

POWER SESSION

Summarizing the Continuing Legislative Process of the **2013 GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**



June 20, 2013

VOL. 3 ISSUE NO. 10

Please contact legislative affairs with any additional information regarding the current session.

As always, we appreciate any and all information you can provide from your respective areas!

QUESTIONS?

contact:

Glennis Barnes 8-506-6576

Debbie Burris 8-506-6588

John D'Andrea 8-506-7282

Scott Draper 8-506-6933

Ben Forehand 8-506-6225

Sandra Gentry 8-506-3636

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Did You Know?

pages 1

Under the Gold Dome

page 2-3

Legislation on the Move

pages 4-10

Informational Websites

page 11

SINE DIE

The Legislative Affairs Team sends out a big **THANK YOU** to our Corporate Partners who helped to make the 2013 legislative session a success by reading, reviewing, and supplying facts and data on legislation with potential impact to Georgia Power.

Did you know

During the 2013 Legislative Session, members of the Georgia General Assembly introduced **695** House bills, **272** Senate bills, **1038** House resolutions, and **699** Senate resolutions.

Of those bills and resolutions, Debbie Burris sent out **130** for review by Georgia Power subject matter experts to determine the effects of these bills on Georgia Power.

The legislative affairs team is actively tracking **46** bills and resolutions as amend, support, oppose, neutral or monitor in status.

11 bills have already been signed by Governor Nathan Deal.

Legislation that did not pass or fail in both chambers during the 2013 legislative session will carry over into the 2014 session at which time those bills and resolutions may be taken up for consideration. Additional bills may also be introduced during the 2014 legislative session.

continued from page 1

Under the Gold Dome

Solar Initiative

The Rural Georgia Economic Recovery and Solar Resource Act of 2014, HB 657 by **Rep. Rusty Kidd (I-Milledgeville)** is a bill authorizing the Public Service Commission to establish a rural community solar initiative and charges the PSC with managing responsible expansion of solar energy in the state of Georgia. The PSC would be responsible for determining if any federal funds or tax incentives would be available for the program. In addition, the bill authorizes the PSC to select a "Community Solar Provider" as the sole developer of solar generation facilities throughout the state.

HB 657 would charge the PSC with setting a long-term target for solar capacity and mandate a minimum amount of solar electricity that must be purchased by the electric utility regardless of customer enrollment in the program. The PSC would set the rate the CSP would be paid by the electric utility for the purchase of the mandated solar generation.

According to the bill, the Community Solar Provider would:

- own, operate and maintain their own solar facilities
- conduct an RFP for excess solar demand
- sell solar electricity to the electric utility
- coordinate solar development in Georgia

The bill specifically states that there would be no change to the Georgia Territorial Act of 1973, but in areas where there is a conflict, the Rural Georgia Economic Recovery and Solar Resource Act of 2014 would supersede the Territorial Act. **Georgia Power opposes the bill.**

Ethics Reform

In the July Primary Elections, over 1 million Georgia citizens voted in favor of limiting lobbyist spending at the State Capitol on non-binding questions on the Republican and Democratic ballots. In response, **House Speaker David Ralston (R-Blue Ridge)** introduced **HB 142** and **HB 143**. After extensive work done during the committee process, both bills were voted on in the House on Monday, February 25. HB 142 passed 164-4 and HB 143 passed 167-0. **Georgia Power is neutral on both bills.**

The major provisions for **HB 142** include:

- Re-establishing the rule making authority to the Georgia Campaign Finance and Transparency Commission, this authority was stripped by former Speaker Glenn Richardson.
- Bans spending by lobbyist for gifts, dinners and event tickets, but allows for events for the whole General Assembly, and groups such as committees, caucuses, and local delegations.
- Expands the definition of a lobbyist to require registration for unpaid individuals who lobby on behalf of organizations.
- Changes reporting requirements for registered volunteer lobbyists who do not spend money on legislators.

continued on page 3

continued from page 2

- Takes away the annual registration requirement for volunteer lobbyists who spend no more than five days at the General Assembly.

HB 143 includes:

- Requirement for members of the General Assembly to file disclosure reports to report any money raised between January 1 and the start of the legislative session.
- Allows local elected officials to file disclosure reports at a local level instead of with the state.
- Removes the disclosure filing requirements for city and county officials who raise \$2,500 or less in campaign contributions or expenditures.
- Changes reporting requirements from four times per year to two times per year during an election year for local officials with contributions or expenditures that fall between \$2,500 and \$5,000.

Both bills now head to the Senate for the committee process and a floor vote. In January, the Georgia Senate adopted a rule governing only the Senate chambers that placed a cap of \$100 on lobbyist spending. The passage of **HB 142** and **HB 143** by both chambers supersedes the Senate rule.

Nuclear Financing

HB 267 by **Rep. Jeff Chapman (R-Brunswick)** is a bill aimed at limiting the amount of profit that Georgia Power will be allowed to earn on costs that are above the certified amount for units 3 and 4 at Plant Vogtle.

Currently, the Georgia Public Service Commission has the authority to review and approve/disapprove costs of the project. Georgia Power files reports to the PSC every six months, which are then reviewed by an independent construction monitor for management and prudence of the dollars spent. The process, along with Nuclear Regulatory Commission supervision provides for extreme oversight and scrutiny of every aspect of the construction project.

The bill was heard on Tuesday, February 26 in a sub-committee of the House Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications committee. **Georgia Power opposes the bill.**

GPC Sales Tax Exemption

HB 418 and **HB 419** by **Rep. Barry Fleming (R-Harlem)** are two bills currently in the House Ways and Means committee that directly affect the sales tax exemption that Georgia Power receives for machinery used in the generation of electricity. **Georgia Power opposes both bills.**

- **HB 418** is an attempt to allow counties to use confidential taxpayer information to research inconsistencies in the distribution of taxes from the State of Georgia. This bill would place an administrative burden on GPC to answer questions regarding refunds, exemptions and inconsistencies in county tax amounts. The State Department of Revenue has the authority to oversee the collection of taxes and to ensure that all taxpayers are treated fairly and in a consistent manner.
- **HB 419** seeks to remove electrical power generating facilities from the definition of a manufacturer for sales and use tax purposes. Georgia Power currently receives the exemption for sales and use tax on machinery and equipment used in all generating facilities. If passed, this bill will significantly increase costs and in turn, those costs to the company would be passed on to the customer.

Solar Tax Credits and Exemptions

HB 348 by **Rep. Don Parsons (R-Marietta)** is a bill that allows tax credits for alternative fuel vehicles. The bill is currently in the House Ways and Means committee. **Georgia Power is neutral on this bill.**

HB 430 by **Rep. Don Parsons (R-Marietta)** is a bill that qualifies equipment used in solar installations for a sales and use tax exemption. The bill would benefit Georgia Power and its customers due to the company's move toward more solar generation. **Georgia Power supports this bill.**

continued from page 3

LEGISLATION on the move

BILL	SPONSOR	TITLE	STATUS	COMMITTEE HISTORY
HB 31	Rep. Rahn Mayo <i>(D-Decatur)</i>	Motor vehicles; only hands-free communication devices	Amend to exempt utilities	1/17/13 – Assigned to the Motor Vehicles committee
HB 34	Rep. Don Parsons <i>(R-Marietta)</i>	Income tax credit; clean energy property; include certain commercial geothermal heat pumps	Amend	1/15/13 – Assigned to the House Ways & Means committee 3/4/13 – Passed the House 153 Yea, 0 Nay 3/05/13 – Assigned to the Senate Finance committee 3/26/13 – Failed in the Senate, Reconsidered and returned to the Senate General Calendar (This bill could come back during the 2014 Legislative Session)
HB 76	Rep. Doug Holt <i>(R-Social Circle)</i>	Electric transmission lines; factors to be used by a utility in exercising power of eminent domain	Oppose	1/17/13 – Assigned to the House Energy, Utilities & Telecommunications committee
HB 77	Rep. Doug Holt <i>(R-Social Circle)</i>	Electric transmission lines; burden of proof for the route selected for location	Oppose	1/17/13 – Assigned to the Energy, Utilities & Telecommunications committee
HB 93	Rep. Earnest "Coach" Williams <i>(D-Avondale Estates)</i>	Motor vehicles; use of devices for oral communications unless hands-free device	Amend to exempt utilities	1/28/13 – Assigned to the Motor Vehicles committee
HB 97	Rep. Tyrone Brooks <i>(D-Atlanta)</i>	Minimum Wage; substantive and comprehensive reform of provisions regarding the law	Oppose	1/28/13 – Assigned to the Industry and Labor committee
HB 128	Rep. Allen Peake <i>(R-Macon)</i>	Georgia Downtown Renaissance Investment Tax Credit Act	Support	1/29/13 – Assigned to the Ways & Means committee
HB 133	Rep. Tommy Benton <i>(R-Jefferson)</i>	Property easements; rights of way across private land for the purpose of access to cemetery sites	Neutral	1/30/13 – Assigned to the Judiciary committee
HB 136	Rep. Mary Margaret Oliver <i>(D-Decatur)</i>	Solid waste management; surface storage and disposal of coal combustion	Oppose	1/30/13 – Assigned to the Natural Resources & Environment committee

continued from page 4

LEGISLATION on the move

BILL	SPONSOR	TITLE	STATUS	COMMITTEE HISTORY
HB 142 Passed	Rep. David Ralston <i>(R-Blue Ridge)</i>	Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission	Neutral	1/30/13 – Assigned to the House Rules committee 2/25/13 – Passed the House 164 Yea, 4 Nay 2/26/13 – Assigned to the Senate Rules committee 3/22/12 – Passed the Senate 52 Yea, 0 Nay 3/25/2013 – House and Senate Conference Committee Appointed 3/28/2013 – Senate Conference Committee Report Adopted 56 Yea, 0 Nay 3/28/2013 – House Conference Committee Report Adopted 169 Yea, 0 Nay
HB 143 Passed	Rep. David Ralston <i>(R-Blue Ridge)</i>	Campaign contributions; disclosure reports	Neutral	1/30/13 – Assigned to the House Rules committee 2/25/13 – Passed the House 164 Yea, 4 Nay 2/26/13 – Assigned to the Senate Rules committee 3/26/2013 – Senate passed by Substitute 45 Yea, 2 Nay 3/28/2013 – House and Senate Conference Committee Appointed 3/28/2013 – House Conference Committee Report Adopted 169 Yea, 1 Nay 3/28/2013 – Senate Conference Committee Report Adopted 54 Yea, 1 Nay
HB 144	Rep. Tom Kirby <i>(R-Loganville)</i>	Labor organizations; public policy declaring Georgia a free-to-work state	Monitor	1/30/13 – Assigned to the Industry and Labor committee
HB 153	Rep. John Carson <i>(R-Marietta)</i>	Local option sales tax; taxes to be imposed at a rate of less than 1 percent	Monitor	1/31/13 – Assigned to the Ways and Means committee
HB 176	Rep. Don Parsons <i>(R-Marietta)</i>	Mobile Broadband Infrastructure Leads to Development (BILD) ACT	Neutral	2/01/13 – Assigned to the Energy, Utilities & Telecommunications committee

continued from page 5

LEGISLATION on the move

BILL	SPONSOR	TITLE	STATUS	COMMITTEE HISTORY
HB 183	Rep. Rick Jasperse <i>(R-Jasper)</i>	New Employees, annual report by public employers relative to compliance with certain laws	Amend	2/04/13 – Assigned to the Industry and Labor committee
HB 196	Rep. Bob Bryant <i>(D-Garden City)</i>	Transportation, Department of; notify municipal authorities prior to removal of trees in certain instances	Oppose	2/05/13 – Assigned to the Transportation committee
HB 225	Rep. Tom Kirby <i>(R-Loganville)</i>	Natural Resources, Department of; Environmental Protection Division; rules or regulations be approved by the General Assembly prior to promulgation	Neutral	02/07/13 – Assigned to the Natural Resources & Environment committee.
HB 226 Passed	Rep. Randy Nix <i>(R-LaGrange)</i>	Solid waste management; tire transportation, storage, and disposal; revise certain requirements (Contains amended language agreed upon for Georgia Power's purposes)	Amend	2/07/13 – Assigned to the House Natural Resources & Environment committee 2/27/13 – Passed the House by committee substitute 139 Yea, 33 Nay 2/28/13 – Assigned to the Senate Natural Resources & Environment committee 3/28/2013 – Senate passed by substitute 46 Yea, 7 Nay 3/28/2013 – House agreed to the Senate substitute
HB 250 Passed	Rep. Tom Rice <i>(R-Norcross)</i>	Local excise tax; sale or use of energy	Support	2/08/13 – Assigned to the House Ways & Means committee 3/5/13 – Passed the House 170 Yea, 0 Nay 3/07/13 – Assigned to the Senate Finance committee 3/28/2012 – Passed the Senate 50 Yea, 0 Nay
HB 267	Rep. Jeff Chapman <i>(R-Brunswick)</i>	Financing costs; construction of nuclear generating plant; change calculation that utility can recover from customers	Oppose	2/08/13 – Assigned to the Energy, Utilities & Telecommunications committee

continued from page 6

LEGISLATION on the move

BILL	SPONSOR	TITLE	STATUS	COMMITTEE HISTORY
HB 276 Passed	Rep. Chad Nimmer <i>(R - Blackshear)</i>	Hazardous site response; appropriations to Department of Natural Resources and Georgia Hazardous Waste Management Authority; change certain procedures	Support	2/11/13 – Assigned to House Natural Resources and Environment 3/05/13 – Passed the House 169 Yea, 2 Nay 3/07/13 – Assigned to the Senate Natural Resources & Environment committee 3/26/2013 – Senate passed by Substitute 50 Yea, 0 Nay 3/28/2013 – House agreed to the Senate Substitute as Amended by the House 174 Yea, 1 Nay 3/28/2013 – Senate agreed to the Substitute as Amended by the House 51 Yea, 1 Nay
HB 282 Failed	Rep. Mark Hamilton <i>(R-Cumming)</i>	Municipal Broadband Investment Act	Monitor	2/11/13 – Assigned to the House Energy, Utilities, & Telecommunications committee 3/07/13 – Failed in the House 70 Yea, 94 Nay
HB 290	Rep. Katie Dempsey <i>(R-Rome)</i>	Labor; employees use sick leave for care of immediate family members; allow	Amend	2/12/13 – Assigned to Human Relations and Aging
HB 348	Rep. Don Parsons <i>(R-Marietta)</i>	Income tax credit; purchasers of alternative fuel vehicles	Neutral	2/14/13 – Assigned to the Ways & Means committee
HB 357	Rep. Tom McCall <i>(R - Elberton)</i>	Hazardous waste; management of sites and provisions concerning enrollment, participation, and administration of hazardous site remediation programs; revise provisions	Support	2/19/13 – Assigned to Natural Resources and Environment
HB 360	Rep. Al Williams <i>(D-Midway)</i>	Taxation; wages of certain employees responding to natural disasters; exempt	Monitor	2/19/13 – Assigned to the Ways & Means committee
HB 370	Rep. Paulette Braddock <i>(R-Powder Springs)</i>	State income tax; eliminate classification of counties into tiers	Oppose	2/19/13 – Assigned to the Ways & Means committee

continued from page 7

LEGISLATION on the move

BILL	SPONSOR	TITLE	STATUS	COMMITTEE HISTORY
HB 390	Rep. Rahn Mayo <i>(D-Decatur)</i>	Sales and use tax; ceiling on local taxes which may be levied by a political subdivision; provide for additional exemption	Oppose	2/20/13 – Assigned to the House Ways & Means committee
HB 418	Rep. Barry Fleming <i>(R-Harlem)</i>	Revenue collection; method for county and municipal governing authorities to obtain certain information from revenue commissioner; provide	Oppose	2/21/13 – Assigned to the Ways & Means committee
HB 419	Rep. Barry Fleming <i>(R-Harlem)</i>	Sales and use tax; change definition regarding manufacturing	Oppose	2/21/13 – Assigned to the Ways & Means committee
HB 430	Rep. Don Parsons <i>(R-Marietta)</i>	Sales and use tax; eligibility of solar energy electric generation equipment for tax exemption	Support	2/21/13 – Assigned to the Ways & Means committee
HB 494	Rep. Andy Welch <i>(R-McDonough)</i>	Mass transportation; installation of safety markers on utility lines to provide adequate visual warning in use of private airstrips	Amend	2/27/13 – Assigned to the House Transportation committee 3/07/13 – Passed the House 167 Yea, 2 Nay 3/11/13 – Assigned to the Senate Transportation committee
HB 549	Rep. Jon Burns <i>(R-Newington)</i>	Water pollution; establish water emergency response procedures	Oppose	3/07/13 – Assigned to the House Natural Resources & Environment committee
HB 564	Rep. Karla Drenner <i>(D-Avondale Estates)</i>	Electric suppliers; energy savings plans to optimize use of demand-side capacity options	Oppose	3/07/13 – Assigned to the House Energy, Utilities & Telecommunications committee
HB 650	Rep. Rusty Kidd <i>(I-Milledgeville)</i>	Sales and use tax; variable rate based on place of manufacture of product sold	Oppose	3/21/13 – Assigned to the House Ways and Means committee
HR 740	Rep. Matt Dollar <i>(R-Marietta)</i>	House Study Committee on the Economic Impact of Expanding the Renewable Energy Market in Georgia; create	Neutral	3/20/13 – Assigned to the House Economic Development & Tourism committee
SB 20	Sen. Donzella James <i>(D-Atlanta)</i>	Labor/Industrial Relations; prohibit employers from requesting credit reports	Monitor	1/15/13 – Assigned to the Insurance and Labor committee

POWER SESSION

Summarizing the Continuing Legislative Process of the **2013 GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

continued from page 8

LEGISLATION on the move

BILL	SPONSOR	TITLE	STATUS	COMMITTEE HISTORY
SB 40	Sen. Lester Jackson <i>(D-Savannah)</i>	Revenue Dept.; report on the effect of tax exemptions on the amount of revenue collected; state and local governments	Monitor	1/15/13 – Assigned to the Finance committee
SB 51	Sen. Buddy Carter <i>(R-Pooler)</i>	“The Georgia Cogeneration and Distributed Generation Act of 2001”	Oppose	1/16/13 – Assigned to the Regulated Industries and Utilities committee
SB 89	Sen. Vincent Fort <i>(D-Atlanta)</i>	Fire Protection/Safety; require every public/private school and early care and education program to have carbon monoxide detectors	Amend	2/01/13 – Assigned to the Education and Youth committee
SB 99	Sen. Judson Hill <i>(R-Marietta)</i>	Taxation/Revenue; allow such taxes to be imposed at a rate of less than 1 percent	Monitor	2/04/13 – Assigned to the Senate Finance committee 3/5/13 – Passed the Senate 47 Yea, 2 Nay 3/07/13 – Assigned to the House Ways and Means committee
SB 110	Sen. Horacena Tate <i>(D-Atlanta)</i>	Rules of the Road; prohibit the use of telecommunications devices for oral communications; unless hands-free communication device	Amend	2/07/13 – Assigned to the Public Safety committee
SB 117	Sen. Rick Jeffares <i>(R-McDonough)</i>	Blasting or Excavating Near Utility Facilities	Neutral	2/07/13 – Assigned to the Senate Regulated Industries and Utilities committee 2/19/13 – Passed the Senate 53 Yea, 0 Nay 2/20/13 – Assigned to the House Energy, Utilities & Telecommunications committee
SB 176	Sen. Ross Tolleson <i>(R-Perry)</i>	Waste Management; hazardous waste sites; enrollment, participation, administration; revise provisions	Support	2/26/13 – Assigned to the Senate Natural Resources & Environment committee

continued from page 9

LEGISLATION on the move

BILL	SPONSOR	TITLE	STATUS	COMMITTEE HISTORY
SB 213	Sen. Ross Tolleson <i>(R-Perry)</i>	"Flint River Drought Protection Act"; clarify legislative intent; revise definitions; expand programs	Oppose as passed in the Senate	2/26/13 – Assigned to the Senate Natural Resources & Environment committee 3/7/13 – Passed the Senate as amended on the floor 52 Yea, 1 Nay 3/11/13 – Assigned the House Agriculture & Consumer Affairs committee 3/28/2013 – Withdrawn and recommitted back to the Rules committee (This bill could come back during the 2014 Legislative Session)
SB 242 Passed	Sen. Hunter Hill <i>(R-Atlanta)</i>	Downtown Development Authorities; undertake projects; reducing energy or water consumption; renewable resources	Neutral	3/01/13 – Assigned to the Senate State and Local Governmental Operations committee 3/07/13 – Passed the Senate 36 Yea, 7 Nay 3/11/13 – Assigned to the House Energy, Utilities & Telecommunications 3/26/13 – Passed the House 165 Yea, 3 Nay
SR 113 Passed	Sen. Bill Jackson <i>(R-Applying)</i>	Public Property; granting of restrictive and non-exclusive easements for operation/maintenance of facilities, utilities 16 counties	Support	1/30/13 – Assigned to the Senate State Institutions and Property committee 2/21/13 – Passed the Senate 50 Yea, 0 Nay 2/22/13 – Assigned to the House State Properties committee 3/21/13 – Passed the House by committee substitute 166 Yea, 0 Nay 3/28/2013 – Senate agreed to the House Substitute 52 Yea, 0 Nay

POWER SESSION

Summarizing the Continuing Legislative Process of the **2013 GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

continued from page 10

INFORMATIONAL WEBSITES

www.sos.ga.gov – The Secretary of State website has information Georgia’s state government, elections and elected officials.

<http://www.georgia.gov> – The State of Georgia website includes information on the governor, legislators and the legislative process, as well as links to all Georgia state department web sites.

www.legis.state.ga.us Provides information about the Georgia General Assembly, legislation and committees, and the Georgia Legislative Budget Office.

To find out how a bill becomes a law go to:

http://www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/2003_04/hinfo/Howabill.htm

Legislative White Book directories:

<http://www.house.ga.gov/en-US/Publications.aspx> – House information directory

<http://www.senate.ga.gov/senators/en-US/SenateMailingListsLabels.aspx> – Senate information directory