

NEWSLETTER

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



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Session Update: 2026 Legislative Priorities Receiving Final Passage

On **Tuesday, April 7th**, Lt. Governor Burt Jones issued a statement in support of his 2026 legislative priorities receiving final passage before the Georgia General Assembly adjourned Sine Die on April 2nd.

"I am proud of the work done during this session to deliver on common sense issues that will positively impact Georgians today, tomorrow, and for generations to come. We delivered on our promise to cap property taxes, reduce the income tax for the fourth year in a row, protect students' first amendment rights, and pass a conservative, fiscally sound budget. The 2027 fiscal year budget includes critical investments in education by fully funding a literacy coach for every school, support for Georgia's retired state employees, appropriations for 900 NOW/COMP waivers, and additional support for Georgia's veterans. I look forward to Governor Brian Kemp signing these priorities and budget into law."

2027 Lt. Governor Jones Legislative Priorities:

"Georgia Economic Growth and Tax Relief Act of 2026": This act cuts both Georgia's personal and business income tax rates to 4.99% for 2026 and creates a path for both rates to reach 3.99% in the coming years.

Property Tax Reform: Under the legislation, the most your assessed value can increase in a given year is 3% or the rate of inflation, even if the market value of your home grows more quickly. The bill also eliminates the ability of school boards, counties, and cities to opt-out of those caps, completing the work led by Lt. Governor Burt Jones and the Georgia Senate beginning in 2023 to ensure that homeowners had more predictability and transparency into their property taxes.

"True Patriotism and Universal Student Access Act:" This legislation is the first of its kind to be passed and ensures 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: Three bills passed to expand current pilot programs screening foster youth for autism spectrum disorder, ensure school districts are in compliance with enrollment requirements for easier transfers for foster children, and create the Joint Study Committee on Evaluating Escalating Costs in Georgia's Foster Care System.

Session Update: Amended Fiscal Year 2026 and Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Priorities

On **Thursday, April 2nd**, the Georgia General Assembly adjourned *Sine Die*. The following budget items were priorities for Lt. Governor Burt Jones during the 2026 session. The Amended Fiscal Year 2026 Budget was signed into law by Governor Brian Kemp on **Tuesday, March 3rd**.

Amended Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Lt. Governor Burt Jones Priorities:

- The Senate version of the budget supported middle class families by providing for both the Governor's income tax rebate and the House homeowner's property tax relief grant, and the House agreed to this appropriation.
- The Senate doubled the House's proposed contribution to Employees' Retirement System bringing the total to **\$100M**.
- The Senate championed the support of mental health services and law enforcement by appropriating **\$409M** for the construction of a 300-bed mental health services hospital, and the House agreed to this appropriation.
- **\$325M** was appropriated for the Needs Based Scholarship Program - DREAMS.
- **\$45M** for homelessness grants and **\$5M** directed at eliminating homelessness in Georgia's Veterans community.
- Furthering the Lt. Governor's commitment to veterans, the Senate appropriated **\$500,000** to the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic in Hinesville, GA.
- Over **\$17M** for new graduate medical education programs.
- Furthering the Lt. Governor's commitment to childcare, the Senate added **\$2.5M** to the BOOST program, which provides after school care for children across the state, and the House agreed to this appropriation.

Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Lt. Governor Jones Priorities:

- Funding a literacy coach in every school for K-3 with an appropriation of **\$70M**.
- An additional 2.92 percent increase for the Employees' Retirement System to trigger regular and annual cost of living adjustments with a contribution of **\$100M**.
- Furthering the Lt. Governor's commitment to the safety of Jewish community centers and schools, the budget includes a **\$5M** appropriation for non-profit security grant programs.
- Funding for **900** additional New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) slots for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Fully funding **\$16.1M** to create parity between in-home and in-office reimbursement rates for autism services.
- Furthering the Lt. Governor's commitment to veterans, appropriated **\$2.5M** to eliminate veterans' homelessness.
- An appropriation of **\$2.5M** to the BOOST program, which provides after school care for children across the state.

For more information on the Amended FY26 Budget and FY27 Budget, please follow this link:
<https://www.legis.ga.gov/senate/budget-and-evaluation-office>

2026 Workforce Opportunity PSAs with Champ Bailey

On **Monday, April 20th**, Lt. Governor Burt Jones announced a series of workforce opportunity public service announcements. Lt. Governor Jones worked with Champ Bailey to develop this three-part series with a goal of bringing awareness to workforce opportunities across the state.

Lt. Governor Jones: "I want to thank Champ and everyone else who was involved with this initiative. I prioritized the creation of these PSAs because bridging the gap between education and employment in Georgia through workforce development opportunities like those offered by the Technical College System of Georgia, Georgia's College and Career Academies, and private-public partnerships like Positive Athlete is critical. Growing and developing Georgia's workforce continues to be a top priority, and I am hopeful that awareness efforts like these will highlight the options Georgians have as they look to develop skills and enter our workforce."

Champ Bailey: "I want to thank Lt. Governor Burt Jones for inviting me to help bring awareness to this important initiative. I've had the privilege of working with him, my home state of Georgia, and partners like Positive Athlete to highlight new pathways into the workforce. By strengthening vocational training, internships, and job placement opportunities, we're helping students gain real-world experience and build a skilled, competitive workforce for Georgia's future."

Please view the links below for each individual PSA:

[Workforce Development PSA](#)

[Positive Athlete PSA](#)

[College and Career Academies PSA](#)



Please use this link for information on Lt. Governor Burt Jones' Workforce Development Resources.

Constituent Visits Around the State

On **Friday, April 24th**, Lt. Governor Burt Jones, along with Senator Rick Williams, Chairman of the Senate Retirement Committee, met with representatives from the Georgia State Retirees Association for a roundtable discussion on the 2026 Legislative Session and the Senate's appropriation of \$200M to the ERS fund in Savannah, Georgia. Lt. Governor Jones plans to hold additional roundtables to hear from Georgia retirees around the state.

"I want to thank Chairman Rick Williams, GSRA President Judy Bryson, other board members, and local representatives who joined us at the meeting. Strengthening Georgia's retirement system for retirees who served as public servants is a priority I will not waver on. This year, I prioritized securing more funding in the budget totaling \$200M, and we will keep pushing to improve and protect benefits for Georgia retirees across the state. I look forward to holding additional roundtables around the state because feedback and support from GSRA members is how we will continue to strengthen our retirement system."

This past session, Lt. Governor Burt Jones, along with the Georgia Senate, prioritized \$100M in the Amended Fiscal Year 2026 Budget and another \$100M in the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget. The Georgia State Retirees Association (GSRA) is an organization with members who are retired from all parts of Georgia Government.



Lt. Governor Jones met with Georgia Farm Bureau State Board of Directors in Macon.



Lt. Governor Jones served as the keynote speaker at the ACCG Annual Legislative Conference in Savannah.



Lt. Governor Jones joined Governor Brian Kemp, Senator Russ Goodman and other leaders to survey counties impacted by the wildfires.

For the latest updates on the wildfires, including resources, burning bans and emergency declarations, please follow these links:

Georgia Forestry Commission: <https://gatrees.org/current-wildfire-information-and-resources/>

Georgia Dept. of Agriculture: <https://agr.georgia.gov/hurricane-helene-block-grant>

GEMA: <https://gema.georgia.gov/wildfires>