

FAMILY & POLICY



AN ADVOCACY PROGRAM OF

FEBRUARY 19, 2010

The General Assembly has called a 2-week break to consider the budget crisis and will reconvene March 8th. With revenue receipts still in decline from last year, the Governor's revenue estimate for the remainder of FY 2010 may have to be revised downward by several hundred million dollars. Because the shortfall reserve now holds only \$103 M, this could necessitate even deeper cuts. It would be possible instead to move federal stimulus funds from the FY 2011 budget to the FY 2010, but that would leave another deep hole in the FY 2011. Legislators will not resolve the FY 2010 amended budget until after they learn the amount of February tax receipts in the first week of March.

The Senate passed its version of the FY 2010 amended budget. The Senate made relatively few changes from the House version of the FY 2010 amended budget. See: [Senate FY 2010](#) (organized by Appropriations subcommittee). *Education*. The Senate agreed with the House on restoring the proposed \$17 M cut in equalization grants, but agreed with the Governor's proposed 8% cut in programs such as Communities in Schools, Information Technology, and Regional Education Service Agencies. *Community Health*. The Senate restored prenatal care funds in Babies Born Healthy, disagreeing with the House's 8% cut. The Senate agreed with the House on increasing cuts to Ga. Partnership for Caring (\$75,000), St. Joseph Mercy Care (\$45,811), Chatham Co. Board of Health (\$55,901), and the Southeastern Firefighters Burn Foundation (\$62,500). The Senate cuts the Rural Health Association by \$7,500 instead of the House's \$15,000. The Senate further reduced funding for Low-Income Medicaid showing a \$13.3 M cut instead of the House's additional \$11.9 M. The Senate added another \$250,000 for start up of a total of two new Federally Qualified Health Centers. *Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities*. The

Senate restored \$200,000 for the Marcus Autism Center (a \$74,000 reduction from the House version, but agreed to delay funding for a Sexual Offender Review Board database. *Human Services*. The Senate agreed with the House to restore \$225,000 for Alzheimer's respite services, but agreed with the Governor's cut of \$177,859 for the Center for the Visually Impaired, \$15,000 for the Haralson Co. Senior Center, and \$20,000 for Senior Connections in DeKalb. The Senate agreed with the House's \$200,000 cut for the EMBRACE foster care program. It reduced the cut in departmental administration from the House's

\$2.9 M to \$626,320.

House and Senate subcommittees will meet jointly the week of February 22nd on the FY 2011 budget. See the [Meeting Schedule](#) for details. Legislators will hear from department heads about their budgets. The joint Health subcommittees will hold a public hearing on the Department of Community Health budget Thursday, 2/25, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. in Room 341 CAP.

Is the hospital tax dead? Scores of hospital and business interests turned out this week to protest [HB 307](#) (Cole, 125th), which would charge the 1.6% tax on net revenues Gov. Perdue used as a building block for his budget. Many called for increasing the tobacco tax instead.

Child sexual exploitation. A new bill not yet assigned to committee, [HB 1256](#) (Manning, 32nd), defines prostitution and masturbation for hire as applying to persons age 16 or over. Younger children could be taken into DFCS custody and placed in foster care if it is not in their best interests to return them home.

Child welfare. The House Children and Youth Committee recommended passage of [HB 1085](#) (Dempsey, 13th) to bring the Department of Human Services into compliance with recent federal law. See the 2/5 Bulletin.

Highlights

- The General Assembly is in a recess until March 8th to work on budget issues.
- The Senate passed its version of the FY 2010 Amended Budget.

You can help!

Locate your State Representative and Senator: www.votesmart.org (Check your driver's license for 9-digit zip code.)

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