

# NEWSLETTER

The official newsletter of Georgia's  
13th Lt. Governor Burt Jones



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## Budget Priorities: FY2027 Budget Passes Senate Committee

On **Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>**, Lt. Governor Burt Jones issued a statement in support of the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget passing the Senate Appropriations Committee with bi-partisan, unanimous support.

*"I want to thank Chairman Blake Tillery, the subcommittee Chairs, and all members of the Senate Appropriations Committee for their hard work. This budget includes critical investments in education by fully funding a literacy coach for every school, support for Georgia's retired state employees, appropriations for 1,217 NOW/COMP waivers, and additional support for Georgia's veterans. I look forward to the Senate taking action on this budget and our work with the House to ensure that we pass a conservative, fiscally sound budget."*

### Fiscal Year 2027 Highlights:

- The Senate version of the budget supports statewide literacy efforts by funding a literacy coach in every school for K-3 with an appropriation of **\$70M**.
- The Senate proposes a contribution of **\$100M** to the Employees' Retirement System of Georgia.
- Furthering the Lt. Governor's commitment to the safety of Jewish community centers and schools, the Senate version of the budget includes a **\$3M** appropriation for non-profit security grant programs.
- The Senate's proposed budget **fully funds 1,217 additional** New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) slots for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- The Senate fully funded **\$16.1M** to create parity between in-home and in-office reimbursement rates for autism services.
- Furthering the Lt. Governor's commitment to veterans, the Senate appropriated **\$5M** to eliminate veterans' homelessness.
- House appropriation of **\$2.5M** to the BOOST program, which provides after school care for children across the state.

For additional information, please scan the QR code or click [HERE](#).



## 2026 Priority: Tax Rebates and Gas Tax Relief

**On Friday, March 20th**, Lt. Governor Burt Jones joined Governor Brian Kemp, Speaker Jon Burns, and members of the Georgia General Assembly for a bill signing ceremony for House Bill 1000 and House Bill 1199 - returning nearly \$1.2 billion in state income tax refunds to hardworking Georgians and suspending the state motor fuel tax for 60 days.

*"I want to thank Governor Brian Kemp, Speaker Jon Burns, and our friends in the Georgia General Assembly for their ongoing work on behalf of the hardworking people of Georgia. The two bills signed today provide significant and immediate tax relief and further our commitment to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars."*

House Bill 1000 provides a one-time income tax rebate for taxpayers who filed timely income tax returns for both 2024 and 2025. HB 1000 provides refunds of \$250 for a single taxpayer or a married taxpayer filing separately, \$375 for a head of household, and \$500 for a married couple filing jointly.

Please follow this link for additional information on House Bill 1000:

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72293>

House Bill 1199 aligns Georgia's Internal Revenue Code with federal law, following certain changes included in the "Big Beautiful Bill of 2025." This legislation also suspends the state motor fuel tax for 60 days, among other provisions.

Please follow this link for additional information for House Bill 1199:

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/72875>



## 2026 Priorities Update Leading to Sine Die on April 2nd

As of **March 26, 2026**, Lt. Governor Burt Jones' legislative priorities for the 2026 Legislative Session have all passed the Senate and are now awaiting action in the House. The final day for these bills to receive a vote by the House or action by the Senate is *Sine Die* on **April 2, 2026**.

For updates on the Lt. Governor Burt Jones' priorities, please follow this link: <https://ltgov.georgia.gov/priorities>

### REDUCING STATE INCOME TAX

The next step is eliminating Georgia's state income tax, giving Georgians a 5% raise so we stay competitive with states like Florida and Tennessee.

- **Legislation:** Senate Bill 476/House Bill 134 - Income Tax Reduction Act of 2026.
- **Legislation:** Senate Bill 477/House Bill 463 - This bill reduces the income rate for individuals to 4.99 percent in the taxable year beginning on January 1, 2026, 4.49 percent for the taxable year beginning on January 1, 2027, and to 3.99 percent for the taxable year beginning on January 1, 2028.

### PROPERTY TAX REFORM

• **Legislation:** Senate Bill 382 - would make annual caps on increases in home values mandatory for any jurisdiction that does not already have such a system in place and would eliminate the ability of local governments to opt-out of the annual caps, as current law allows.

### "TRUE PATRIOTISM & UNIVERSAL STUDENT ACCESS ACT"

• **Legislation:** Senate Bill 552 - would ensure that students' First Amendment rights to organize, gather, and speak are protected, regardless of their religious, political, or social viewpoints or those of school administrators.



### SUPPORTING FOSTER CHILDREN INTO ADULTHOOD

Prioritized the creation of the Senate Study Committee on Additional Services and Resources for Transition Age Youth during the 2025 Legislative Session. During the 2026 Legislative Session, prioritizing the following study committee recommendations:

- **Legislation:** Senate Bill 402 - Continue current pilot programs screening foster youth for autism spectrum disorder and collect additional data for the pilot by implementing screening in two additional DFCS regions.
- **Legislation:** Senate Bill 431 - Ensure school districts are in compliance with enrollment requirements.
- **Legislation:** Senate Resolution 622 - Joint Study Committee on Evaluating Escalating Costs in Georgia's Foster Care System. Appropriate necessary funding for Senate Bill 85, the Georgia Foster Care Scholarship. Review current reimbursement rates, delivery options, and supervision requirements for Advanced Behavioral Analysis treatment for autism spectrum disorder. Fully leveraging federal resources, including President Trump's Fostering the Future for American Children and Families Executive Order.

### REAFFIRMING COMMITMENT TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS

- **Legislation:** Senate Bill 446 - codifies action taken by Governor Brian Kemp on January 20, 2026, to opt Georgia into a new federal tax credit for donations to school choice programs as outlined in the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act."
- **Legislation:** Senate Bill 497 - expands existing protections afforded to Georgia students and parents in public schools by ensuring that parents are notified any time their child receives services at school, including counseling or medical services.

### EXPANDING SCHOOL CHOICE TO FOSTER CARE FAMILIES

- **Legislation:** Senate Bill 152 - expands eligibility for the Georgia Promise Scholarship to biological and adoptive children of foster care parents.

# Events Under the Gold Dome

The 2026 Legislative Session began on **Monday, January 12, 2026** and will end on *Sine Die* - scheduled for **April 2, 2026**.

For additional information on the Senate Committee schedule, please follow this link: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/schedule/senate>.  
For information on legislation that has been introduced, please follow this link: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/all>.



**Lt. Governor Jones joined Senator Blake Tillery to meet with AP students from across Georgia.**



**Lt. Governor Jones joined Rep. Chris Erwin and representatives from Stephens County.**



**Lt. Governor Jones with Georgia Municipal Court Judges.**



**Lt. Governor Jones and Senator Steve Gooch with representatives from Gilmer County.**



**Lt. Governor Jones met with Providence Christian Academy students and parents.**



**Lt. Governor Jones met with students from Emory University.**

Three days remain in the 2026 Legislative Session. Follow along by clicking [here](#) for the Senate Chamber livestream or using the QR Code.

Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>  
Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>  
Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> - *Sine Die*

