



**Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
2018 General Assembly - Legislative Report
February 12, 2018**

- The 2018 General Assembly convened on January 8. This is the second year of a two-year session in Atlanta for a total of 40 days. As of today, the assembly has convened for 18 legislative days. [SR 631](#) provided the Resolution Adjournment Calendar on January 25, which officially established the General Assembly meetings and adjournments from January 29 – March 29.
- **Budget – Funding for state-certified domestic violence centers FY 2018A & FY 2019:** No amendments have been made in FY 2018 amended budget funding for state certified domestic violence centers. The Governor has released his proposed [FY 2019 budget](#), which includes continued state funding for state-certified domestic violence centers. Budget documents can be viewed [here](#).
- **Domestic Violence Survivor Protection and Public Safety Bill:** GCADV has identified [Representative Karen Mathiak 73rd](#) to lead and carry [HB 541](#) following former lead sponsor, now State Senator Brian Strickland 17th, resignation of the House. This bill that would make it a felony crime for domestic violence perpetrators to possess a firearm or ammunition while they are subject to a final Family Violence Protective Order or if 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 federally licensed firearms dealer.

- **Sexual assault on college campuses: [HB 51](#)**
On January 23, a Joint Senate and House Higher Education informational hearing was held and three speakers testified about the policies and procedures in public universities, technical colleges, and private universities. They testified on how their respective institutions investigate and respond to sexual assault. Senator Millar concluded that HB 51 would not move forward this year. Legislators decided it would be best to wait until Title IX federal guidelines come out first before addressing this bill.
- **Stop Violence Against Women Day** was on held on January 30 from 8 AM – 12 PM. 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.
- **Georgia Tenant Victim Protection Act –** Reintroduced as HB 745 sponsored by Rep. Scott Holcomb, 81st, would offer certain protections to victims of domestic violence who are bound by lease agreements and may remain in unsafe housing to avoid financial penalties that damage their credit and rental history. This bill has been assigned to a

subcommittee of the House Judiciary committee. This bill will be heard on February 13.

- **Domestic Violence Helping Hands Act:**
[HB 291](#) was introduced and sponsored last year by Rep. James Beverly 143rd. This bill would have required all cosmetologists and barbers to complete one hour of domestic violence and sexual assault awareness training as well as would have provided domestic violence resources during their certification registration. This bill has now shifted from legislative policy to administrative policy change. Rep. Beverly 143rd submitted a letter to the Georgia State Board of Cosmetologists and Barbers requesting this requirement be institutionalized by the licensing board.
- **Provide termination of a rental or lease agreement under circumstances involving family violence**
On February 5, Rep. Mandi Ballinger introduced an identical bill, [HB 834](#), to HB 745 with the inclusion of providing an immediate family member the ability to terminate a victim's lease early in the circumstance of death or incapacitation. It has been assigned to the House Judiciary Kelley subcommittee.