
Bills: Some Lived, Some Died, Some Were Guttled

While death-by-committee is the fate of most legislation, it is, simultaneously, good or bad depending on what the bill was introduced to do. Based on their subject, bills and resolutions are assigned to committees to accelerate their disposition. Meanwhile, legislators convene for a fraction of each of 40 days to handle on-the-floor responsibilities. Then, they attend committee meetings before and after the floor sessions to decide which bills and resolutions are favorably reported out of committee onto the Senate floor or House floor, where they pass or die. Bills left in committee die, also.

Passed, but Guttled: Campus Free Speech Act

S.B. 339, The Campus Free Speech Act, passed but was gutted in committee. As introduced by Senator Ligon, S.B. 339 would have prohibited on-campus "free speech" zones where students, staff, and administrators may censor/prohibit comments or printed material that bring discomfort to hearers. Comments most commonly censored are expressions of religious or moral opinions, that most often reflect Christian morality.

The watered-down version of S. B. 339 passed to protect invited public speakers, who agree to comply with the institution's content-neutral time, place, and manner restrictions. But the prohibition against so-called free speech zones was deleted before passage of the bill.

Passed: Safe Place for Newborns

H.B. 513, The Safe Place for Newborns, passed the House and Senate without opposition. Sixteen years ago, the culture had changed so much that the Safe Place for Newborns Act of 2002 passed, so mothers could permanently drop off newborns at fire stations or police stations, no questions asked, no strings attached. The goal: prevent the injury or death of newborns.

In 2008 the Act was amended to include medical facilities and sheriffs' offices as legal drop-off locations. Passage of H.B. 513 amends it again with new language requiring the Department of Human Services to develop a standard sign to be posted at all authorized drop-off facilities. DHS will decide the size and type of the signs and where they should be posted.

Passed: Israel Honored

S.R. 718 Reaffirmation of Friendship and Cooperation with Israel was passed and adopted in the Senate to recognize Israel as the greatest friend the U.S. has in the Middle East and to commemorate Israel's 70th anniversary, which is April 19, 2018.

H.R. 1469, Israel: Maintain Consulate General in Atlanta, which is home to one of the ten largest Jewish communities in North America. H.R. 1469 was adopted in the House.

H.R. 1470, Relocate U.S. Embassy to Israel's Capital, Jerusalem, from Tel Aviv as authorized in the Jerusalem Embassy Act passed by Congress in 1995, which declared that Jerusalem should remain an undivided city. Former presidents did not implement the Act.

NOTE: President Trump will receive a copy of H.R. 1470 and the Israeli Ambassador and Consul General in Atlanta will receive copies of H.R. 1469 and S.R. 718.

Passed: Driving Laws

H.B. 673, Prohibit Distracted Driving of Motor Vehicles, survived 14 legislative processes, two committee substitutes, and 14 proposed amendments before passing the last day of the session. Already in Georgia, it's illegal for anyone 18 and younger with a learner's permit to use an electronic device while driving. H.B. 673 says "no individual shall physically hold or support, *with any part of his or her body*" a wireless communications device. However, the driver may use an earpiece, headphone device, or device worn on a wrist (smart watch), or a stand-alone electronic device. Drivers must keep their hands free or expect enhanced penalties.

H.B. 978, Traffic Enforcement Safety Devices in School Zones, amends driving laws in school zones and when meeting or overtaking a school bus on the road. It authorizes schools to use "An automated traffic enforcement safety device," to detect speed and take photographs or videos (or both) of the rear of a vehicle, including rear license plates of vehicles being towed. Such devices can record the date, time, location, and speed of vehicles. Schools that choose to use such equipment must get a permit from the Department of Transportation. *FYI*: School safety zones extend 1,000 feet from schools.

Passed: Alcohol and Marijuana Bills

S.B. 17, Earlier Alcoholic Beverage Sales on Sunday, authorizes a local referendum in counties or municipalities that allow Sunday sales of alcoholic beverages. Meaning, voters will decide whether the sale of alcoholic beverages consumed on the premises begins at *11:00 a.m. before church is over or remains at 12:30 p.m.* in consideration of Sunday church services.

H.B. 65 Create Medical THC Commission; Qualify Intractable Pain and PTSD for THC Held over from 2017, H.B. 65 originally made seven additional ailments eligible for treatment with THC. But it lay dead-in-committee, until its sponsor gutted and reworded it with H.B. 764 and additional language. The "as-passed" version (a) creates a ten-member Low THC Medical Oil Access Joint Study Commission to research marijuana cultivation, manufacture, labeling, testing, dispensing and delivery, and (b) qualifies intractable pain and PTSD for THC oil treatment. The commission's findings and recommendations, including possible legislation for 2019, are due December 31st, when the commission stands abolished.

H.B. 147, House Study Committee on Industrial Hemp Production, creates a five-member House committee to study the production of industrial hemp. It promotes the economic value of growing hemp, but does not mention that no marijuana seed in the world is guaranteed to produce marijuana with hemp-level THC. Online THC oil salesmen claim their product is legal because it's made from industrial hemp marijuana. *Translation*: industrial hemp marijuana and other marijuana plants produce the same THC. The committee report is due December 1st.

Passed: Protection for Disabled and Elderly Adults

H.B. 803, Crimes and Offenses; Trafficking a Disabled Adult, Elder Person or Resident, explains trafficking this way: "A person commits the offense of trafficking a disabled adult, elder person, or resident when such person, through deception, coercion, exploitation, or isolation, knowingly recruits, harbors, transports, provides, or obtains by any means a disabled adult, elder person, or resident for the purpose of appropriating the resources of such ... for one's own or another person's benefit." Violations will be felonies punishable by one to 20 years in prison and/or \$100,000.00 fine. Each violation will be a separate offense.

Conservatives Bat 500 for Bills: 16 Wins, 16 Losses

Out-right Victory: Bad Bill Defeated by a Senate Floor Vote

- ❖ **S.B. 418, Remove Local Control of Regulated Substance Sales**, lost 19 – 34 in Senate

❖ *Victories when these Bills Died*

House Bills

- H.B. 118, The Fantasy Contest Act of 2017**, online gambling for youth, tabled/died in Senate
- H.B. 650, State Symbols & Public Monuments**, disposition of confederate memorials, died
- H.B. 660, Enhanced Sentence if Crime Targets LGBTQQ**, died in House committee.
- H.B. 663, Harsher Sentences for Crimes against LGBTQQ**, died in House committee.
- H.B. 819, Change Address at Election, Vote Same Day**, died in House committee, no action
- H.B. 948, Remove Local Control of Regulated Substance Retail Sales**, died in committee

House Resolutions

- H.R. 317, Provide Casino Poker Room in Locations with Entertainment Districts**, died
- H.R. 373, Cobb County Judicial Circuit Judge**, hijacked, changed to pro-LGBTQQ bill, died
- H.R. 969, Ratify Equal Rights Amendment**, died in House committee without action.
- H.R. 1399, Legalize Casino Gambling**, introduced in 2018, died with no committee action.

Senate Bills

- S.B. 302, State Symbols & Public Monuments**, treatment of certain confederate objects, died
- S.B. 320, Schools would Register Voters**, upon enrollment of a child, died without action.

Senate Resolutions

- S.R. 195, Article V Convention for Term Limits**, passed Senate, died in House committee
- S.R. 614, Authorizing Legalization and Regulation of Marijuana**, died in Senate committee
- S.R. 820, Ratify Equal Rights Amendment**, died in Senate committee with no action

❖ *Losses when these Bills Died*

House Bills

- H.B. 484, Vertical License for DACA Drivers**, died without action in House committee.
- H.B. 605, Hidden Predator Act**, died, Senate conference committee not appointed on Day 40
- H.B. 662, Ethics in Government Act, Define Sexual Conduct**, died in House committee.
- H.B. 719, Housing Preferences for Homeless Veterans**, died with no action in committee.
- H.B. 737, Law Enforcement Exposed to HIV, Hepatitis B or C**, died in Rules Committee.
- H.B. 936, School Year Not to Begin before Third Week in August**, died in committee.
- H.B. 999, Weapons Carry, Inpatient Hospitalization**, passed the House, tabled in the Senate

House Resolutions

- H.R. 888, Committee to Study Conversion of Closed Hospitals into Veterans Homes**, died.
- H.R. 939, Opposes Citizenship Question on Census**, died in House committee without action.

Senate Bills

- S.B. 335, Trafficking of Sexual Servitude**, passed the Senate, died in a House committee.
- S.B. 375, Keep Faith in Adoption Foster Care Act**, passed Senate, died in House committee
- S.B. 417, Vertical License for DACA Drivers**, died without action in Senate committee.
- S.B. 437, Non-Resuscitate Child Needs Parent Consent**, passed Senate, died in House Rules
- S.B. 452, Ensuring Necessary Deportations (END) Act**, passed Senate, died, tabled in House

Senate Resolutions

- S.R. 587, English Georgia's Official Language**, died, no action after assigned to committee
- S.R. 613, English Georgia's Official Language**, died with no action in committee.

Focus on the Family “Day of Dialogue” to Counteract “Day of Silence”¹

In 2012 Focus on the Family introduced a “Day of Dialogue” to counter the pro-homosexual annual day of silence and supplied downloadable Day of Dialogue tools and strategies, still available online. But this year, FOF is asking participants to choose the best date for their Day of Dialogue and register at DayofDialogue.com. Then, join FOF on Facebook and Twitter.

Day of Silence in Schools, April 27, 2018, Promotes LGBTQQAI

January: “No Name-Calling Week”

October: “Coming Out” Day & “Allies” Week

November: “Transgender Day of Remembrance”

November: Mix-It-Up at Lunch Day

The on-going systematic, persistent strategy for acceptance of homosexuality in schools sprouted in 1996 from the idea of an 18-year-old who put it in writing. Her project, “organizing grassroots for non-violent protests” evolved into an in-class day for students and school staff to publicize, promote and present homosexuality as desirable, normal and entitled to acceptance.

The year it started, 150 University of Virginia students, reportedly, gained wide-spread local press coverage after declining to speak in class. In 1997, with a new name, National Day of Silence (DOS) was observed in 100 colleges and universities, and by 1998 it was in 200 schools. Current numbers may be available after this year’s DOS, which is Friday, April 27th.

Between 1999 and 2001, the first DOS National Project Coordinator met with volunteers for a weekend in Boston to develop strategy. By then, DOS had moved into secondary schools and had added 300 high schools where students or staff pledged to promote LGBTQQAI in class.

So, within five years DOS was in high schools and headed to middle schools. The Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN) became, and is, the official organizational sponsor, complete with funding, staffing and volunteers.

GLSEN developed a DOS Project Advisory Board and a Leadership Team of students to further hone their skills to ensconce DOS and related activities in high schools. The United States Student Association became a partner to make sure colleges and universities would not be short-changed when high schools became the focus.

ACTION – Oppose. Will your local school allow DOS participation on April 27th? Remind administrators that Georgia law authorizes only a moment of silence that, if observed, must be at the beginning of the school day. Since anti-LGBTQQAI days are not allowed, ask for the denial of in-school pro-LGBTQQAI days, though they may be disguised as anti-bullying.

¹ **2002** Georgia DOS observances: 15 high schools: Brookwood, East Paulding, Etowah, Harrison, Hiram, Jackson County, Loganville, North, Northwest Whitfield, Phoenix, Rabun Gap-Nacoochee, South Effingham, Stone Mountain Charter, Twiggs County, Villa Rica; 5 Colleges: Georgia Tech, Spelman, State University of West Georgia, University of Georgia, Wesleyan.

2004 Georgia participation ballooned to 71 as follows: 10- colleges and universities: Berry, Georgia Tech, Georgia Perimeter, Georgia State, Morehouse, Oxford of Emory, Southern Polytechnic State, Spelman, Valdosta State, Wesleyan; 4 Schools of the Arts: Atlanta Art Inst., Davidson Fine Arts, DeKalb School of Arts, John S. Davidson Fine Arts (dup. ?);

4 middle schools: Dodgen, Richmond Hill, RSMS, Snellville; 53 high schools: Abraham Lincoln, Appalachee, Brandon Hall, Callaway, Campbell, Centennial, Central Gwinnett, Central (dup.?) Chattahoochee, Collins Hill, Colquitt County, Druid Hills, Dunwoody, Eagles Landing, East DeKalb, Effingham County, Etowah, Fayette County, George Walton Comprehensive; Grady, Greenbrier, Harrison (Harrison in Cobb?), Harlem, Holy Innocents, Houston County, Kell, Lakeside, Lassiter, Lewis Central, Lowndes, Manchester, McEachern, McIntosh, Milton, Norcross, North Forsyth, North Gwinnett, North Springs, Northgate, Northview, Peach County, Peachtree Ridge, Pepperell, Rabun Gap-Nacoochee, Radford, Roswell, Sequoyah, South Gwinnett, Southeast Bullock, Statesboro, Westminster Schools, Tucker, Union County.

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