2017 Legislative Update Week 5 – February 10, 2017

The General Assembly completed Day 16 of the 2017 Legislative Session on Friday, February 10th. The legislature re-convened on Tuesday, February 14th for Legislative Day 17 and was in session Tuesday through Friday of this week. Crossover day remains scheduled for March 3.

Budget

The Senate passed the Supplemental Budget, <u>HB 43</u>, with minor changes that will be resolved between the two chambers. The 2018 Budget, <u>HB44</u>, continues to be heard by the appropriations subcommittees of the House.

Business & Industry

<u>HB 192</u> sponsored by Rep. Beth Beskin (R-Atlanta), aims to return Georgia to an environment that facilitates reasonable decisions by corporate directors and officers. It also encourages companies to incorporate in Georgia, thereby creating opportunities for further economic growth. HB 192 was heard in the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Friday, February 10.

<u>HB 199</u> sponsored by Rep. Trey Rhodes (R- Greensboro), is an income tax credit incentive to entertainment companies such as video game and postproduction. The bill is intended to jumpstart emerging companies by making capital more readily available when they may need it most. The bill was heard in the Ways and Means Income Tax Subcommittee on Wednesday, February 8.

<u>SB 85</u> sponsored by Sen. Rick Jeffares (R – McDonough) is a compromise reached between the Georgia Beer Wholesalers and the craft beer industry which will allow breweries in Georgia to make limited direct sales of their product to their customers. The bill caps the total amount of direct sales by each brewer to 3000 barrels per year and allows a customer to purchase a case of beer per day directly from the brewery for take-out from the premises. On-site sales of beer are allowed as well. This effort is designed to help the craft beer industry to continue to grow in Georgia and should be beneficial to both the wholesalers and brewers. The bill passed out of the Alcohol and Tobacco Subcommittee on Thursday and awaits a hearing in the full House Regulated Industries Committee.

Economic Development

<u>HB 155</u> sponsored by Rep. Amy Carter (R - Valdosta), the "Georgia Musical Investment Act" offers a 20 – 25% income tax credit for projects that are recorded in Georgia or for tours that invest in the state above a threshold dollar amount. The bill is awaiting action in the House Ways and Means Committee.

<u>SB 2</u> sponsored by Sen. Mike Dugan (R – Carrollton), the FAST Act - Fairness, Accountability, Simplification and Transparency - empowering our small businesses to succeed, aims to reduce regulations and licensing requirements on small businesses. The bill was heard in the Senate Economic Development and Tourism Committee on Tuesday, February 7 and is awaiting further action.

<u>SB 79</u> sponsored by Sen. Brandon Beach (R - Alpharetta), allows for two "destination resorts" in Georgia and creates the Georgia Gaming Commission. The legislation requires a two billion dollar minimum investment in an Atlanta resort and 450 million dollars required for the unspecified second location. The bill was heard in the Senate Regulated Industries committee for the first time on Thursday, February 11.

Healthcare

<u>SB 70</u> sponsored by Sen. Butch Miller (R – Gainesville), would renew the Hospital Provider Payment Program also known as the hospital Medicaid financing program that provides for the continuation of a charge by hospitals statewide which will be pooled to assist in drawing down federal Medicaid matching funds. The current Program is set to sunset on June 30, 2017 so this bill extends the program until June

30, 2020. The House Passed SB70 with a vote of 152-14 on Friday, February 10 and now awaits the Governor's signature.

<u>SB 81</u> sponsored by Sen. Renee Unterman (R - Burford), is aimed at addressing the opioid abuse problem in the state of Georgia in a variety of ways. The bill passed the Senate Health and Human Services Committee by committee substitute on Thursday, February 9.

Transportation

<u>SB 6</u> sponsored by Sen. Steve Gooch (R – Dahlonega), creates a statewide regional transit council to address regional solutions to issues of infrastructure for transit. The bill passed the Senate Transportation Committee on Tuesday, February 7, and awaits action in the Senate Rules Committee.

<u>HB 160</u> sponsored by Rep. Kevin Tanner (R – Dawsonville), creates the Georgia Commission on Transit Governance and Funding to study and address the needs of mass transportation. The bill passed the House Transportation Committee by substitute on Thursday, February 9

For detailed information on specific legislation visit: http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-us/Search.aspx

The Regional Business Coalition of Metropolitan Atlanta (RBC) is an organization of over a dozen of the largest and most active Chambers of Commerce throughout the metro Atlanta region, including the Douglas County Chamber. RBC member chambers represent over 15,000 member companies who employ millions of metro Atlanta residents. The RBC's primary goal is to represent the interests of RBC Chamber members on regional public policy issues impacting our transportation, water and air quality and to advocate for solutions that improve metro Atlanta's quality of life and economic vitality.