to make it clear that it will not be so in Pine Lake," Bordeaux said.

For her part, Davis said she was raised in a family that opposed abortion rights and made it clear

ily with government officials," she said. "And I think that coming from women in all the powerful positions in Pine Lake spoke volumes."

Hammet has been in office for seven years, six-and-a-half of which have

women leaders setting up a government where people with or without families can fully participate. "As you have a group of women in leadership, some of the impediments fall away," she said.

Young children, either

AJC Article – “Opinion: The women-led city that just rejected Georgia’s abortion ban - <https://www.ajc.com/politics/opinion-the-women-led-city-that-just-rejected-georgias-abortion-ban/64Q4SIM6NJH7XOQUYHWHS7T3TE/>



Representative Kim Schofield: Reproductive Freedom Act introduced in Georgia legislature. By Deidra Dukes and Fox 5 – <https://www.fox5atlanta.com/news/georgia-reproductive-freedom-act>

Mental Health

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the mental health of our children and families. Recognizing this, we have put forth a series of legislation that will greatly benefit districts across the State of Georgia. It is crucial for Georgia to make investments in expanding mental health facilities, rather than relying on jails to serve as mental health hospitals. Jails are not equipped to effectively treat individuals with mental illness.

Here are the key pieces of legislation we have authored:

1. **[HB4](#)**: This bill focuses on the creation and maintenance of an electronic inpatient psychiatric bed registry within the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. Its purpose is to ensure better access to psychiatric care. (Source: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63472>)
2. **[HB7](#)**: This legislation seeks to establish a school-linked behavioral health grant program under the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental

Disabilities. The aim is to provide support and resources for addressing mental health needs in schools. (Source: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63475>)

3. **HB8**: This bill proposes that attendance policies in education consider mental and behavioral health. By recognizing these factors, we can better support students' mental well-being and educational success. (Source: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63476>)
4. **HB9**: The objective of this legislation is to create and maintain the Georgia Crisis and Access Line within the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. This helpline would serve as a crucial resource for individuals in need of mental health support and assistance. (Source: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63477>)

In addition to these measures, we have also introduced bills aimed at addressing mental health within the criminal justice system:

5. **HB232**: This bill requires public disclosure of specific data relating to the health and safety, and conditions of detention of inmates. By increasing transparency, we can work towards improving mental health outcomes within penal institutions. (Source: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63986>)
6. **HB233**: This legislation focuses on providing mental health treatment alternatives to imprisonment within the criminal justice system. It seeks to explore more effective approaches to address mental illness and promote rehabilitation. (Source: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63987>)
7. **HB234**: This bill mandates certain mental illness evaluations for individuals detained in penal institutions. By ensuring proper assessment and treatment, we can better address the mental health needs of incarcerated individuals. (Source: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63988>)



Housing Legislation

Under **HB 322**, by Rep. Sandra G. Scott (D-Rex) - ad valorem tax bills could still include fees or charges related to delinquent ad valorem property tax collections. Any partial payment provided by a taxpayer to the tax commissioner or local fiscal authority would first be applied to the outstanding balance of ad valorem taxes on real property that are due. Furthermore, prohibited charges would include, but be not limited to, storm water, service fees, solid waste service fees, fees for water and wastewater, as well as any late fees, penalties or interest related to anything other than ad valorem taxes on the property. **HB322** - <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/64168>

HB 303: **House Bill 303 (HB 303)**: by Rep. Viola Davis (D-Stone Mountain) Property; protections for homeowners, condominium owners, and property owners in community associations; provide. **HB 303** is titled, “**Community Association Transparency and Protection Act**” would establish new statutes regarding HOAs, POAs, and others with procedures for liens, foreclosures, fines, late fees, etc.; a significant rewrite of the statutes governing condominium homeowner and property owner associations, among many other things, creates an ombudsman to register all community associations under the Secretary of State. Drafted by Rep Viola Davis and co-sponsors are Leader James Beverly, Deputy Whip Sandra G. Scott, Rep Kim Schofield, Rep Rhonda Taylor, and Chairman Billy Mitchell. **HB303** - <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/64141>

HB 145 by Rep. Regina Lewis-Ward (D-McDonough) relates to property owners’ associations to provide for certificates of good standing for payment of annual

assessments; requires associations to offer to participate in alternative dispute resolution prior to the effectuation of a lien on a lot for unpaid assessments; provided that such a lien shall be inferior to liens for unpaid medical bills; and provides for alternative dispute resolution policies and requirements therefore. **HB145** -

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/63795>

HB 490 by Rep. Spencer Frye (D-Athens) eliminates a deduction related to depreciation for single-family residential rental property. **HB 490** -

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/64591>

HB 627 by Rep. Rhonda Taylor (D-Conyers) would repeal the state's protection from restrictive local rent control policies. **HB 627** -

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/64941>

HB 1032 by Rep. Sandra G. Scott (D-Rex), known as the "**Property Owner Rights and Accountability Act**," seeks to protect homeowners by amending Georgia's property laws to limit the ability of property associations to foreclose on homes for unpaid fees and assessments. By repealing the \$2,000 minimum threshold for foreclosure, the bill directly addresses concerns over the potential misuse of assessment fees, which have been used to unfairly target homeowners in some cases. This legislation seeks to protect homeowners from losing their homes over association dues and foster a fair and transparent system. Advocates of the bill highlight that foreclosure is an overly punitive measure that undermines the American Dream of Homeownership. Instead, the proposed changes encourage property associations to explore alternative methods for recovering fees and maintaining financial stability while safeguarding homeowner rights. By removing foreclosure as an option, the bill sets the stage for reforming the relationship between property associations and homeowners, prioritizing equity, protection, and stability. **HB 1032** - <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/66308>

House Bill 1059 by Rep. Sandra G. Scott (D-Rex), known as the "**Georgia Tenant Protection and Mediation Act**," proposes the establishment of residential eviction diversion programs to safeguard disabled and low-income tenants from unfair eviction practices. This legislation requires courts with jurisdiction over eviction cases to create mediation programs that provide tenants and landlords an opportunity to resolve disputes before eviction proceedings advance. The bill mandates written notice to tenants about their right to request mediation within seven days of receiving an eviction

notice and requires landlords to participate in the mediation process. It also allows tenants to assert a landlord's failure to comply with notice or mediation requirements as a legal defense. By fostering cooperation and providing alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, the bill aims to reduce housing instability and ensure a fairer, more transparent process for handling disputes between tenants and landlords. This act is set to take effect on January 1, 2025, for lease agreements entered into or renewed after July 1, 2023. **HB 1059** - <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/66447>

House Bill 1051, sponsored by **Representatives Rhonda Burnough**, establishes the "**Senior and Disabled Persons Foreclosure Protection Fund and Project**" to protect vulnerable homeowners from foreclosure. The bill mandates the creation of a State Home Foreclosure Prevention Trust Fund, managed by the Georgia Housing and Finance Authority, which will provide resources to prevent foreclosures among elderly and disabled individuals. Mortgage servicers will be required to pay a \$200 fee per loan into the trust fund, which will be used for foreclosure prevention services such as housing counseling, legal assistance, and loan modification negotiation. The bill also establishes a database to track foreclosure proceedings and allows the Georgia Housing and Finance Authority to extend foreclosure filing deadlines by up to 30 days to facilitate resolution efforts. By offering these protections and resources, House Bill 1051 seeks to ensure housing stability for Georgia's most vulnerable populations. **HB 1051** - <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/66400>



Georgia House Bill 303 - Protecting the American Dream of Homeownership -
<https://youtu.be/4K12vOdu5M8?si=8kLW9BJAk6UxNo2>

Articles and Meetings on Housing Issues:

‘Terrorized by HOAs’: Homeowners seek state help to curb association powers by Dylan Jackson with the AJC, November 27, 2023.

<https://www.ajc.com/news/investigations/terrorized-by-hoas-homeowners-seek-state-help-to-curb-association-powers/AFVMBJ7NXNBL7IGJ72PEWKFSY/>

Democratic state lawmakers pushing bills on “housing stability” by Cindy Morley with the James Magazine, April 20, 2023.

<https://jamesmagazinega.com/2023/04/20/democratic-state-lawmakers-pushing-bills-on-housing-stability/>

Could Redrawn Voting Maps One Day Foster Rent Regulation in Georgia? By Sean Keenan with Atlanta Civic Circle, November 12, 2023

<https://atlantaciviccircle.org/2023/11/12/could-redistricting-foster-rent-control-in-georgia/>

Zoom Meeting with Rural Homeowners on HOA Abuses: Georgia House Bill 303 - Protecting the American Dream of Homeownership

<https://youtu.be/4K12vOdu5M8?si=h99BdRxGCsJxOwxS>

Georgia lawmakers to rein in aggressive HOAs after hearing homeowner horror stories by Justin Gray with WSBTV, May 3, 2024.

https://youtu.be/8h8js_bQ_4c?si=2HbsV-YYuOU8ZT_A

3 corporations own 19,000 metro Atlanta homes. What does that mean for the housing market?

<https://youtu.be/JnuBvVm4yhg?si=vus42-31Ece5Sjq2>

How Homeowners Associations Took Over American Neighborhoods

<https://youtu.be/fnLMeotB0c0?si=8L2PQu6CNLGLg3cp>

HOAs in Georgia: Property managers discuss problems but offer lawmakers some solutions - https://youtu.be/8ne4_o0G3vg?si=DpQ6NhSOYUQWwwcA

Georgia homeowners push for HOA crackdown

<https://youtu.be/ICm7uTQKRu8?si=ba0ZW9Fh9ya5RIW6>

Homeowners tell stories of distrust, fear, and financial ruin | Lawmakers look at bettering HOA laws.

<https://youtu.be/ipD8DgjJOQk?si=etdp3390dANkYjG3>

Lawmakers to refile bill to stop HOAs from taking people's homes after Channel 2 investigation by WSBTV.

<https://www.wsbtv.com/news/local/atlanta/lawmakers-plan-reintroduce-bill-stop-aggressive-hoas-taking-peoples-homes/VVAN3NALIZEQ7I6FBUZ2Z4AFFM/>

Renters Share Nightmare problems with HOA

<https://www.wsbtv.com/video/local-video/renters-share-nightmare-problems-with-hoa/e4ce8e0f-ad93-46f9-a4ab-20ff09cdd221/>

They faced foreclosure; their HOA treasurer benefited by Dylan Jackson with the AJC; September 16, 2022. - <https://www.ajc.com/news/investigations/they-faced-foreclosure-their-hoa-treasurer-benefited/J5G6NPUMD5AQTJ2PQ4S53XIOME/>

Georgia homeowners share horror stories of HOAs abusing power with excessive fees and home foreclosures by Bethan Moorcraft with Moneywise.com, August 6, 2024.

https://moneywise.com/a/ch-aol/georgia-homeowners-share-horror-stories-of-hoas-abusing-power-1719481293953?utm_source=syn_msna_mon&utm_medium=Z&utm_campaign=57249&utm_content=msna_mon_57249





Rep. Kim Schofield Speak Out on Squatters - I-Team: Georgia Squatter Reform Act passes, awaits governor's signature

<https://youtu.be/e4qUOZW8W1A?si=BfkSoVdAK2eEz-mD>

History of Town Halls & Meetings on Housing Issues:

A graphic featuring two women, Representative Viola Davis on the left and Representative Rhonda Taylor on the right. Between them is text that reads: "Have questions about House Bill 1093 better known as Build to Rent (BRT) or other housing concerns?". Below each woman's name is a banner with their name and title. Viola Davis's banner is orange and says "Representative Viola Davis". Rhonda Taylor's banner is blue and says "Representative Rhonda Taylor".

Representative Viola Davis and Representative Rhonda Taylor address housing concerns.

VIRTUAL 2024 HOUSING LEGISLATION UPDATE

Learn about the bills moving now through both chambers and how they may impact you

Landlord/Tenant
Rental Control
Housing Regulation
Preemption Bills
HOA/Rights & Regulations
Safe Homes

Hear from Special Guests Legislators

**Monday, February 19, 2024
7pm**



Scan here to Register

Hosted by Representatives
Viola Davis (Dist. 87) and Rhonda Taylor (Dist. 92)



Commissioner Marvin S. Arrington, Jr
presents

DISTRICT DIALOGUES:

ADDRESSING
HOUSING INSECURITY
DURING THE PANDEMIC

PANELISTS



Commissioner
Marvin Arrington, Jr.
District 5



GA Representative
Rep. Kim Schofield
District 60



GA Representative
Rep. Viola Davis
District 87



Dr. Pamela Roshell
Fulton County Deputy COO
Health & Human Services

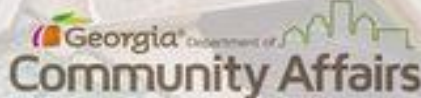


Betty McGee
Georgia Department
of Community Affairs

**THURSDAY
SEPTEMBER 9, 2021
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM**

Streaming Live
on **FGTV**
 **YouTube**

For public comment,
go to:
[fulton.communication
@fultoncountygga.gov](mailto:fulton.communication@fultoncountygga.gov)

 Georgia Department of
Community Affairs



A CONVERSATION
ON HOUSING IN CLAYTON COUNTY

FEATURING



**REPRESENTATIVE
SANDRA G. SCOTT**



**SENATOR
GAIL DAVENPORT**



**REPRESENTATIVE
VIOLA DAVIS**

Clayton County Housing Authority
Ms. Dinnie Ziegler
P: 404.362.1200 F: 404.362.0635

Clayton County HUD Office
Ms. Linda Boswell
P: 770.477.4523

SATURDAY AUG. 14, 2021 9:00AM - 11:00AM

**Will Break Down
HB980, HB523, AND HB302
2019 - 2020 Legislative Year**

HOT OFF THE PRESS

Town Hall on PadSplits, Short Term Rentals/Airbnb, Illegal Personal Care Homes, and Boarding/Rooming Houses in Single-Family Residential Neighborhoods

TO REGISTER:

You are invited to the Zoom Town Hall meeting.
When: July 20, 2021 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

To register in advance for this meeting:
https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZclc6qrTlqHtxmc0EZ_lf0V4mSgy_igU0I

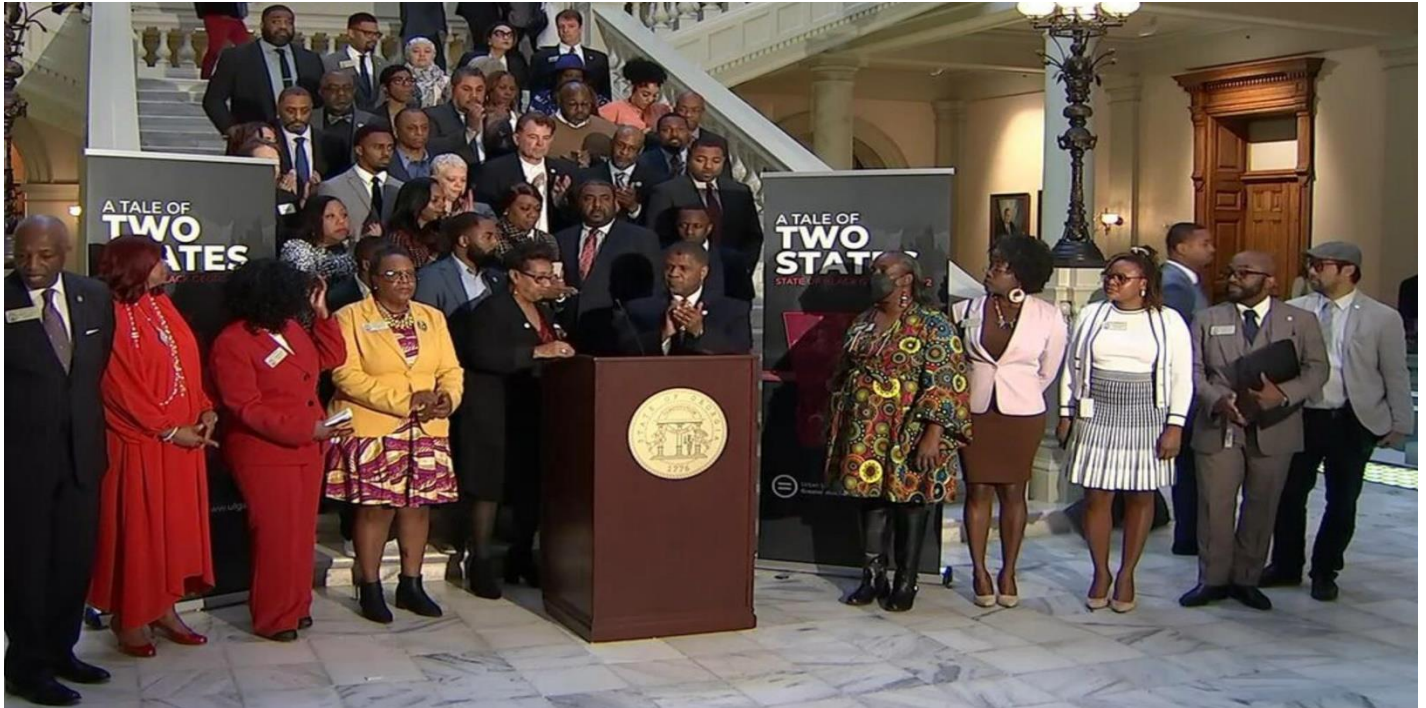


After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

If you are unable to attend the town hall, please send your comments, concerns, and/or questions to
viola.davis@house.ga.gov
<https://violadavis.com/>

Representative Viola Davis
Georgia House District 87

District
P.O. Box 830726, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083



The Urban League of Greater Atlanta unveils its State of Black Georgia report at the state Capitol in March 2023 - <https://www.gpb.org/news/2023/03/17/the-state-of-black-georgia-report-tells-tale-of-two-states>





Representative Kim Schofield at rally for affordable housing and rent control.



Representative Kim Schofield and protesters



Representative Sandra Scott and Representative Viola Davis with protesters

Housing and Homeownership Hearing



Public Hearing: The Plight of Housing Instability and Homeownership Impacting Under-resourced Communities (Urban, Suburban, Rural).

POSTPONED
NEW DATE COMING SOON

Reps. Scott, Davis, Schofield

Date - October 27, 2022
Time - 2:30 pm - 5:00pm

Location: Room 406 of the Coverdell Legislative Office Building
(18 Capitol Sq. SW) in Atlanta.

To testify: Contact Rep. Davis' Capitol Office at 404-656-0109,
email viola.davis@house.ga.gov, Register online in advance –
<https://us02web.zoom.us/joining/register/tZMucu2gqjwrEtwWY2WQfLRBa4u5qp41OVGE>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Representative Kim Schofield, Representative Viola Davis, and Representative Sandra Scott addressed the plight housing instability and homeownership impacting under-served and under-resourced communities (Urban, Suburban, and Rural)

Protecting the American Dream of Homeownership

Housing Crisis Legislation Press Releases:

<https://house-press.com/democratic-legislators-make-constituents-aware-of-proposed-legislation-to-address-housing-crisis/>

<https://house-press.com/rebs-scott-schofield-davis-to-hold-hearing-on-housing-homeownership/>



Representatives: Viola Davis, Rhonda Burnough, Kim Schofield, and Sandra G. Scott

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice emerged as a critical focus in the 2023-2024 legislative session, reflecting the urgent need to address inequities in environmental policy that disproportionately impact low-income and minority communities. This section highlights key legislative efforts aimed at promoting sustainability, equity, and community well-being.

House Bill 1263 (Georgia Environmental Justice Act)

Author: Rep. Kim Schofield

This comprehensive legislation requires state entities to consider and report on environmental justice concerns before taking specific actions. It establishes the Environmental Justice Commission to study and address issues affecting disadvantaged communities. The bill mandates pollution prevention and community health studies for permit applicants targeting low-income neighborhoods and prohibits discrimination in state-funded programs. By focusing on transparency and accountability, HB 1263 seeks to protect vulnerable populations from environmental hazards.

House Bill 667 (Disadvantaged Community Drinking Water Assistance Program)

Author: Rep. Viola Davis

HB 667 establishes the Disadvantaged Community Drinking Water Assistance Program to provide financial and technical aid to underserved areas struggling with water quality and accessibility. The program prioritizes communities most affected by environmental and infrastructure inequities, offering a pathway toward safe and sustainable drinking water systems.

House Resolution 1301 (Addressing Sewage Pollution in DeKalb County)

Author: Rep. Viola Davis

HR 1301 calls for action from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, the Environmental Protection Agency, and DeKalb County to resolve chronic sewage pollution and spills, particularly in "non-priority" areas. This resolution emphasizes the need for equity in environmental protections, urging accountability and adherence to Clean Water Act requirements. It represents a critical step toward addressing longstanding environmental injustices in DeKalb County.

House Bill 803 (Safer States Act)

Author: Rep. Kim Schofield

This bill aims to ban polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and certain chemical flame retardants, which are known to persist in the environment and pose significant health

risks. HB 803 promotes safer alternatives and heightened transparency in consumer products to protect public health and the environment from toxic substances.

House Resolution 807 (100% Clean Energy Goal by 2050)

Author: Rep. Kim Schofield

HR 807 envisions a Georgia powered entirely by renewable energy by 2050. This bold resolution underscores the urgency of reducing the state's climate footprint while fostering green job growth and cleaning up local communities. By joining other states in setting 100% clean energy goals, Georgia can lead the way toward a sustainable future.

House Bill 71 (Okefenokee Protection Act)

Author: Rep. Darlene Taylor

HB 71 seeks to prohibit surface mining operations near the Okefenokee Swamp, a vital natural resource, and National Wildlife Refuge. The bill underscores the ecological and cultural significance of protecting Trail Ridge from mining activities that could disrupt the swamp's hydrology and biodiversity. Although it did not advance this session, the overwhelming bipartisan support signals strong momentum for future action.

House Resolution 169 (House Study Committee on Water Customer Rights)

Author: Rep. Karla Drenner

HR 169 proposes creating a study committee to explore water customer rights, with a focus on affordability, access, and accountability. The committee aims to address systemic challenges in water management and delivery, ensuring fair treatment for all Georgians.

This legislative session marked a significant step forward in addressing environmental injustices and promoting sustainability across Georgia. These bills and resolutions underscore the commitment of state leaders to protect the environment and ensure equitable treatment for all communities. Continued advocacy and public support will be essential to advancing these critical initiatives.

2025-2026 Legislative Vision

Democratic Representatives Viola Davis, Sandra Scott, and Kim Schofield remain committed to a legislative agenda that prioritizes equity, justice, and opportunity for all Georgians. The 2025-2026 legislative cycle builds upon past accomplishments, addressing systemic challenges through comprehensive and inclusive solutions.

1. Education

We will refile legislation to secure equitable funding for education, emphasizing transportation and school security. Updates will reflect the critical need for additional resources to ensure all students have a safe and supportive learning environment.

2. Economic Development

Our efforts will focus on eliminating economic deserts in underserved and under-resourced communities. By drafting innovative funding legislation, we aim to create new jobs and foster entrepreneurial growth. Collaboration with like-minded legislators will amplify this mission.

3. Voting Legislation

Protecting voting rights remains paramount. We will refile legislation to repeal barriers to voting, especially for Black and Brown communities, ensuring constitutional rights are upheld over restrictive policies.

4. Criminal Justice Reform

To dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline, we will refile legislation to enhance educational and professional opportunities, reducing incarceration rates and creating pathways for success.

5. Civil Forfeiture Reform

Our legislative agenda will include reforms to prevent unjust seizures of personal property, addressing Georgia's D- rating in this area and promoting fairness in legal processes.

6. Gun Safety Reform

We will advocate for commonsense gun safety measures to prevent mass shootings, especially in schools and public spaces. Georgians deserve to live without fear of gun violence.

7. Healthcare

We will push for comprehensive healthcare reform, focusing on universal access,

reducing hospital closures in rural areas, protecting reproductive rights, and eliminating maternal mortality disparities affecting Black women.

8. Mental Health

Recognizing the inadequacies in mental health care, we will refile legislation to expand access and reduce the reliance on jails as mental health facilities, ensuring proper treatment for those in need.

9. Housing

To preserve the "American Dream of Homeownership," we will champion reforms against HOA and POA abuses, ensuring affordability and fairness in homeownership and rental markets.

10. Environmental Justice

We will refile legislation to combat environmental injustices in underserved communities. Exposing abuses, enforcing accountability, and prioritizing clean and safe environments are key to our agenda.

Mobilizing for Change

This legislative vision cannot be achieved without the collective voice of Georgia's taxpayers and voters. We call on all citizens to engage with their legislators, attend town halls, and support policies that reflect the will of the people. Together, we can create a Georgia that upholds equity, justice, and opportunity for every resident.

Success Stories on the Session:

Success Story: Grand Opening of the DeKalb State House & Senate Delegation Constituent Services Office

The grand opening of the DeKalb State House & Senate Delegation Constituent Services Office on April 27, 2024, at The New Black Wall Street in Stonecrest, Georgia, stands as a testament to effective legislative leadership and the power of collaborative community engagement. This milestone, spearheaded by State Representatives Viola Davis (D-Stone Mountain), Karla Drenner (D-Avondale Estates), and Rhonda Taylor (D-Conyers), showcased the dedication of the DeKalb Delegation to fostering accessibility, advocacy, and empowerment for the community.

Highlights of the Success:

1. Historic Initiative:

- The office marks the first of its kind in DeKalb County, offering a dedicated space for constituents to interact with their state legislators. This initiative reflects an unprecedented commitment to bridging the gap between elected officials and the residents they serve.

2. Comprehensive Services:

- The Constituent Services Office provides resources such as personal assistance, district information, state services, seminars, and more, ensuring that residents have a centralized hub to address their needs effectively.

3. Community Engagement:

- The grand opening ceremony brought together constituents, families, friends, and neighbors in a celebration of progress and unity. The event featured speeches by local dignitaries, a ribbon-cutting ceremony, and an overview of the services offered.

4. Collaborative Vision:

- The successful launch of the office was a culmination of a two-year effort involving negotiation, planning, and collaboration with The New Black Wall Street. This partnership underscores the importance of public-private collaboration in serving the community.

5. Legislative Leadership:

- Rep. Viola Davis, as Vice Chair of the DeKalb House Delegation, emphasized the office's role in fostering collaboration and understanding among constituents and legislators. Her leadership, alongside Chair Karla Drenner and Rep. Rhonda Taylor, ensured the vision was brought to fruition.

Impact and Future Vision:

This Constituent Services Office has already begun to make an impact by providing a physical space where residents can access valuable resources and voice their concerns directly to their representatives. It serves as a model for other counties, demonstrating how dedicated constituent services can strengthen the connection between communities and their elected officials.

The success of the grand opening and the positive response from the community highlight the importance of initiatives like this in creating a more inclusive and responsive government. This office stands as a legacy of good legislation, collaborative governance, and a deep commitment to serving the people of DeKalb County.



DeKalb lawmakers open Constituent Services Office in City of Stonecrest 04.27.2024





Articles:

Georgia lawmakers open Constituent Services Office @ New Black Wall Street Market by On Common Ground News on April 29, 2024

<https://ocgnews.com/georgia-lawmakers-open-constituent-services-office-new-black-wall-st-market/>







<p>Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting For State House & Senate Constituent Services Office <i>The New Black Wall Street</i></p>	
	
Welcome.....	Senator Kim Jackson (DeKalb Senate Delegation Chair)
Purpose.....	Representative Karla Drenner (DeKalb House Delegation Chair)
Remarks	
The New Black Wall Street.....	Mr. Bill Allen
Office of CEO Michael Thurmond.....	Ms. Delores Crowell
Mayor of Stonecrest.....	Jazzmin Cobble
Minority Caucus Chairman.....	Representative Billy Mitchell
Acknowledgement of House Delegation Members	
Minority Senate Chairwoman.....	Senator Elena Parent
Acknowledgement of Senate Delegation Members	
Blessing of the New Office.....	Pastor Vandy Simmons
Ribbon Cutting	
Senator Jackson and Representative Karla Drenner	
Representatives Rhonda Taylor and Viola Davis	
Tour.....	Stroll to the new office
Light Refreshments in the common area	

Success Story: Combating Period Poverty Through Advocacy and Funding

The ongoing advocacy efforts of Representatives Viola Davis (D-Stone Mountain), Kim Schofield (D-Atlanta), and Sandra Scott (D-Rex) have yielded significant success in addressing period poverty among low-income students in Georgia. Through persistent legislative efforts and collaboration, these leaders secured critical funding to provide feminine hygiene products to students in need, empowering them to focus on their education without the barriers imposed by inadequate access to basic necessities.

Highlights of the Success:

1. Funding Allocations:

- Over \$476,000 has been allocated across key school districts for fiscal years 2024 and 2025 to support the Feminine Hygiene Products Grant. Specific allocations include:
 - **FY 2024:**
 - Atlanta Public Schools: \$39,591
 - Fulton County Schools: \$78,384
 - DeKalb County Schools: \$73,696
 - Clayton County Schools: \$43,899
 - **FY 2025:**
 - Atlanta Public Schools: \$40,718
 - Fulton County Schools: \$80,005
 - DeKalb County Schools: \$75,453
 - Clayton County Schools: \$44,846

2. Advocacy Impact:

- These allocations reflect years of sustained advocacy to address period poverty, a pressing issue that disproportionately affects low-income students. By securing this funding, legislators are directly combating a challenge that has long hindered equitable access to education.

3. Empowering Students:

- Providing free feminine hygiene products in schools ensures that students can attend class, participate in activities, and pursue their education without the stigma or interruption caused by lack of access to these essential products.

4. Collaborative Leadership:

- The partnership among Representatives Davis, Schofield, and Scott exemplifies how collaborative leadership can drive impactful policy

changes. Their united efforts have raised awareness of period poverty and prompted tangible legislative solutions.

5. Looking Ahead:

- While these accomplishments mark a significant step forward, the legislators remain committed to advocating for the continuation and potential expansion of funding in future fiscal years. They also aim to raise awareness about this issue to ensure that no student is disadvantaged due to period poverty.

Impact and Vision for the Future:

The success of this initiative underscores the importance of addressing basic needs as a foundation for educational equity. By removing barriers related to period poverty, Representatives Davis, Schofield, and Scott have demonstrated the power of focused advocacy and legislative action in improving the lives of students. This milestone serves as a blueprint for future efforts to ensure that all students have access to the resources they need to thrive academically and personally.



Period Poverty Group Picture – Assemble Period Poverty Bags to give away.



Rep. Sandra G. Scott Free Period Products with Rep. Viola Davis and Rep. Kim Schofield and Supporters



Here's how metro Atlanta is bringing awareness to period poverty on 11Alive which featured Representative Sandra G. Scott.



Period Poverty – Free Period Products to the community

Success Story: Advancing Support for Georgia Families with the DDDRP Grant

The Georgia Community Action Association (GCAA) has achieved a monumental success in securing the Diaper Distribution Demonstration and Research Pilot (DDDRP) grant, marking a transformative step in supporting low-income families across the state. This grant in the amount of **\$1 million dollars** will provide essential resources, including diapers and related supplies, to underserved communities, alleviating a critical burden faced by many families and promoting healthier outcomes for Georgia's most vulnerable populations.

Highlights of the Success:

1. Securing the DDDRP Grant:

- GCAA's ability to secure this competitive grant is a testament to their dedication and innovative approach to addressing the basic needs of Georgia families. The funding will support the distribution of diapers and supplies to those in need, ensuring that no family has to choose between diapers and other necessities.

2. Collaborative Legislative Efforts:

- This success builds on years of legislative advocacy, including co-sponsored bills such as **House Bill 864** (2021-2022 Session) and **House Bill 6** (2023-2024 Session). These bills aimed to expand public assistance for diapers and menstrual products, reflecting a broad commitment by legislators to address family needs.

3. Impact on Georgia Families:

- Access to diapers is crucial not only for hygiene but also for the health and well-being of children and families. The implementation of this program will reduce financial stress, improve health outcomes, and enhance the quality of life for families statewide.

4. Legislative Champions:

- **Representatives Viola Davis, Sandra Scott, Carolyn Hugley, Kim Schofield, Debbie Buckner, Gloria Frazier, and Solomon Adesanya** have been instrumental in advocating for policies that address the unmet needs of families. Their leadership and collaboration have laid the groundwork for successes like the DDDRP grant.

5. A Model for Future Advocacy:

- GCAA's achievement highlights the importance of partnerships between legislators and community organizations in driving meaningful change. This program serves as a model for how targeted initiatives can address systemic challenges and uplift communities.

Call to Action:

This milestone demonstrates what can be achieved through persistence, collaboration, and community-driven solutions. To ensure continued success, it is vital for the public to support programs like the DDDRP and advocate for policies that address the basic needs of all Georgians. Together, we can build a future where every family has access to the resources they need to thrive.

The GCAA's achievement is a victory for families across Georgia, and it underscores the power of dedicated advocacy and innovative solutions. Let's celebrate this success and work together to ensure its lasting impact.

Success Story: Inspiring Patriotism with the “I Pledge” Initiative

The “I Pledge” initiative, championed by Representative Kim Schofield, is a shining example of how creative engagement can inspire patriotism and community pride among young students. After three years of dedication and hard work, Rep. Schofield successfully partnered with Atlanta News First, a CBS affiliate, to bring this initiative to life, providing students in 1st through 5th grades the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance on air during the 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. morning show.

Highlights of the Success:

1. Empowering Students:
 - The “I Pledge” initiative gives elementary students a platform to showcase their patriotism and leadership skills, fostering confidence and a sense of responsibility.
2. Community Partnership:
 - Through a strategic partnership with Atlanta News First, the initiative reached a wider audience, allowing families and communities to celebrate the voices of young leaders across Georgia.
3. Collaboration with Schools:
 - Currently working with Fulton County Schools, Rep. Schofield is ensuring that students from diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to participate in this meaningful program.
4. Encouraging Civic Engagement:

- By starting each morning with students reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, the initiative reinforces values of unity, respect, and civic pride, creating a ripple effect of inspiration across communities.
5. Dedication to the Vision:
- After three years of persistence and development, Rep. Schofield's commitment to this initiative exemplifies how passion and perseverance can bring impactful ideas to fruition.

Impact and Vision for the Future:

The “I Pledge” initiative is more than a morning segment—it’s a movement to inspire young minds and connect communities through a shared sense of purpose and pride. As the program continues to grow, Rep. Schofield envisions expanding its reach to more school districts and broadcasting partners, ensuring that every child has the chance to be celebrated as a leader.

This initiative demonstrates the power of collaboration, creativity, and determination in building a legacy of civic engagement and pride among Georgia’s youth. Through efforts like “I Pledge,” Rep. Schofield is not only shaping the future but also celebrating the voices that will lead it.



Pledge of Allegiance

Pledge of Allegiance

<https://www.atlantaneWSfirst.com/video-gallery/community/pledge-of-allegiance/>

Success Story: Championing Purple Heart Designations in Local Communities

The movement to designate communities across Georgia as Purple Heart Cities and Counties is a testament to the collaborative efforts of legislators, local governments, and communities to honor our military veterans. Inspired by Representative Rhonda Burnough's heartfelt campaign in Clayton County and Representative Kim Schofield's advocacy across Fulton County, I, Representative Viola Davis, proudly joined this meaningful initiative to recognize the sacrifices of our military heroes.

Key Contributions:

1. Representative Rhonda Burnough:
 - Rep. Burnough's leadership has been instrumental in securing Purple Heart City designations for all seven cities in Clayton County. Her tireless advocacy has shown how communities can come together to honor the bravery of veterans who were wounded or lost their lives in service to our nation. She invited fellow legislators, including myself, to join this initiative, expanding its reach to other parts of Georgia.
2. Representative Kim Schofield:
 - Rep. Schofield has championed Purple Heart City designations in Fulton County, working closely with cities like Union City and College Park. Her efforts in organizing events, such as National Purple Heart Day, and unveiling Purple Heart signs reflect her deep commitment to ensuring that the sacrifices of veterans are recognized and celebrated within her district and beyond.
3. Advocacy in DeKalb County:
 - Following the example set by Reps. Burnough and Schofield, I presented formal requests for Purple Heart designations in DeKalb County, the City of Tucker, and the City of Pine Lake. These efforts aim to extend the spirit of gratitude and respect for veterans to more communities in Georgia.

4. Collaboration with Local Governments:

- This initiative has fostered strong partnerships with city councils and county officials, who share the commitment to honoring Purple Heart recipients. Together, we are working toward completing the designation process in 2025.

5. Building on Success:

- Inspired by previous accomplishments in Clayton and Fulton Counties, this effort in DeKalb County builds on a growing statewide movement to recognize the extraordinary sacrifices of our military heroes.

With the anticipated completion of Purple Heart designations in DeKalb County and its cities by 2025, we will celebrate ceremonies, install signage, and engage communities in ongoing support for veterans. These efforts will ensure that the legacy of Purple Heart recipients remains a central part of our communities' values.

This initiative highlights the importance of collaboration in achieving meaningful recognition for those who have served. Thanks to the leadership of Representatives Rhonda Burnough and Kim Schofield, Georgia continues to set an example of honoring its veterans with respect and gratitude. By joining forces with local governments and community members, we are fostering pride, unity, and a deeper appreciation for the sacrifices made by our military heroes.

As we work together to complete this initiative, I am proud to stand alongside my colleagues in ensuring that the Purple Heart designations serve as lasting symbols of our respect and commitment to those who have given so much for our nation.





PURPLE HEART



"It has been my honor to initiate Clayton County and all seven cities to be given the Purple Heart Designation, This tribute to our men and women and those that will visit along with our tribute to Gold Star Fathers will let members of the Military Community know that we value their sacrifice." State Representative Rhonda Burnough HD 77.





Rep. Kim Schofield & Rep. Rhonda Burnough with Union City – Purple Heart City Proclamation



Success Story: Rep. Sandra Scott Named Chairwoman of the National Foundation for Women Legislators

State Representative Sandra Scott's remarkable journey of service and leadership reached a new pinnacle in 2024 with her nomination as Chairwoman of the **National Foundation for Women Legislators (NFWL)** for 2025. This prestigious role reflects her steadfast commitment to empowering women in government and her extensive contributions to public service. Since joining NFWL in 2011 and serving on its board since 2018, Rep. Scott has been a driving force in advancing the organization's mission to unite, support, and inspire women leaders across the nation.

Highlights of the Success:

1. Securing Resources for Women Legislators:

- Rep. Scott secured \$200,000 in funding to support NFWL initiatives, enhancing the organization's capacity to engage women in public policy discussions and foster meaningful change.

2. Recognized Leadership:

- Her nomination as Chairwoman is a testament to her dedication, vision, and ability to bring people together for the greater good. As a veteran legislator and an Army veteran, Rep. Scott has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership.

3. Widespread Recognition:

- Fellow legislators, including Rep. Viola Davis and Rep. Kim Schofield, celebrated her achievement, highlighting her passion for service and unwavering commitment to advancing women's leadership. Their endorsements reflect the deep respect Rep. Scott commands among her colleagues.

4. Advancing the Mission of NFWL:

- As Chairwoman, Rep. Scott will work to expand NFWL's reach and impact by fostering collaboration among elected women at all levels of government. Her previous roles as Chair and board member of the Recruitment and Engagement Committee underscore her long-standing dedication to the organization.

5. Legacy of Service:

- In addition to her work with NFWL, Rep. Scott has served as the Chief Deputy Whip for the Georgia House Democratic Caucus, former Chairwoman of the Clayton County Delegation, and member of key legislative committees.

Impact and Vision for the Future:

Rep. Scott's appointment as Chairwoman of NFWL is a victory for women in leadership, underscoring the importance of fostering connections and providing resources to amplify their voices. By securing critical funding and bringing her strategic vision to this role, she will inspire and empower a new generation of women leaders.

This milestone serves as a testament to the power of collaboration and dedication in achieving transformative goals. Rep. Scott's leadership, supported by her colleagues like Rep. Viola Davis and Rep. Kim Schofield, highlights the potential for unity and shared vision to elevate women in government and beyond. Her work as Chairwoman of NFWL will leave a lasting legacy for women legislators across the nation.



Representative Sandra G. Scott



NFWL Conference: Georgia elected officials celebrate swearing in of Chairwoman Sandra G. Scott

Closing

On behalf of Representative Viola Davis, Representative Kim Schofield, and Representative Sandra G. Scott, we extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who has supported our legislative efforts and community initiatives. Your unwavering encouragement and active participation have been instrumental in driving meaningful change and improving the lives of Georgians across the state.

As **"Three Legislative Hidden Figures,"** we remain steadfast in our commitment to **"Working Together for the Greater Good."** Through collaboration and dedication, we have tackled critical issues such as equitable education funding, period poverty, veterans' recognition, housing reform, and more. These achievements are not just the work of legislators but the result of partnerships with constituents, advocates, and local leaders who share our vision for a stronger, more inclusive Georgia.

Thank you for standing with us, amplifying our efforts, and helping to create a future where every Georgian has the opportunity to thrive. Together, we will continue working for the greater good, turning challenges into opportunities and ensuring that no voice goes unheard.



Three Legislative Hidden Figures - Representative Sandra Scott, Representative Kim Schofield, and Representative Viola Davis





Three Legislative Hidden Figures - Representative Sandra Scott, Representative Kim Schofield, and Representative Viola Davis





Rep. Viola Davis

Representative **Viola Davis** represents the citizens of District 87, which includes portions of DeKalb County. She was elected to the House of Representatives in 2018 and currently serves on the Defense & Veterans Affairs, Insurance, Interstate Cooperation, Natural Resources & Environment and Urban Affairs committees.



Rep. Kim Schofield

Representative **Kim Schofield** represents the citizens of District 63, which includes portions of Fulton County. She was elected to the House of Representatives in 2017 and currently serves as the Secretary of the Urban Affairs Committee. She also serves on the Creative Arts & Entertainment, Health, Interstate Cooperation and Small Business Development committees.



Rep. Sandra Scott

Representative **Sandra Scott** represents the citizens of District 76, which includes portions of Clayton County. She was elected to the House of Representatives in 2010 and currently serves as the Minority Caucus Chief Deputy Whip. She also serves on the Banks & Banking, Defense & Veterans Affairs, Human Relations & Aging, Insurance and Reapportionment and Redistricting committees.