

# Capitol Report

## Adjournment Sine Die -- March 29, 2023

GCAA had a busy 2023 General Assembly! An action packed 40 days. We worked closely with Mathews & Maxwell to track, monitor and lobby issues of importance to our industry. In addition, we worked in partnership with our allies @ The Georgia Transportation Alliance, GHCA, GRMCA, GMA and the Georgia Chamber/Government Affairs Committee. The legislative process is clearly a collaborative effort. We were not successful on all fronts, but we look forward to continuing to relay our legislative priorities to key leaders during the remainder of the year.

The Georgia General Assembly adjourned at 12:15 a.m. Thursday morning. Gov. Brian Kemp has 40 days (May 8) to sign or veto bills that passed both Houses. Bills that neither completely passed nor were voted down will return to their last committee of jurisdiction where their journey resumes next January. Listed below are updates on key issues for our industry this year.

HB 239 would add "aggregate and mineral mining" to the existing Manufacturers Investment Tax Credit. It passed out of the House Ways & Means Committee but was not given a vote on the House floor. It returns to W&M Committee next session. Even proposed tax credits that would support favorite issues such as attracting healthcare providers to rural Georgia were not moved this year. The Governor, Lt. Governor and Speaker have agreed to do an intensive study of all tax credits over the interim. There is a legislative faction who would like to reduce the number of state tax credits as a way to eliminate or lower Georgia's income tax rate. GCAA will work with key players on this issue during the year.

HB 189, truck-weight legislation, was settled by various compromises in a House/Senate Conference Committee and did not pass until after midnight Wednesday. Final bill: Expansion of weight variance up to 88,000 pounds but limited to trucks carrying agriculture and timber products. These trucks may not travel in 13-county EPA pollution non-attainment area surrounding Atlanta nor exceed 150 miles to delivery. Local law enforcement may purchase scales and weigh trucks themselves. There is a two-year sunset on the legislation designed to give all parties time to discuss ways to raise funds for road maintenance. Bill moves to the Governor.

HB 617 would develop a state-wide freight and logistics implementation plan. HB 617 did not cross over, thus returns to the House Transportation Committee next session.

HB 436 would increase the maximum criminal penalty for surface mining violations to a fine of \$10,000 per day. Its status for the next session is "passed House," resides in Senate Natural Resources Committee.

HB 71, The Okefenokee Protection Act failed to get out of the House Natural Resources and Environment Committee and remains there next year. HR 438 creating a House Study Committee on the Okefenokee swamp will also return to House Natural Resources Committee.

SB 146, Provides for the regulation and taxation of electricity purchased as a motor fuel in electric vehicles. Would ensure replacement of tax funds lost as drivers switch from current motor fuel usage. Passed both Houses. On to the Governor.

SR 155, Senate Study Committee to examine cause and effects of the truck driver shortage and recommend legislation. Passed Senate, no need to go to the House or Governor. It will be composed of five members of the Senate to be named later.

### Tort Reform Bills:

SB 186 -- Premises liability. No vote. Back to Senate Committee.

SB 191 -- Sue insurance company directly. Tabled, back to Committee.

SB 192 -- Limit use of GPS data and video footage to date of accident. Back to Committee.

SB 196 -- Allow failure to wear seatbelt admissible in civil action. Voted down. Dead.

SB 200 -- Protect high-ranking corporate officials from unwarranted depositions. Tabled, back to Committee.

SB 74 -- Similar to SB 200, although some argue watered down. On to the Governor.