

Hello, all.

Here is an update of legislation through the end of last week. Please note that the green text scattered throughout the list represents legislation either new to this list, or legislation which has progressed in some form or another since the last legislative update. The bills in black ARE STILL ACTIVE, so please feel free to contact your lawmaker about them if you desire.

I have also included some of Sally FitzGerald's notes from the capitol, as they seemed interesting and insightful. I left all my other notes for those of you who are new to this update.

--Polly

### Potential Laws Affecting Your Children and Your Wallet

Dear Moms, Dads, and Guardians,

At present the General Assembly in Georgia is convening. Below are brief descriptions of a number of bills, which, if passed, will most likely affect you and your children. I encourage you to read the descriptions and talk about those which you support and oppose with your peers and lawmakers. Many of them can **ADVERSELY** affect your kids and Mary Lin! Please don't hesitate to call or email me if you have questions about any of the information below. I am happy to help wherever I can. ([pollymckinney@comcast.net](mailto:pollymckinney@comcast.net) 678-427-5945)

I will remind you that one visit to the capitol or a phone call to your lawmaker or to members of the appropriate House and Senate committee members can make a vast difference in the decisions those people make on our behalf. I have included some email addresses, phone numbers and links for your convenience.

For those of you who are interested, I have also included a brief primer on the few most important points of legislative process and terminology. This section follows the bill descriptions. Also following is a brief note about the importance of the 2010 Census and how it can help your children.

Thanks for reading. Your voice counts.

--Polly McKinney

Legislative Co-chair Lin PTA, mother to Skye and Zane.

News Update: Day 30, Crossover Day will be on March 25. Crossover Day is very important. Bills must have passed their chamber of origin to be considered for passage this session by the second chamber. As this is the second year of a two year term, no bills will be carried over into the 2011 session.

It also appears that there will be a recess week in early April, undoubtedly to await the results of the March revenue numbers. Those of February, release late yesterday, were down over 12%. Year to date, the state budget has taken in \$1.3 billion less than anticipated when compared to last year, which itself was most disappointing.

To anyone who thinks there is some hidden pot of gold to fix the cuts that are taking place in all levels of government, this reporter replies, 'WRONG.' And the state cuts will translate to cuts at the local school district level, and the county commission and city council levels. Schools may close, programs may be cut, personnel may be laid off. All levels of government must have a balanced budget, which is hard to do when the tax revenues do not materialize and the General Assembly is convinced they can cut their way to that goal and that increased revenues are unnecessary.

### **How to Contact Lawmakers**

David Adelman is currently our state Senator, but chances are that he is about to be appointed to be U.S. Ambassador to Singapore. I still recommend calling his office until the minute he gets on the plane! ([david.adelman@senate.ga.gov](mailto:david.adelman@senate.ga.gov) (404) 463-1376)

Otherwise, the Senate committee list is easy to use. Simply click on the appropriate list and member to access phone and email:

[http://www.legis.ga.gov/legis/2009\\_10/senate/committee-alpha-list.php](http://www.legis.ga.gov/legis/2009_10/senate/committee-alpha-list.php)

The House committees are not as easy to access due to a lousy website. The best thing to do is to contact our Representative, Stacey Abrams ([staceyabrams@gmail.com](mailto:staceyabrams@gmail.com) 404.656.0224), or the House Education Committee Chair, Brooks Coleman ([brooks.coleman@house.ga.gov](mailto:brooks.coleman@house.ga.gov) 404.656.9210) for education legislation.

For House committees other than Education, simply click on this link and the committee and call the number listed on the particular committee's home page (there is staff just for that committee):

[http://www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/2009\\_10/house/commroster.htm](http://www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/2009_10/house/commroster.htm)

### **Bills Which Could Affect You and Your Children**

(These descriptions have been written by GA PTA legislative guru, Sally FitzGerald, who has spent many years volunteering at the capitol each session, tirelessly and diligently following education legislation and other measures which affect all of us. I know Sally personally, and not a day goes by when I am not grateful to her for her vast perspective and encyclopedic knowledge of how education in this state is legislated and administered.)

#### **Key:**

HB- House Bill

HR- House Resolution

SB- Senate Bill

SR- Senate Resolution

CA-Constitutional Amendment

H. - House

S. - Senate

The Descriptions list the bill or resolution number (e.g. SB 361, HR 1166, etc.). In most cases, the descriptions also list the last name of the bill sponsor and the district that the legislator represents (e.g., Marin – 96, Rynders – 152, etc.). Following that is the status of the bill so far

(e.g. what committee it is in currently, what committee or chamber it has passed, etc.). Also, where the GA PTA has a position for or against a bill, then that is stated as well, sometimes with the reason. Note: the PTA does not necessarily take a position on every bill).

SB 361, Rogers – 21 DO PASS in S.Education & Youth **(GA PTA OPPOSES!!!!!!!!!!)**

Adds 504 students, foster care students and students from a military family on active duty or in the national guard or reserves to those who can participate in the special needs voucher, renamed the Georgia Early HOPE Scholarship Act. The 504 students must have a 504 plan (named after the federal code section in the 1973 bill which authorized it), and all the students must be enrolled in public school for the immediately prior year. As with special needs scholarships, the student is entitled to the voucher until graduation or a return to public school. Vouchers must include not only the amount within the QBE formula for that student but a proportional share of state categorical grants, non QBE state grants, equalization grants and the student's share of transportation, food services, and building programs. ***The required formula stipulates that the voucher student will get a share of all of these grants even if the student were not eligible to receive any benefit if enrollment in the public school were continued. PTA OPPOSES any voucher, tax credit, or tax deduction that siphons public money to private schools.***

(Sally writes (and I agree): "SB 361 will expand the special needs voucher program to include a considerable larger number of students and at a per pupil costs to the local school systems. It seems like some sort of psychedelic movie that the legislature is cutting and cutting appropriations to the local school systems and then mandating them to provide more and more to students who are not attending their schools and requiring absolutely no accountability for the taxpayer money going to those schools. One would think that someone would shout 'WAIT A MINUTE. Let's not hit them again when they're already down.' Sadly, that's not happening.")

HR1, Lindsey – 54 H. Ways and Means Committee **(GA PTA OPPOSES)**

Proposes constitutional amendment to cap annual property assessment increases of property value at 3% or the rate of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), whichever is less. Would become effective in 2011. The purpose of this resolution is to ensure that sold or transferred property is assessed for tax purposes at fair market value, which is defined as no more than the sales price of the property value in an arms length transaction.

HB 995, May – 111 H. Education **(GA PTA OPPOSES)**

School years cannot begin before September 1 or Labor Day. ***PTA SUPPORTS the options of a local board to set their own school calendars. Whatever is done to prevent school attendance in August must be made up in June, when student attention spans are infected with spring fever.***

SR 886, Chance – 18 S. Education & Youth **(GA PTA SUPPORTS)**

Urges Congress and state agencies to increase nutritional quality and options to students through school meals.

HB 615, Bearden – 68 H. Judiciary **(GA PTA OPPOSES)**

Would allow concealed guns to be carried in schools, churches, bars, public buildings and at sporting events. The only place they would not be allowed is courtrooms and prisons/jails and those places barred by federal law. **OPPOSE - PLEASE call your legislator and tell them guns don't belong in schools.**

SB 308, Seabaugh – 28 DO PASS in S.Special Judiciary **(GA PTA OPPOSES)**

If one possessed a concealed weapons permit, one may carry it anywhere except a college dorm and a school building. Shifts issuance of weapons permits to the Secretary of State rather than the local probate judge. **Current law also forbids guns at school functions and within the 1000 ft school safety zone around a school.**

HB 927, Jacobs – 80 DO PASS in H.Judiciary TABLED IN HOUSE **(GA PTA SUPPORTS)**

Expands the definition of 'bullying' to include electronic bullying that physically harms a person or damages the property of another, has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education, creates an intimidating or threatening education environment, or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school. DOE is required to develop a model policy and make it available on the department's web site for use by local school systems. Local schools must immediately notify law enforcement when a student has allegedly committed a physical assault or battery on another student or a school employee. **Does not require police notification of assault on anyone else, including volunteers or legislators, who might be in the school at the time.**

SB 304, Unterman – 45 S. Judiciary **(GA PTA SUPPORTS)**

Children under the age of 16 cannot be prosecuted for prostitution. **Children under age 16 cannot consent to sex; but currently they can be prosecuted for prostitution. Bill is part of an effort to curb sexual abuse of minors.**

HB 1183, Neal – 1 H.Judiciary Non Civil **(GA PTA SUPPORTS)**

Incest is broadened to be gender neutral such as father and child rather than father and daughter, etc. **PTA SUPPORTS protection of all children.**

HB 1097, Dollar – 45 **FAILED** in H.Education **(GA PTA OPPOSES)**

Local boards of education shall adopt a calendar that begins the fall semester for students no later than the third week of August. **PTA SUPPORTS the options of a local board to set their own school calendar. Whatever is done to limit school attendance in August must be made up in late May or June when student attention spans are infected with spring fever.**

HB 1132, Benfield – 85 H.Education

Grades one and two shall no longer have a CRCT.

SB 427, Weber – 40 DO PASS in S.Education & Youth

Establishes the Georgia Foundation for Public Education to solicit and accept contribution of money, in-kind services and property, particularly for the state schools for the deaf and

blind. The board of directors will number between 5 and 15 and be appointed by the State School Superintendent.

HB 908, Casas – 103 **PASSED** House DO PASS in S.Education & Youth

Local school systems will be exempted from meeting the QBE expense controls (OCGA 20-2-167) and allowed options to use 20 Additional Days of Instruction (OCGA 20-2-212) during the school year for extra instruction to students who need it through June 30, 2013. Senate adds: local school systems may operate with a system average relative to class size.

***If there are two or more classrooms serving the same grades, the system stays in compliance as long as the average of the all the classrooms for that grade have the same number of students as the individual class size itemized for that grade and program in the bill.***

SB 340, Harp – 29 **PASSED** Senate

Every year, local school systems and private schools must transmit to GA School Finance Commission an electronic transcript of courses and grades for each freshman, sophomore and junior high school student, grading scales used in the school, state required test scores for the purpose of calculating the GPA for potential HOPE scholarships. ***Currently, only the seniors' records must be sent.***

SB 299, Jones – 10 DO PASS in S.Education & Youth

Juvenile judges given discretion about incarcerating a child with a weapon in school, on school grounds, or at a school function on the first offense unless the weapon is a firearm or machine gun or is used with an assault. ***Essentially, knives and other items used as weapons excluding firearms are removed from the zero tolerance law for children on the first offense. School are not required to change their behavioral codes.***

SB 332, Jones – 10 DO PASS in S.Education & Youth

Requires reporting of all disciplinary actions of zero tolerance offenses to the DOE annually from each school. ***Currently, reporting is done by school district. With the smaller base of a student enrollment, the discipline actions will be fewer in each category which might lead some to be able to determine which student did what. This seems to be a violation of the student's confidential records.***

SB 332, Jones – 10 DO PASS in S.Education & Youth

Requires reporting of all disciplinary actions of zero tolerance offenses to the DOE annually from each school. ***Currently, reporting is done by school district. With the smaller base of a student enrollment, the discipline actions will be fewer in each category which might lead some to be able to determine which student did what. This seems to be a violation of the student's confidential records.***

HB 1103, Maxwell - 17 DO PASS in H.Education

Professional Standards Commission, PSC, to do criminal background checks on newly certified teachers and paraprofessionals. Includes teachers in charter schools. ***Currently, the local board of education is arranging for that to be done. In either case, the employee pays for the check.***

HB 1023, Graves – 12 DO PASS in H.Spec. Committee on Small Business Develop. & Job Creation

Provides a one year waiver from Secretary of State filing fees for corporations, limited partnerships, and LLCs. Hiring folk receiving unemployment benefits can get a credit against required unemployment contributions of \$25 to \$125/employee/quarter. An income tax exclusion for long-term capital gains in the year following a year where revenue shortfall reserve is at \$500 million or more, the exclusion amount is 25%; 50% for all years thereafter. A \$2500 income tax credit per unemployed for at least 13 weeks person hired thru' June 2011 and each stays on the job for at least 2 years. Angel investors get an income tax credit in tax years 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 for up to 50% of the investment in Georgia domiciled businesses that employ 20 or fewer people, have gross sales of less than \$500,000/yr. There is a state cap of \$10 million on these tax credits. Eliminates the corporate net worth tax in 2011.

SB 391, Unterman – 45 DO PASS in S.Judiciary

A child under the jurisdiction of the superior court who is mentally ill or has a developmental disability and is in need of involuntary placement may be placed in a secure hospital or community facility. ***The superior court will have jurisdiction if the charge is severe and the child is being charged as an adult.***

SB 400, Crosby – 13 DO PASS in S.Special Judiciary

Juveniles will be credited for time served in confinement prior to the court order.

HB 1100, Casas – 103 DO PASS in H.Education

Eliminates the CRCT in grades 1 and 2. The SBOE can waive any required test if insufficient funds are appropriated.

HB 1121, Ramsey – 72 DO PASS in H.Judiciary Non Civil

Tampering with state test answer sheets shall be a misdemeanor such as copy a test booklet, make answer keys available, give inappropriate guidance to students taking the test. Superintendents and principals are included if they fail to follow testing procedures established by the state. The penalty is up to a \$1000 fine and/or 30 days in jail and is in addition to any other process currently in law, such as loss of certification by the Professional Standards Commission. ***The governor's recommendation.***

SB 84, Heath – 31 **PASSED** Senate in 2009 **PASSED** House **DV**

Local board of education candidates may serve simultaneously on the board of a private school. School boards may have only seven members unless grandfathered by a local act. Each school board member shall subscribe to an ethics policy, shall have minimal interest in a business which transacts with the school system, shall accept no gifts or favors, loans, contributions or other thing of value, except campaign contributions. Any board member may be removed from the board with a 2/3s vote of the other board members. The governor may remove board members if a local school system is placed on probation by any accrediting agency. The board member may appeal to the governor for reinstatement after a hearing. Disallows a relative of a superintendent to be on the school board. State board shall design and deliver all school board member training. ***House amends:*** Limits members of a board from removing one of its own. Governor can remove a board member but can only appoint a replacement until the next election. Local board members cannot serve on a board of a private elementary or secondary school at the same time as a local

public board of education. Nepotism restricts board member eligibility and superintendents qualifications. Qualifications for elections may be waived by the state board of education prior to the date for filing for election. ***Recommendations of a study requested by the state board of education on changes to local school board governance. PTA points out that removal of duly elected public servants for loss of accreditation is heavy handed as there is NO legal requirement for accreditation.***

SB 298, Seay – 34 **PASSED** Senate **(GA PTA OPPOSES)**

A first aid component of the health and physical education courses in grades 8-12 must include a unit on basic first aid. ***PTA believes that the Department of Education should develop curriculum, not the legislature. Author has tried very hard to remove offensive language, but still insists on requiring this curriculum.***

HB 1130, Benton – 31 DO PASS in H.Education

Class sizes can be increased until 2013 by the following:

- . K-5 can be exceeded by one student
- . 6-12 can be exceeded by two students
- . State Board of Education may authorize up to one additional student per class upon requests by a local school board.

A 30 notice and a public hearing must be held by the local school board. The state board may ask for performance measures in exchange for the additional class size authority such as higher graduation rates, SAT or ACT performance, CRCT or EOCT score increases. Also removes expenditure controls on QBE programs and the 20 additional instructional day program. ***These last two proposals were the original HB 908 which was amended in the Senate and may not move further along.***

HR 1485, Carter – 175 DO PASS in H.Education

Creates the 16 member Certification and Learning Task Force to study and recommend which PLUs are best for educators and education. Report due November 2011. The members come from the PSC, DOE, USG, a public school superintendent, a public school principal, a private college representative, among others.

SB 319, Staton - 18 **PASSED** Senate DO PASS in H.Science & Technology **DV**

Money appropriated for 'textbooks' can also be used to purchase computer hardware and software.

**HB 906**, Neal – 1 **PASSED** House **PASSED** Senate **TGFS**

Through 2013, contracts for educators can be offered as late as May 15 of the previous spring. ***Currently, contracts must be issued by April 15. School systems will have the additional month to better estimate the students to be enrolled the following fall and have more certain information about the state appropriations and thus how many teachers may be needed. This bill needs to be signed quickly for school system planning.***

SB 341, Harp – 29 **PASSED** Senate DO PASS in H.Higher Education

Students must be legal residents of Georgia to get a HOPE GED scholarship-voucher, which is a \$500 stipend and funded by the lottery. ***Aligns this grant with other HOPE***

**grants and scholarships. An audit discovered that about \$2.3 million had been lost to ineligible recipients.**

HR 1166, Marin – 96 H. Natural Resources & Environment

Urges local boards of education to apply for federal funding to retrofit school buses with pollution control devices which reduce as much as 85% the dangerous fine particulates in diesel exhaust which builds up in the cabins of the buses. About 200,000 of Georgia's children have asthma.

HB 966, Millar – 79 TABLED in H.Education subcommittee

Request for intradistrict choice can be limited by the school district if space is available. This bill requires the space to be permanent classroom space which shall not include temporary buildings, portable units, or trailers.

HB 975, Anderson – 117 H.Ways & Means

A property tax exemption of 100% until the property is sold or for six years on a newly constructed single-family residence offered for sale by a residential contractor. **Older homes will pay more taxes to make up the difference.**

HB 963, O'Neal – 146 **PASSED** House

A property tax return shall be filed in the county where the real property is located without reference to how the return shall be delivered thereto. Homestead exemptions for school taxes for those over age 62 shall be no more than \$10,000 net income from all sources for taxpayer and spouse. **Currently, the income limitation applies to all income from all persons in the household.**

HB 977, Rynders – 152 **PASSED** House

In years where local boards of education must furlough teachers and other staff, raises cannot be given to superintendents using state funds [which are not used now], however step increases on the state salary scale may be awarded. If local funds are used in such years to provide a raise to the superintendent, there must be 30 days notice to the public and a hearing.

HB 1110, Loudermilk – 14 H.Education

A local school board member must wait one year after leaving office to become employed in that local school system .

HB 992, Taylor – 55 H.Ways & Means

A 100% property tax exemption for six years on new residential construction. **This shifts the local revenue needs to older houses and corporate taxpayers.**

HR 1219, Benfield – 85

Urges the GA Department of Education and all school systems to cease military recruitment of students under age 17; and for older students such recruitment can be done with parental permission only; and to actively provide forms for parental permission to exclude schools disclosing student records to military recruiters.

***Federal NCLB legislation allows military recruiters to have access to a student's record if other post secondary institutions have access. The parent may opt out, but how to do that is not well publicized.***

HB 651, Carter – 175 **PASSED** House

The sexual offenders information sent to the Department of Education for dissemination to all the schools in the state may be done electronically or other ways, not just a 'list'. This will permit an electronic file or internet access to satisfy the requirement.

HB 905, Dickson – 6 **PASSED** House DO PASS in S.Education & Youth

Capital outlay programs are extended through FY15. This includes the fast growth, low wealth and advanced funding programs. ***In 2009, the governor vetoed an extension of the capital outlay programs because of significant costs attached to a curriculum requirement amended to the bill.***

HB 907, Casas – 103 **PASSED** House DO PASS in S.Education & Youth

Schools containing any combination of grades 6, 7, or 8 may be eligible to earn the middle school grant. All other middle school criteria must be met. ***Currently, a middle school must contain grades 8 and 7 with or without grade 6. Middle school programs earn 13% more than middle grades programs.***

HB 1031, Oliver – 83 H.Education

Parents would be allowed to wait up to 30 days before enrolling a child in school if they move. ***Should a parent move twice during any school year, this would permit the student to miss 60 school days, 1/3 of the entire school year. Currently, the student has to enroll at the earliest possible time in the new school system.***

SB 352, Williams – 19 S.Education & Youth

Requires the state Board of Education to include a growth model in the calculation of Adequate Yearly Progress, and for grades to be given to school of A, B, C, D, and F. The grades of the students on the tests must be scaled so that no more than 60% get an A or B. Obsoletes the High School Graduation Test and replaces it with End of Course Tests beginning in the 2013-14 year. ***Currently, AYP is calculated on a cohort model. The uses of the state tests defined in this bill are for purposes not part of their design and content.*** This observer cannot shake the feeling that the sponsors want at least 20% of the schools to make an F every year, another 20% to make a D, and another 20% to make a C, and if they do better than that, too bad!

SB 358, Grant – 25 S.Higher Education

A tuition assistant grant is made available to students at GA Military College. ***Currently, such grants are available only to students of North Georgia College and State University.***

HB 910, Maxwell – 17 **PASSED** House

Annual school year reporting requirements for expenditures and participation rates for each gender in extracurricular activities is simplified. **PTA SUPPORTS gender equity in extracurricular opportunities as is required by Title IX of the federal education code. Asked for by DOE.**

HB 1029, Scott – 153 H.Ways & Means  
Repeals the corporate income tax as of 1-1-11.

HR 1238, Butler – 18 and HB 1051, Butler – 18 H.Ways & Means  
CA and enabling legislation to permit local school districts to levy a homestead sales and use tax, HOST, of 1% for providing a homestead exemption from property taxes in an amount that does not exceed the tax collected. As with the educational SPLOST, food would be taxed. Referendum required.

HB 936, Battles – 15 DO PASS in H.Education subcommittee  
Funds appropriated for school bus replacement may be used to refurbish existing buses. Refurbished buses, then, cannot be replaced for seven more years. The costs of refurbishing shall not exceed \$30,000/bus.

HB 937, O'Neal – 146 DO PASS in H.Education subcommittee  
Repeals the nepotism clause for candidates for local board of education for candidates and family members employed as of 1-1-10. The candidate is not protected if a family member is hired in the future. This restriction was put into law in 2009 and has caused much angst especially in smaller school districts.

HB 1114, Smith – 113 H.Government Affairs  
Local boards of education and local election superintendents shall be authorized to develop and implement a Student Teen Election Participant, STEP, program to permit full-time high school student to volunteer to work as poll officers. The student shall be trained, must have written permission of the parent, shall work at least four but not more than six hours on any single election day, and shall be counted as present at school. Only two days per school year are allowed for each student to serve. **Currently, a student age 16 or older may serve as a poll officer, but there is no recognition by the schools that the service to the community is an excused absence or curriculum related work. There have been previous attempts to enact similar language, but none has succeeded.**

HB 281, Walker – 107 DO PASS in H.Science & Technology  
Students enrolled in the Georgia Virtual School or another state approved virtual charter school in grades 6-12 shall be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities of the public school to which each would otherwise be enrolled. Schools are prohibited from joining any organization that regulates or governs interscholastic extracurricular activities that discriminates against virtual students. **Currently, students must be enrolled full time in a school to participate in interscholastic competitions offered by that school.**

## CENSUS 2010

The requirement to count the population of the country is in our original constitution adopted in 1787, and remains unamended to this day. The count is for reapportioning the House of Representatives among the states, which is now capped at 435 members. Over the years, that decennial count has been put to work as the basis for redrawing boundaries of elected offices in the country, except those elected at large, and for the distribution of a myriad of federal grants.

Everyone is to be counted on April 1, from the baby born that day to the oldest resident, citizen or not, legal resident or not. This is a challenge for those not native to this country, for they sometimes feel the information will be used against them. Not True! The Census Bureau is forbidden to share any of that information with any other entity.

In 2010, the census form has just 10 questions, mailed to most residences in March. It is available in several languages for those not comfortable with English. If the form is not returned by the requested date, census workers will call at one's residence.

Residents are NOT required to reveal their social security number, bank account number, or any other number than could be used for identity theft. Census workers will have identity cards and will never ask to enter your house.

PTA can begin informing membership to expect these census forms, return them promptly, and encourage others to do so as well. **BE COUNTED!**

### When and How Laws are Made in Georgia (in a nutshell)

The state House and Senate, known as the General Assembly, meet each year, from the second Monday in January for 40 legislative days. This means the session runs from that Monday until about the beginning of April, as recessed days to study the budget, etc., do not count as legislative days. Over the last 2 weeks, they have been in recess to conduct budget hearings. They reconvene for the 21st legislative day on Monday, March 8. FYI, the only legislation the House and Senate are required to pass each session is the state budget. They do, however, consider and pass a great deal more each year.

The House of Representatives and Senate operate with similar powers, except that appropriation bills must originate in the House, while confirmation of the Governor's appointments rests with the Senate. The concurrence of both bodies is necessary before any bill may become a law.

The House of Representatives has 180 members and the Senate has 56. Two-year terms of office apply to both houses, and the entire membership of each body is elected at the same time.

Here is a great link to a brief description of the legislative process (This describes the process if a bill starts in the house. You do the same thing if one starts in the Senate, but reverse the chambers.):

[http://www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/2009\\_10/house/communications/constservices/billLaw.html](http://www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/2009_10/house/communications/constservices/billLaw.html)

## Terminology

**Bill:** Legislative proposal originating in either house, normally proposing a change in the statutes requiring approval by both chambers of the Legislature and action by the Governor in order to be effective.

**Committee:** A body of appointed members designated to consider and make recommendations concerning disposition of bills, resolutions and other related matters within a particular subject area.

**Conference Committee:** Committee composed of appointed members of both chambers to resolve differences between the two chambers on a legislative proposal.

**Resolution:** A formal expression of opinion or decision (not to be confused with a bill).

**House or Senate Resolution:** A resolution acted upon by only one chamber, requiring the approval of a majority of those present and voting, used for matters relating only to that chamber.

**Constitutional Amendment (CA):** A proposal to change the state constitution. It takes a two-thirds vote in each chamber and, later, the approval of voters.

**Amendment:** An alteration proposed or made in a bill or motion by adding, changing, substituting or omitting. It may be offered by a committee or a member.

**Rules:** The committee that decides whether a bill gets debated by the full chamber. Later in the session, it sets the daily calendar, making it very powerful.

**Vehicle:** A piece of legislation used by lawmakers to carry another measure they really want to pass. The bill they want to pass gets amended onto the vehicle, which is often minor legislation

**Sine die:** Latin for adjournment without recall. On the last day of the session, the House Speaker and lieutenant governor adjourn "sine die" and slam down their gavels, signifying the end of the 40 legislative days.