



The Capitol Report
February 23rd, 2007
Provided by The Georgia Railroad Association
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The Georgia General Assembly recessed yesterday and will reconvene next Tuesday for three legislative days. While no schedule has been finalized beyond next Thursday, it appears the lawmakers will then take a long recess – perhaps two weeks – while Congress decides whether to provide further support to the Peach Care insurance program for children without health insurance. The legislature has completed 24 of its 40 legislative days.

HB 430 hearing has been scheduled.

Rep. Mack Crawford will hear HB 430 in his Judiciary sub committee next Tuesday morning. Anticipating that the bill gets a favorable reporting it would then go to the full Judiciary committee. The bill has 6 legislative days to get through the sub committee, full committee, Rules committee, the floor of the House and cross over to the Senate.

GRA Spring Conference

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the 2007 Spring Conference at the King & Prince Resort on St. Simons Island. The conference will be May 29-31. The format will be the same as previous conferences with receptions, golf tournament, group dinner and morning meetings. The room rates are as follows: Oceanfront Rooms - \$175 Oceanview Rooms - \$160 Resortview Rooms - \$150. The number for reservations is 800-342-0212. There is a link to the King & Prince Resort at www.georgiarailroad.org

Bills of Interest

HB 268 Davis 109th, Franklin 43rd, Lane 167th to amend Article 9 of Chapter 9 of Title 46, relating to the Georgia Rail Passenger Authority, so as to repeal said article in its entirety; to provide for related matters. **Transportation**

HB 269 Davis 109th, Lakly 72nd to amend Chapter 9 of Title 32, relating to mass transportation, so as to provide for a referendum to approve funding for a commuter rail project within or through a county or municipality. **Transportation**

HB 289 Roberts 154th Freeman 140th Williams 178th Sims 119th Hatfield 177th Peake 137th to amend Article 11 of Chapter 5 of Title 48, relating to ad valorem taxation of public utilities, so as to provide an exemption for eligible expenses for maintenance, repairs, and improvements of a railroad equipment company's railroad cars; to provide for related matters; to provide for a referendum. **Ways & Means**

HB 426 Jones 44th, Fludd 66th, Sims 151st, Rynders 152nd, Smith 129th to amend Code Section 32-6-200, relating to the installation of protective devices at railroad grade crossings, so as to provide for legislative findings; to define a certain term; to provide that local school districts shall provide the Department of Transportation with information regarding rail crossings without active warning devices that are used by school buses; to provide that local school districts shall use best efforts to reroute buses to minimize use of such crossings. **Transportation**

HB 430 Ralston 7th, Roberts 154th, Hatfield 177th, Crawford 127th to amend Title 44 of the O.C.G.A., relating to property, so as to clarify the scope of the provisions applicable to the acquisition of title to land by adverse possession, the acquisition of easements and private ways through prescription, and the acquisition of land by railroad corporations or railroad companies; to amend Article 2 of Chapter 4 of Title 24 of the O.C.G.A., relating to presumptions and estoppel, so as to provide that occupancy of a railroad right of way is by permission; to amend Code Section 46-8-100 of the O.C.G.A., relating to the general powers of railroad companies, so as to provide that issues arising as to the dimensions of property acquired by a railroad corporation or railroad company prior to 1913 shall be determined by reference to the official map filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission pursuant to the Railroad Valuation Act of March 1, 1913. **Judiciary**

HB 434 Martin 47th, Royal 171st, Burns 157th, Benefield 85th, Fludd 66th to amend Title 48 relating to revenue and taxation, so as to provide for a regional sales and use tax for transportation; to provide for definitions; to provide for the levy and collection of such tax; to provide for procedures, conditions, and limitations; to provide for expenditure of proceeds; to provide for collection and administration; to provide for powers, duties, and authority of the state revenue commissioner; to amend Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter 10 of Title 32 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Georgia State Road and Tollway Authority, so as to provide for a Georgia Regional Transportation Fund to finance transportation projects. **Ways & Means**

HB 440 O'Neal 146th amend Chapter 7 of Title 48, relating to income taxation, so as to revise certain provisions relating to certain business income tax credits; to provide for definitions; to provide for administration; to provide for related matters. **Ways & Means**

HR 149 Epps 128th, Buckner 130th, Nix 69th A RESOLUTION creating the Joint Study Committee on the Viability of Commuter Rail Service from Atlanta to West Point; and for other purposes. **Transportation**

SB 43 Rogers 21st, Whitehead 24th, Williams 19th, Johnson 1st, Heath 31st, Mullis 53rd to amend Part 3 of Article 4 of Chapter 11 of Title 16, relating to carrying and possession of firearms, so as to prohibit certain employers from prohibiting employees from lawfully carrying and possessing firearms in locked motor vehicles; to provide for immunity for employers who allow employees to possess firearms in locked vehicles on the premises of such employer; to provide for civil remedies. **Passed Judiciary now in Senate Rules committee**

SB 179 Staton 18th, Powell 23rd, Unterman 45th, Hudgens 47th, Murphy 27th, Butler 55th to amend Article 2 of Chapter 5 of Title 21, relating to campaign contributions, so as to repeal the prohibition against persons acting on behalf of a public utility regulated by the Public Service Commission contributing to political campaigns; to prohibit public utilities regulated by the Public Service Commission from contributing to Public Service Commission candidates or campaign committees for such candidates; to prohibit electric membership corporations from contributing to political campaigns. **Favorably reported Senate Rules**

SR 263 Balfour 9th, Hudgens 47th, Cowser 46th, Unterman 45th, Shafer 48th, Thompson 5th, urging the Congress of the United States to provide funding for the engineering, construction, and land acquisition and other necessary costs for commuter rail connecting Athens to Atlanta. **Favorably reported from Senate Transportation**

SR 282 Seabaugh 28th, Rogers 21st, Pearson 51st, Heath 31st, Hill 32nd A RESOLUTION proposing an amendment to the Constitution so as to eliminate and prohibit the subsequent imposition of state ad valorem taxes and state income taxes and impose in lieu thereof a comprehensive consumption tax to be known as the Georgia One Tax; to provide for procedures and requirements; to provide for the submission of this amendment for ratification or rejection. **Finance Committee**

Thanks to the following associate members who have rejoined the association:

Adams – Warnock
Atlas Railroad Construction
Aon Risk Services Inc.
Atlantic Track & Turnout
Boatright Enterprises Inc.
Century Group
C & S Signaling
Crouch Engineering
Hatch & Kirk
Hulcher Services
Holland LP
Johnson Railway

Koppers Inc
Lanier Steel Products
LB Foster Co.
McCord Tie & Timber
Neel – Schaffer
National Railway Equipment Co
Progress Rail Services
Railway Tie Association
Tangent Rail
Trinity Rail Group
Zurich North America