2017 Legislative Update
Weeks 8 & 9 – Crossover Report

The General Assembly completed Crossover Day (Legislative Day 28) around 10:30 pm on Friday, March 3 and Friday, March 10 marked legislative day 31. Bills that made the crossover deadline and passed over to the other chamber are slowly getting hearings in committees. Bills that did not crossover are technically dead for this session, however bills can still be amended onto other bills and advance within that bill. The last day of session or Sine Die remains set for March 30.

Budget

HB 44 sponsored by Rep. David Ralston (R- Blue Ridge) is the 2018 Budget. The Senate continues to work on the budget, which was heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on Monday, March 13.

Business & Industry

HB 61 sponsored by Rep. Jay Powell (R- Camilla) allows the state to collect sales tax on online purchases through either direct collection by the retailer or by notification of the tax amount to the consumer and the state. The bill awaits action in the Senate Finance Committee.

HB 192 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 will be heard in the Senate Banking and Financial Institutions Committee on Wednesday, March 15.

HB 199 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 Senate Finance Committee on Monday, March 13.

SB 85 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 awaits action in the House Rules Committee. The bill will be on the House floor for a vote on Monday, March 13.

Economic Development

HB155 sponsored by Rep. Amy Carter (R - Valdosta), called 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 awaits action in the Senate Finance Committee.

HB 158 sponsored by Rep. Ron Stephens (R – Savannah) aims to allow two "destination resorts" with casinos in Georgia and create the Georgia Gaming Commission. The legislation requires a two billion dollar minimum investment in Atlanta with 450 million dollars required for the unspecified second

location. The bill did not make it out of the House Regulated Industries Committee and is therefore dead for this session.

HB 265 sponsored by Rep. Chuck Efstration (R – Dacula) amends the existing Quality Jobs Tax Credit by allowing qualified projects which have at least $2.5 million investment to receive a subsequent quality jobs tax credit. The bill also allows for a sales tax exemption of property used for or in the renovation or expansion of certain theaters and provides a sales tax exemption on certain tickets for arts and educational programming. HB 265 passed the Senate Finance Committee on Wednesday, March 8.

HB 336 sponsored by Rep. Don Parsons (R - Marietta), known as the Broadband Strategy for All of Georgia Act, creates broadband deployment incentives to expand internet access in rural Georgia. The bill did not make it to the House floor for a vote and is therefore dead for this session.

SB 2 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 awaits action in the House Small Business Development Committee.

SB 79 sponsored by Sen. Brandon Beach (R-Alpharetta), titled the "Destination Resort Act," pertains to casinos and requires a two billion dollar minimum investment in Atlanta with 450 million dollars required for an unspecified second location. The bill did not make it out of the Senate Regulated Industries Committee and is therefore dead for this session.

SB 116 sponsored by Sen. Frank Ginn (R- Danielsville) relates to provisions applicable to counties and municipal corporations prohibiting the assessment of storm-water utility fees on water-neutral properties. The bill did not pass the Senate Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee and is therefore dead for this session.

Education and Workforce Development

HB 338 sponsored by Rep. Kevin Tanner (R- Dawsonville), provides for a system of supports and assistance for low-performing schools identified as in the greatest need of assistance. The bill also looks to provide for and create an Education Turnaround Advisory Council and a Joint Study Committee on the Establishment of a State Accreditation Process. The bill was heard in the Senate Education and Youth Committee on Friday, March 10.

SB 3 sponsored by Sen. Lindsey Tippins (R- Marietta), known as the CONNECT Act, expands credentialing for vocational and skilled labor education in secondary schools. The bill will be heard in the House Education Sub-Committee on Monday, March 13.

Transportation

HB 160 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 awaits action in the Senate Transportation Committee.

SB 6 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 awaits action in the House Transportation Committee.

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

The Douglas County Chamber is part of the Regional Business Coalition (RBC), an organization of over a dozen of the largest and most active Chambers of Commerce throughout the Metro Atlanta region. 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.