



**Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
2015 General Assembly - Legislative Report
February 13, 2015**

- **Budget – Funding for state-certified domestic violence centers FY 2015 Amended & FY 2016:** Both the House and Senate have passed the FY 2015 Amended budget with no change in the appropriation level for domestic violence centers. The House is currently holding hearings on the Governor’s proposed FY 2016 budget, which includes no change in the appropriation level but does transfer all funding from the Dept. of Human Services (DHS) to the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), which currently administers the funding via MOU. This proposed transfer was anticipated and will reportedly increase the efficiency of the processing of grant payments to the centers. The Governor’s proposed FY 2016 budget also includes an increase of \$386,251 for grants for civil legal services to victims of domestic violence, administered by the Administrative Office of the Courts. Budget documents can be reviewed [here](#).
- **Statutory transfer of administrative duties for state-certified domestic violence centers:** [HB 263](#) removes the administrative duties for state-certified domestic violence centers from DHS and transfers them to CJCC. Since July 1, 2014, CJCC has been carrying out these duties via MOU. This legislation will statutorily transfer those duties and eliminate the need for an MOU. This proposed transfer was anticipated. HB 263 is assigned to the House Juvenile Justice Committee.
- **Harassing communications:** A bill to expand the harassing phone calls statute to include electronic and online harassment has not yet been filed. GCADV will alert members when legislation has been filed.
- **Adding criminal family violence orders to the protective order registry:** A bill to add criminal family violence orders to the protective order registry has not yet been filed. GCADV will alert members when legislation has been filed.
- **Unemployment benefits for domestic violence victims:** Among other provisions to modernize the state’s unemployment insurance program, [HB 117](#) extends eligibility for the receipt of unemployment benefits to victims of domestic violence who voluntarily leave their employment as a result of that violence. This is an exciting and unexpected development which, if passed, will improve economic stability for many victims! HB 117 has passed through the House Industry and Labor Committee and is now being considered by the House Rules Committee, which will decide whether the bill goes before the full House for a vote. A bill with an identical domestic violence provision, [SB 42](#), has been assigned to the Senate Industry and Labor Committee. Stay tuned for possible action alerts!
- **Denial of drivers’ licenses for immigrants in deferred action status:** [SB 6](#) denies drivers licenses to immigrants in deferred action status. This includes immigrant victims of domestic violence and human trafficking who have been granted this status while awaiting the finalization of their T-Visa, U-Visa, or VAWA petition. GCADV is opposed to this bill, as it would limit safety and economic security options for these victims. SB 6 has been assigned to the Senate Public Safety Committee.
- **Stop Violence Against Women Day** was a huge success! Thanks to so many of you for coming down to the Capitol and making your voices heard! Legislators definitely took notice of the throngs of advocates and allies with purple and teal stickers!
- **Schedule:** The legislature has adopted a schedule that takes us through Day 40 on April 2. The schedule is available [here](#).