

FAMILY & POLICY



AN ADVOCACY PROGRAM OF

JUNE 2009

Even as Gov. Perdue signed the **FY 2010 Budget**, revenues continued to plunge. He is requiring agencies to cut 25% from their June 2009 budgets and may call a special session to make further cuts in 2010. He vetoed **HB 481** (Graves, 12th) that would have enacted major tax breaks. **GBPI** analysts project that very large shortfalls are likely in 2010 and 2011, even with the federal stimulus funds.

Governor Perdue signed many bills, including the following:

Government. **HB 228** (Butler, 18th) reorganizing DHR functions effective July 1 creates a new Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD). Aging and DFCS remain in the newly-named Dept. of Human Services. The Dept. of Community Health acquires much of the DHR Office of Regulatory Services and the Division of Public Health (DPH). The Governor will appoint the DPH Director who will report to him and to the DCH Commissioner. **HB 228** also makes permanent the Commission on Family Violence. Gov. Perdue vetoed budget language that prohibited privatizing state hospitals until a director is appointed for DBHDD. **HB 2** (Rice, 51st) addresses citizenship screening for public employers and administrators of public benefits. **Health care.** A substitute to **SB 94** (Hill, 32nd) enables people laid off by small firms to continue their employer-based health insurance for themselves and their families for 9 months with federal stimulus funds paying 65% of the premium. Without the bill, these families would have received the subsidy for only 3 months. **HB 160** (Cole, 125th) fining "super-speeders" is expected to generate \$23 M for trauma care. **SB 165** (Goggans, 7th) allows DCH to verify Medicaid and PeachCare applicants' income through the Dept. of Revenue. **HB 69** (Jerguson, 22nd) removes the requirement that a second physician concur that CPR would be "medically futile" where a do-not-resuscitate advance directive has been implemented by the patient. **Child welfare & protection.** **HB 254** (Peake, 137th) allows DFCS 30 instead of 90 days to identify adult relatives of children removed from their homes. **HB 145** (Lindsey, 54th) sets factors judges should use to decide if certain

child support awards should be reduced. The monthly minimum is \$100, plus \$50 for each other child. **HB 189** (Butler, 18th) permits private child support collection and sets requirements for operations and for contracts between collectors and obligees. Collectors must register with the Secretary of State and post a \$50,000 bond. **HB 123**

(Ramsey, 72nd) defines child molestation to include transmitting indecent images by cell phone or internet. **SB 69** (Unterman, 45th) defines child

abuse to include sexual exploitation by any person who allows or encourages a child to engage in prostitution or any sexually explicit conduct. **SB 79** (Harp, 29th) broadens the definition of who may have access to information in alleged abuse cases involving fatalities or near fatalities to include any federal, state, or local governmental entity needing the information to carry out its legal responsibilities to protect children from abuse and neglect. **SB 207** (Wiles, 37th) requires that juvenile court hearings be open to the public, with certain exceptions. **Education.** **HB 193** (Graves, 12th) allows an hourly equivalent of 180 school days. **HB 149** (Jones, 46th) allows 11th & 12th grade students to attend eligible post-secondary colleges and schools for high school credit. **HB 251** Beginning in school year 2009-2010, a student may choose to attend any school within the system in which the student resides if classroom space is available after its assigned students have been enrolled. As of the 2011-2012 year, **HB 229** (Coleman, 97th) requires school systems to conduct student fitness assessments, report results to parents, and report school aggregate results to the State Board of Education. **SB 114** (Harbison, 15th) facilitates transfer and enrollment in K-12 of children of military personnel who are on active duty, are severely injured and discharged or retired, or who die on active duty or of injuries suffered on active duty. **Unemployment insurance.** **HB 581** (Coan, 101st) allows unemployment insurance (UI) for jobseekers looking for part time work and for certain workers in retraining, and it allows workers to receive UI for 13 extra weeks.

Legislative Roundup

Watch for more!

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