



Georgia Child Care Association 2017 Georgia General Assembly Wrap Up

WHAT HAVE WE DONE LATELY?

- We helped to kill two the casino bills, which provided NO GA Pre-K funding. State legislators know if they plan to move forward with a casino bill next year, it must include Pre-K funding.
- We killed the bill that provided more funding and expansion of PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM PRE-K and public early learning classrooms AND EXCLUDED PRIVATE PRE-K PROVIDERS.
- We killed the bill that expanded exemptions for non-licensed caregivers for 0-2 years old from 8 hours to 20 hours.
- We worked with DECAL to allow staff until July 1, 2017 to obtain both CPR/1st aid and attend new health and safety orientation.
- We lobbied hard and won an additional \$300 in supplies for every Pre-K Classroom across Georgia totaling \$1 Million.
- We lobbied hard and won increased funding from Georgia for CAPS, a 1st for GA

WHAT'S NEW IN THE BUDGET

Governor's 2017 DECAL Budget Recommendations:

- 1) +\$5.5M to Child Care Subsidy budget directed toward tiered reimbursement for Quality Rated child care programs.
- 2) \$2M for Early Language and Literacy Classroom Grants.
- 3) \$2.7M to create the Georgia Center for Early Language and Literacy.

Status: House and Senate passed the 2017 budget and it awaits the Governor's signature.

GCCA LOBBYING AT WORK: EARLY CARE BILLS

SB 24: Expansion of exempt program from licensure nursery schools, playschools, kindergarten programs, and other educational programs who serve children 0-2 years old for four consecutive hours per day and up to 20 hours per week. (Current exemption rules limits 0-2 year-olds to four hours per day up to 8 hours per week.)

- **GCCA met with Chair Tippens and also had our members reach out to their legislators on the committee to oppose.**

Status: This bill was pulled and was never heard in the Senate Education and Youth Committee.

SB 79/HB158: Destination Resort Act

- Gives GA the right to operate two casinos.
- Pre-K funding was not included in the legislation; although the house author assured us the intent was for its inclusion.
- The breakdown of the funds:
 - 30 percent to the HOPE scholarship program.
 - 30 percent to a needs-based college scholarship (Governor's REACH program).
 - 15 percent to help provide rural healthcare.



- 15 percent to help provide rural trauma care.
- 10 percent uncommitted.

Status: Neither bill made it to through crossover day. The legislation will be back next year with much over the interim by all stakeholders. **GCCA was very effective in our grassroots lobbying to ensure Pre-K was included or the bills needed to be pulled We met with key committee members and our membership overwhelmed committee members with emails and phone calls.**

[GCCA Casino Press Coverage](#)
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SB 98: Would allow Capital Outlay Funds to be used for educational facilities for voluntary pre-kindergarten programs; providing the potential expansion of Pre-K and 0-3 population into public schools.

- While this bill appears to be coming directly from DeKalb County and DeKalb City Schools, this could have opened the door for the use of tax payer dollars to fund early education facilities into elementary schools across the state.
- **GCCA testified before the Education and Youth Committee and had many constituents contact their committee members to oppose this bill.**

Status: Assigned to Education and Youth and was heard in subcommittee.

See link also for GCCA on [Fox news](#).

HB 281: Campus Carry Legislation

- Original language included child care facilities if the campus had two or more facilities.
- **GCCA lobbied for complete exemption for all child care centers.**
- The legislation as passed had the following line in it:
 - Does not apply to any preschool or child care space located within such buildings or real property.

Status: Passed house and senate with child care center exemption and awaits Governor's signature.

HB 494: Relating to early care and learning:

- To revise certain provisions relating to the safety of children in early care and education programs.
- To authorize hearsay in preliminary hearings regarding emergency closure of a program or the emergency placement of a monitor or monitors; to revise the definition of "crime" for purposes of background checks.
- To provide that background checks are not valid if an individual has been separated from employment for more than 180 consecutive days from an early care and education program

Status: The legislation for pulled and is being held until next year at the request of DECAL and GCCA.



OTHER EARLY CARE LEGISLATION:

House Bill 463: Georgia Foundation for Early Care and Learning to Promote Public-Private Partnerships

- Enables DECAL to create a nonprofit foundation that will allow for donation transparency and provide a tax benefit for donors.
- Donors prefer working with a foundation type entity.
- Allows more corporate, charitable, and philanthropic dollars to be donated.
- Funding will:
 - Enable DECAL to expand support of and recognition of child care programs and early childhood educators.
 - Allow the department to help child care programs and/or early learning communities during times of natural disaster when other funding streams may not be available.

Status: The bill passed the House and the Senate unanimously, and Governor Deal has signed it into law.

EARLY CARE BILLS THAT DID NOT PASS:

HB 13: Tax credit for educators

- An educator's expense in connection with books, supplies, equipment, software, services, or other materials used in a classroom or instructional setting in a qualified school.
- A qualified school includes: pre-kindergarten program or early care and education program.

Status: Assigned to Ways and Means and never received a hearing.

SB 97: Early Care and Learning; parents in job training or educational program; expand child care subsidies from one year to two years.

Status: Assigned to Education and Youth and never received a hearing.

SB5/HB222: Lottery for Education; net proceeds transferred to the state treasury for credit to the Lottery for Education Account; establish the percentage

Status: Failed to gain passage this year.

SB 29: Requires testing of drinking water in child care learning centers and schools for lead contamination and reporting of test results, along with remediation plans.

Status: Passed out of the Senate. Assigned to the House Natural Resources committee where it did not receive a hearing.