



**Georgia Bio Legislative Report
March 29, 2019
Days 36-39 of 40 Day Session**

GENERAL UPDATE:

This week the Georgia General Assembly met for legislative days 36-39 with Tuesday April 2nd marking the last day of session or Sine Die Day.

BUDGET UPDATE

On Thursday March 28th, the Senate and House adopted the Conference Committee report for HB 31, the General Appropriations budget for FY 2020. Georgia Bio is happy to report that our total asking amount of \$323,000 for our rural teacher training program made it through the budgeting process. The bill is now headed to the Governor's desk.

BILL MOVEMENT

The Medicaid Wavier Bill, SB 106 coined the Patients First Act passed out of the House on Monday March 25th and was signed by Governor Kemp into law on March 27th. This bill authorizes the Department of Community Health to submit a Section 1115 waiver request to the United States Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Other bill movement this week include HB 233 the Pharmacy Anti-Steering and Transparency Act; HB 321 that extends the sunset provision for the hospital Medicaid financing program; HB 323 insurance administration of claims by pharmacy benefit managers; SB 118 the Georgia Telemedicine Act; SB 195 the Prescription Drug Benefits Freedom of Information and Consumer Protection Act; and SR 275 that creates a Joint Innovation and Emerging Technologies Study Committee. Please view our legislative watch for more updates.

[HB 31 - General Appropriations; State Fiscal Year July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020](#)

Bill Author: Rep. David Ralston (R-Blue Ridge)

Bill Status: Senate and House Adopted the Conference Committee Report on March 28, 2019

Summary: HB 31 provides appropriations for the State Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020. These appropriations fund the operation of the State government and its departments, boards, bureaus, commissions, institutions, and other agencies, for the university system, common schools, counties, municipalities, and political subdivisions, and for all government activities.

Importance: **Monitoring**

[HB 63 - Insurance; Health Benefit Plans to Establish Step Therapy Protocols](#)

Bill Author: Rep. Sharon Cooper (R - Marietta)

Bill Status: Senate Passed/Adopted By Substitute on March 25, 2019

Summary: HB 63 is the same bill from the 2018 session and is a compromise from all parties involved and establishes a process for when it is medically appropriate to override a step therapy protocol for patients.

Importance: **SUPPORT**

[HB 99 - Insurance; Provide for Modernization and Updates](#)

Bill Author: Rep. Richard Smith (R - Columbus)

Bill Status: Senate Committee Favorably Reported By Substitute on March 18, 2019

Summary: HB 99 purposes to modernization and update provisions regarding health insurance for purposes of conformity.

Importance: **Monitoring**

[HB 233 - Pharmacy Anti-Steering and Transparency Act](#)

Bill Author: Rep. David Knight (R - Griffin)

Bill Status: Senate Passed/Adopted By Substitute on March 28, 2019

Summary: HB 233 prohibits pharmacies from engaging in certain practices, requires pharmacies to file an annual disclosure statement among other requirements.

Importance: **Monitoring**

[HB 321 - Health; hospital Medicaid financing program; extend sunset provision](#)

Bill Author: Rep. Jodi Lott (R - Evans)

Bill Status: Senate Agreed House Amend or Sub on March 29, 2019

Summary: HB 321 aims to extend the sunset provision for hospital Medicaid financing program to June 30, 2025.

Importance: **Monitoring**

[HB 323 - Insurance; Administration of Claims by Pharmacy Benefit Managers](#)

Bill Author: Rep. David Knight (R - Griffin)

Bill Status: Senate Passed/Adopted By Substitute on March 26, 2019

Summary: HB 323 relates to the regulation and licensure of pharmacy benefits managers for purposes of administration of claims, prohibiting certain activities, and to provide an effective date and applicability.

Importance: **Monitoring**

SB 106 - "Patients First Act"

Bill Author: Senator Blake Tillery (R - Vidalia)

Bill Status: Senate Date Signed by Governor on March 27, 2019

Summary: SB 106 authorizes the Department of Community Health to submit a Section 1115 waiver request to the United States Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The Patients First Act is a step toward lowering insurance premiums, enhancing access to quality care, and improving health outcomes in every part of our state.

Importance: Monitoring

SB 115 - "Medical Practice Act of the State of Georgia"; telemedicine licenses for physicians in other states; engage in the practice of medicine with patients in this state through telemedicine

Bill Author: Senator Renee Unterman (R - Buford)

Bill Status: Senate Agreed House Amend or Sub on March 29, 2019

Summary: SB 115 relating to the Medical Practice Act of the State of Georgia, aims to provide telemedicine licenses for physicians licensed in other states to engage in the practice of medicine with patients in this state through telemedicine.

Importance: Monitoring

SB 118 - Insurance; Georgia Telemedicine Act; modernize; Telemedicine Act the Telehealth Act

Bill Author: Senator Renee Unterman (R - Buford)

Bill Status: Senate Agreed House Amend or Sub on March 28, 2019

Summary: SB 118 aims to modernize the Georgia Telemedicine Act, to rename it to the Telehealth Act. The bill provides the definitions of telemedicine and telehealth and prohibits insurers from requiring insureds to use telemedicine and for pay equity for health care providers using telemedicine.

Importance: Monitoring

SB 195 - "Prescription Drug Benefits Freedom of Information and Consumer Protection Act"

Bill Author: Senator Chuck Hufstetler (R - Rome)

Bill Status: House Passed/Adopted By Substitute on March 28, 2019

Summary: SB 195 provides consumer protections and freedom of information regarding prescription drug benefits.

Importance: Monitoring

SR 275 - Joint Innovation and Emerging Technologies Study Committee

Bill Author: Senator Renee Unterman (R - Buford)

Bill Status: House Committee Favorably Reported by Substitute on March 28, 2019

Summary: SR 275 is a resolution creating the Joint Innovation and Emerging Technologies Study Committee.

Importance: Monitoring

GEORGIA BIO LEGISLATIVE TRACKING SHEET

Georgia Bio will provide updates on specific legislation of interest to the Georgia Bio membership. If you have bills that you would like included in the weekly bill update, please email jsantoro@gabio.org.

[Legislative Tracking Sheet](#)

GABIO POLICY & ADVOCACY COMM. MEETINGS/CALL SCHEDULE FOR 2019 GA LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mon. Jan. 28th at 11am

Mon. Feb. 11 at 11am

Mon. Feb. 25 at 11am

Mon. Mar. 11th at 11am

Mon. Mar. 25th at 11am

If you would like to participate on a Georgia Bio Policy Committee call, please contact jsantoro@gabio.org.