



## Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence 2017 General Assembly - Legislative Report February 10, 2017

- The 2017 General Assembly convened on January 9. This is the first year of a two-year session. The Legislature adopted a schedule which ends the session at 40 days on March 30.
- **Budget – Funding for state-certified domestic violence centers FY 2017 Amended & FY 2018:** The Governor has released his proposed FY 2017 Amended and FY 2018 budgets, both of which include level state funding for state-certified domestic violence centers and state-funded sexual assault centers.

On January 26, the House passed its FY 2017 Amended appropriations bill – including the level domestic violence and sexual assault funding proposed by the Governor – and sent it along to the Senate for further deliberation by the Senate Appropriations Committee. The House Appropriations Committee has now begun deliberating on the Governor’s FY 2018 budget proposal. The House and Senate Appropriations Committees will likely form a conference committee to negotiate and draw up a final set of recommendations for each budget.

Budget documents can be viewed [here](#).
- **Firearms and domestic violence:** GCADV is working with potential bill sponsors to introduce legislation that would make it a felony crime for domestic violence perpetrators to possess a firearm or ammunition while they are subject to a Family Violence Protective Order or is they are convicted of a qualifying family violence-related misdemeanor. The legislation would also require that domestic violence perpetrators who are subject to this prohibition to relinquish their firearms to local law enforcement. Stay tuned for future updates.
- **Sexual assault on college campuses:** [HB 51](#) proposes to drastically limit the ability of colleges and universities to adjudicate sexual assault on campus, among other crimes. It also requires that all felony-level cases be forwarded over to the local criminal justice system. The bill passed favorably out of the Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee and will now be heard by the full House Appropriations Committee. Individuals and domestic violence programs with Representatives serving on the House Appropriations Committee are urged to contact those members and ask them to vote “No” on HB 51. You can find a list of the members of the House Appropriations Committee [here](#).
- **Confidential name change for victims of domestic violence:** [HB 279](#) would allow victims of domestic violence to file for a legal name change for themselves and their children without being forced to give the customary public notice of their name change. HB 279 has been assigned to the House Judiciary Committee.
- **Georgia Tenant Victim Protection Act:** [HB 281](#) would offer certain protections to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking who need to vacate their housing lease agreements due to the violence. HB 281 has been assigned to the House Judiciary Committee.
- **Domestic Violence Helping Hands Act:** [HB 291](#) requires that barbers and cosmetologists obtain one hour of training on domestic violence and sexual assault awareness and intervention every two years as a part of their licensure requirements. HB 291 has been assigned to the House Regulated Industries Committee.
- **Flexible sick leave – the Family Care Act:** This act requires employers that offer sick leave to allow employees to use that leave time flexibly in order to care for sick children, spouses, and other family members. The bill has not yet been filed, but it is anticipated that it will be filed within the next week or so. Senator Butch Miller (Gainesville) is serving as the primary sponsor.
- **“Upskirting”:** [HB 9](#) and [SB 45](#) seek to prohibit any individual to use or install a device for the purpose of videotaping, filming, photographing, or video recording under or through such person's clothing, for the purpose of viewing the body of or the undergarments worn by such person, under circumstances in which such person has a reasonable expectation of privacy. This bill would also make the dissemination of such material is unlawful. HB 9 has been assigned to the House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee. SB 45 passed favorably out of the Senate Judiciary Committee on February 9.
- **Stop Violence Against Women Day** was held on February 8 at the Georgia State Capitol. Hundreds of advocates and other allies were in attendance for this annual lobbying event. Attendees gathered for breakfast and a legislative briefing/training and then headed across the street to the Capitol to speak with their legislators.