



GEORGIA

CLOSE UP

PERSPECTIVES

Annual Youth Legislative Conference

HOT TOPICS:

Gun rights

Religious freedom

Raising the teen driving age

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Getting to know us: about Georgia Close Up

Volunteer community leaders dedicated to the promotion of civic education for American Citizens. a non-profit, non-partisan organization associated with the Close Up Foundation.

Mission Statement

Georgia Close Up's mission is to encourage informed active citizen participation in the democratic process and for young people, teachers, and citizens of all ages to gain a practical understanding of how public policy affects their lives and how they can affect public policy. Georgia Close Up is committed to developing new and better ways for young people to become effective participants by providing a balanced perspective on issues.

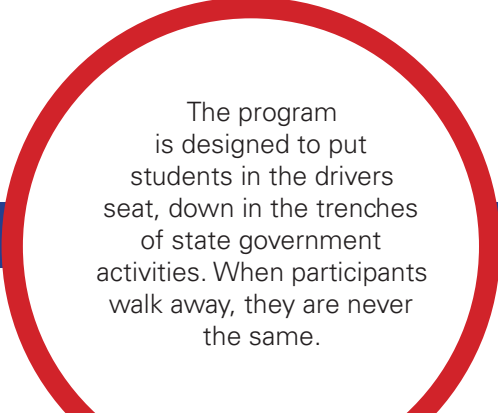
History

For the last 30 years, Georgia Close Up has conducted over 75 local programs on topics ranging from state legislation to public health or the environment. More than 5,600 students, teachers, parents and senior citizens have participated in our local education programs.

With a small grant from the Close Up Foundation, community support, and a host of volunteers, Close Up has been able to bring speakers such as Former President and Governor Jimmy Carter to our conferences. Other guest speakers who have participated in Georgia Close Up programs include Former Ambassador and Mayor Andrew Young, Former Governors Zell Miller and Roy Barnes, Secretary of State Cathy Cox, Lieutenant Governor Mark Taylor, Former Congressman Ben Jones, Former Texas Governor Ann Richards, civil rights leaders Julian Bond and Vernon Jordan, as well as countless state representatives, dignitaries, officials, experts and specialists who have addressed participants on different issues throughout the years.

Legislative Conferences

Each year, Georgia Close Up has two special conferences focusing on legislation at the state level for middle and high school students at the Georgia State Capital. Some of our objectives are to heighten political and social awareness among our participants, fill a need for law and civic education outside the classroom, and reinforce the idea that individuals can make a difference in our community through civic activism. During these two-day conferences, Georgia Close Up's team of trained program instructors and site coordinators provide intensive discussions on legislation as it relates to young people. Students have the chance to meet with their state legislative representatives, tour the Capital, and find out how the legislative process works. During the conference, real legislative bills are debated and voted on. The results are forwarded with accompanying letter from the students to each state senator and representative. In the words of Georgia Close Up's Chairperson, Ron Thomas, "The program is designed to put students in the drivers seat, down in the trenches of state government activities. When participants walk away, they are never the same."



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PRE-PROGRAM LOGISTICS

We are pleased that you have decided to join us at our state Capitol.

Your capitol visit is going to be a very fast-paced schedule of activities, full of educational experiences and stimulating encounters. What we want most from this conference is for you to take advantage of the exchange of ideas and learn a little about our state government and the many issues that are directly related to you. Remember you will be representing your part of Georgia, so be a good listener and diplomat.

Drop off and registration: Registration and most of our workshop and general sessions will be held at the Trinity United Methodist Church (TUMC) at 265 Washington St, one block down from the Capitol on the corner of Trinity and Washington Streets. Parking is free in the parking deck behind the church for cars only. Buses and large vans can park on Washington street (see map). Students can be dropped off on the sidewalk at the back and the can only enter the building from the parking lot through the red doors. Please ring the doorbell to gain entrance.

General Activities: Please check your schedule. Most of our time will be spent in the Capitol Education Center, and the State Capitol. You will see many legislators walking to their next meeting or in their office. All of them wear badges so they can be identified. Look for them. Encourage your guide to stop and talk with them about what you are doing in the capitol. Try to visit with at least two representatives before you leave. We have already scheduled a meeting with your specific state representative, so reach out to others.

Attire and Dress Code: We encourage everyone to look their best. The Capitol is a very formal environment, and most people wear suits, ties, and dress wear. However we want you to be yourselves. If you decide to wear jeans, wear a nice shirt and tie, sport jacket, or blouse to offset a too casual look. We will be doing some walking, so please wear something comfortable and warm. Please be prepared for weather conditions.

Transportation to the Capitol: If you are driving by school bus or van, please have the driver drop the students off in front of the capitol education center at 180 Central Ave. The Education Center is next to the Catholic Church at the corner of M. L. King Jr. Street and Central Ave. The buses and vans can circle and park in front of the Presbyterian Church directly across from the capitol. Please check the map for more details. If you are taking Marta, get off at the Georgia State Station (On the east-west-line). Exit left out of the station onto Piedmont. Take a right on M. L. King Jr. Street and walk past the Capitol to Central Ave. Take a left. The Education Center is the second building on the left. The entrance is through Georgia Plaza Park on the left. If you are driving, and you are coming from I-20, exit Winsor/Spring Street. Keep your eye on the Capitol Building and use it as your destination landmark. If you are coming I-75 south bound, exit right on M.L.K Jr. If you are coming I-75 northbound, exit on Central Ave. The Center is on the right.

Parking: It will be at a premium, and the earlier you get there the better. We recommend parking at Georgia State University Parking of the AAA parking lot next to the Trinity Church on Washington and Trinity. If all else fails, use the Underground Parking Decks (they are the most expensive) at the corner of M. L. King and Central Ave. Most parking spaces fill up between 8:15 and 8:45.

Security: Keep in mind that we will be going in and out of the Capitol and other state buildings. Travel lightly and avoid things that will cause a slow down at the security metal detectors, such as walk mans, metal jewelry, and large sets of keys. Avoid bringing book bags and large purses that will need to be searched. You will be given a name tag at registration. Please wear it at all times. Remember you will need it for both days. The name tag will designate you as a special visitor, and you will get the utmost respect. Please stay in groups or pair off.

Emergency and urgent needs: if you get lost or need to contact one of us at Georgia Close Up please call **404.696.3092**

STAFF BIOS

Ron Thomas, Chairperson

Ronald Thomas is the chairperson and co-founder of Georgia Close Up. Ron's love of working with youth has been life-long and began during his time working as a YMCA camp counselor and director, both locally and internationally. A graduate of Talladega College, Ron confirmed his interest in civic involvement by majoring in Pre-Law and History, with a minor in Political Science and Art. As a teacher and professional educator for over 42 years, Ron has had a variety of diverse opportunities, including time teaching abroad in the Middle East. In 1984, Ron started Georgia Close Up, modeled after the National program, and the first local Close Up conference. Professionally, Ron manages his own business of home remodeling and carpentry work. Georgia Close Up, a non-profit organization, runs solely from the efforts of volunteers. Through their collaborative efforts, Georgia Close-Up continues to provide local conferences for Middle and High School Students. If you would like more information on Georgia Close Up or would like to volunteer, contact Ron at rthomasron@yahoo.com



Jaira Burke, Program Administrator

As an International Economics and Modern Languages student in Georgia State University's Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Jaira Burke feels an inherent and inexorable commitment to the welfare of mankind, domestically and abroad. It is this unrelenting passion for humanity that has inspired her to intern for Georgia Close Up Foundation for over a year. She takes interest in global social injustices and has served as a grassroots lobbyist for the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and United Students Against Sweatshops throughout the entirety of her collegiate tenure. Ms. Burke plans to work in the field of International Relations in collaboration with nonprofits, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and government entities to develop programs that support the social and economic stability of minorities and developing communities. Burke is increasingly passionate about using economic empowerment as a tool to mobilize individuals and strengthen markets. In June 2015, Ms. Burke will begin working with International Rescue Committee as a Resettlement Services Intern where she will utilize her proficiency in Spanish to economically empower recently displaced refugees through cross-cultural assimilation training and professional development.



Bibiana Aguero, Lead Graphic Design Coordinator

As a graphic designer, Bibiana sees the world through visual design. She often looks at the world around her through an artistic lens. This view is so intrinsic to her nature, that when she sees advertisements, for example, she critiques them, and she looks everywhere for her work to draw inspiration from. Bibiana is fluent in English, Spanish and French. Having lived in Colombia, U.S.A, and Canada, she considers herself a nomad. Bibiana now resides between Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A and Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. When it comes to her work, her weapons of choice are Lightroom 5 and Photoshop CC for photo manipulations, compositing and editing. Her next weapon is then Adobe Illustrator for vector designs. She is a very keen user of Adobe InDesign to produce printwork and Adobe DreamWeaver to design for the web and mobile devices. She sees her involvement with Georgia Close Up as a way to connect her designs with social awareness and to perpetuate global respect. See her portfolio at www.bibianart.com





Dear student participants,

Welcome to the 2016 Capitol Program! For over 20 years, Georgia Close Up has hosted an array of conferences focusing on civic education and public policy for high school and middle school students such as yourselves. Our programs are not just an opportunity for students to heighten their political and social awareness, but a call to action for students to get involved in the political process and be a catalyst for change in their local communities. Our conferences fulfill a need for public policy education outside the classroom and reinforce the idea that individuals can make a difference in their communities through civic activism. During these conferences, Georgia Close Up's team of trained program instructors and site coordinators provide intensive discussions on current proposed Georgia legislation, social issues and their effects on the lives of young people.

In today's program we will explore the role of state government in implementing public policy on a local level. Legislation being considered in the 2016 General Assembly will be discussed. In doing so, we will examine the role special interest groups, lobbyists, and constituents have in affecting policy on the state level and explore policy issues from the perspectives of these groups.

The objectives for this year's symposium are to:

- Build our understanding of public policy on a state level
- Encourage group discussion and personal investigation
- Increase awareness of diverse interests from distinct groups, communities, and individuals and understand how they may work to affect policy
- Motivate sharing of learned information with others
- Learn how to affect change in your communities

It is our hope that you'll leave today's program with an unquenchable thirst to positively impact your communities through the sharing of learned information and civic activism. It is our civic duty to inform ourselves of the social, political, and economic issues of our communities and use this knowledge to trigger positive change. As you'll learn during today's program, it's never too late or too early, to take a stand and become a leader!

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jaira Burke", written in a cursive style.

Jaira Burke
Executive Director of Programming
jairaburke@gmail.com

The Georgia Capitol: Under the Gold

The state's most enduring democratic symbol has provided a classic setting for more than a century of political and social change.

By Jerome Thompson and Wayne Snow / Staff

House of the people

The Georgia Capitol's architectural style is Classic Renaissance and is reminiscent of the U.S. Capitol. It was designed by Chicago architects Willoughby J. Edbrooke and Franklin P. Burnham and built by the Toledo, Ohio, firm of Miles and Horn.

About the Capitol

In 1883, state lawmakers set aside \$1 million to build a Capitol in Atlanta, which had been reaffirmed as the state's capital city over Milledgeville in a referendum in 1877. Gov. John B. Gordon accepted the keys to the building March 20, 1889. The project came in \$118 under budget.

The **governor**, lieutenant governor and secretary of state have offices in the Capitol. The Legislature meets there annually. The Capitol also has a small museum and historic portraits, sculptures and flags.

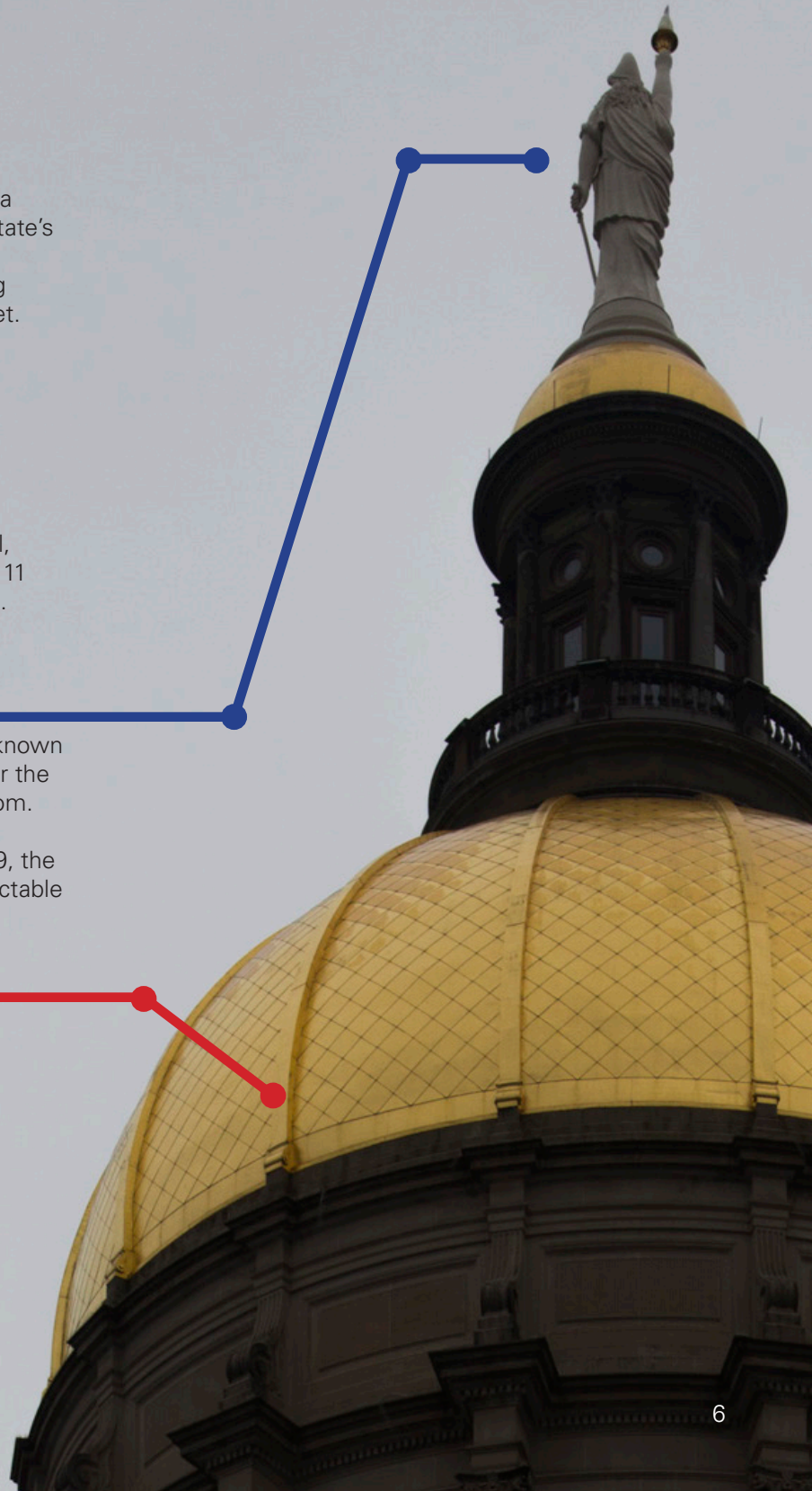
The **Capitol** is open to the public from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mondays-Fridays. It is located at 214 Sate Capitol, Atlanta, Ga 30334. Guided tours are available at 10 and 11 a.m. and at 1 and 2 p.m. Admission and tours are free.

Miss Freedom

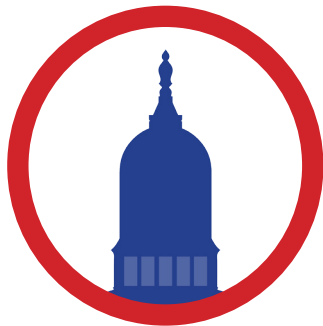
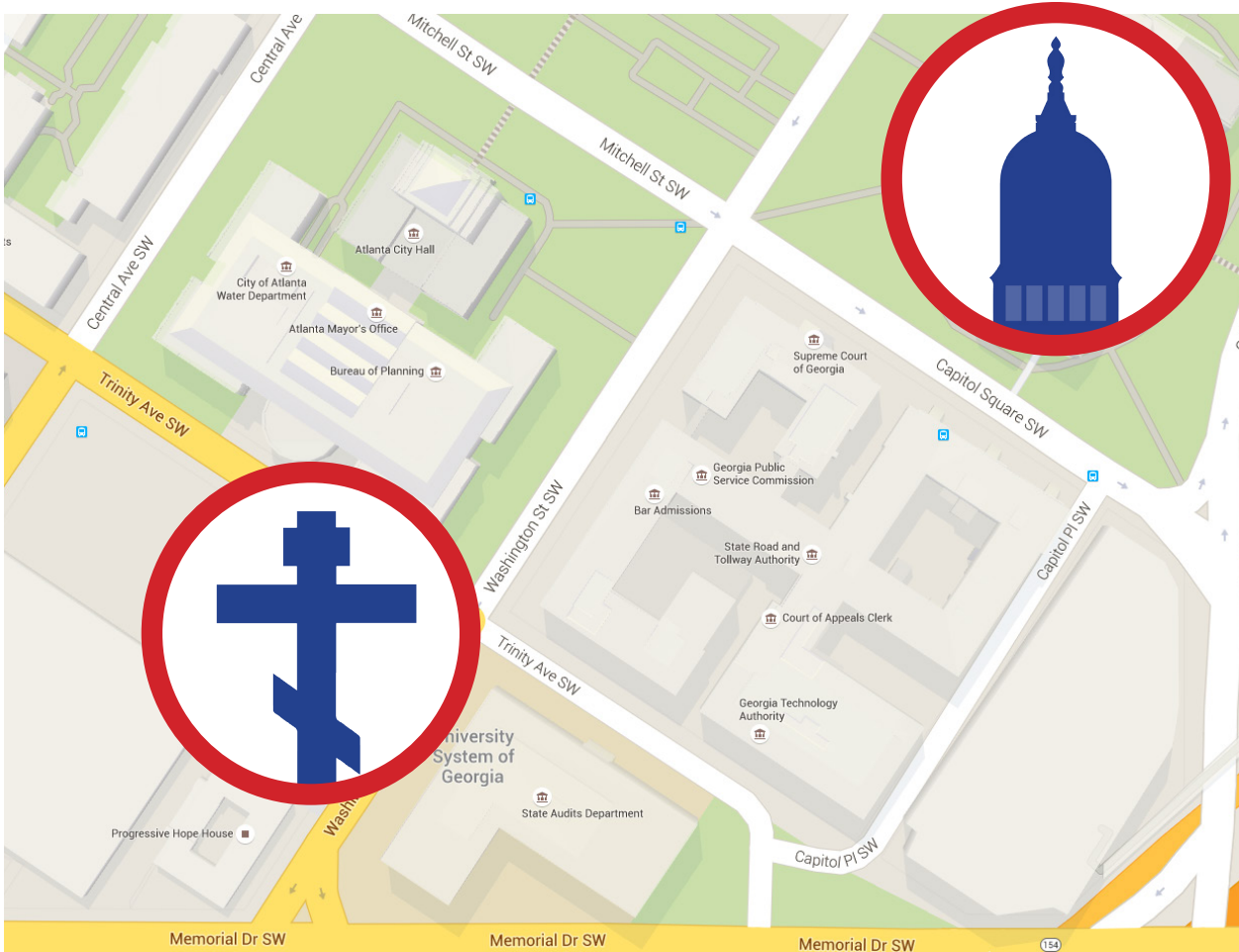
Mystery surrounds the statue atop the dome. It isn't known what its name is or whether it was built specifically for the Georgia Capitol. It is known unofficially as Miss Freedom. The Miss Freedom statue is about 15 feet tall, weighs about 2000 pounds and is made of copper. Since 1959, the torch has been lighted using a 5 inch tube with a retractable trolley that allows workers to change the light bulb.

The Dome

The dome was originally terra cotta covered with tin. Since 1959, it has been covered with gold donated by the residents of Lumpkin County. Gold was applied again in 1979 and 1998. In 1828, Lumpkin County became the site of the nation's first gold rush.



Georgia Capitol Map



CAPITOL BUILDING
206 WASHINGTON ST SW,
ATLANTA, GA 30334



TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
265 WASHINGTON ST,
ATLANTA, GA 30303

Glossary

Administration bill: A bill sponsored by the governor and his floor leaders.

Agency bill: A bill requested by one of the state agencies.

Amendment: A change made to a bill. Author: Not the same as the sponsor of a bill. The author can be a legislator, legislative counsel, a lobbyist, a special interest association, or any number of others.

Big budget: The budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

Called home: When a legislator “retires” on the advice of his family for having a little too much fun in Atlanta

Catfish: A bill that loses the meat, or any power in the amendment process. Also known as being gutted or Grooverized, in honor of former longtime lawmaker Denmark Groover, an attorney who was an expert at filleting bills. Often used in the sentence, “Hold still little catfish, all I want to do is gut ya,” with the bill playing the role of the catfish.

Cease all audible conversation: Means be quiet now. What the House Speaker or presiding officer of the Senate says when he tries to get lawmakers, staffers (and occasionally loud-mouthed reporters) to quiet down on the House or Senate floor. Generally preceded or followed by a violent slamming of the gavel.

Conference committee: A six-member committee of three House members and three senators, appointed by the House speaker and the Senate president to reconcile different versions of a bill passed by both chambers.

Constitutional amendment: A proposal to change the state constitution. It takes a two-thirds vote in each chamber and, later, the approval of voters.

Christmas tree: A bill that gets lots of other bills amended to it, generally at the end of the session. See: vehicle.

Dead: Used to describe a bill that is no longer viable, at least for the moment. Such legislation can be brought back to life, often by being tied to a Christmas tree. No bill is truly dead until the session ends. **Depot:** The location of many of the receptions put on by various towns or special interest groups for lawmakers and their staffs. Located about a block from the Capitol next to Underground Atlanta and the former Coca Cola Museum. If it's 5:15 p.m. on a session day and your looking for a lawmaker, he or she is probably at the depot.

Devotional: The sermon lawmakers get before they business each day, usually from a Protestant minister.

Doctor of the day: Local doctors who volunteer to work a day at the statehouse medical station and are introduced to legislators each day.

Fiscal note: Estimate of a bill's costs, if there is one.

Fiscal year: The year covered by the state's budget, July 1 to June 30.

Gentleman from, lady from: How lawmakers refer to each other in debates.

Hand vote: Allows lawmakers to vote on bills without a record of how they voted. Members haven't returned to the chamber but the speaker or lieutenant governor wants to get the calendar moving. Speakers will sometimes use hand votes on amendments to determine the support without putting it to a formal vote.

Hawks: Lieutenants of the House speaker who swoop into committee meetings and vote on bills to either kill them or get them moving.

Hopper: A folder in the House clerk's office and the secretary of the Senate's office where bills are filed.

Housekeeping bill: A bill that fixes small or technical problems in a law. A housekeeping bill might, for instance, change Georgia code so that tax laws in the state match those of the federal government. Or it can be a bill that merely changes some out-of-date language or fixes unintended errors in earlier bills. Sometimes used to slip in tax breaks or other changes without most lawmakers knowing it. **Industry bill:** A bill brought by lawmakers on behalf of a particular industry, often written by lobbyists for that industry.

Leadership: The Senate president, president pro tem, majority leader and their designees. In the House, it's generally the speaker, speaker pro tem, majority leader, rules chairman and others chosen to be included in the leadership circle.

Little budget: The mid-year spending plan, which helps fund the final few months of the current fiscal year.

Local assistance grant: Money that goes to a specific district at the request of a lawmaker. Also known as pork.

Glossary

Mash the button: Generally means pressing the voting machine. In the appropriations room, it means pressing the button to let the chairman know a member has a question.

Modified open rule: Allows a bill to be amended, but the amendment must be printed and placed on the desks of law-makers at least one hour before debate. **Modified structured rule:** Allows a bill to be amended by the Rules Committee, which is run by a member of the chamber leadership.

New information: Use to be known as “later data.” In budget talk, it means “new information” has been given to House or Senate leaders that allows them to spend less or more money on a program. For instance, an agency lobbyist could tell lawmakers late in the session they need money for 4000,000 Georgians in a health care program. Rather than the 5000,000 included in the governor’s budget pro-posal. That means they can spend some money elsewhere. “New information” or “later data” can also simply be used by lawmakers as an excuse to shift money from one priority to another, regardless of the “data” or “information.”

Not Ready: As in, “That bill is not quite ready.” Usually means the bill is being held up, often as a hostage to be used in a later trade for passage of other legislation.

Open rule: Means a bill that can be amended.

People in the halls: Also known as “friends in the hall.” Lobbyists — as in, “The people in the halls don’t want you to vote for this bill.” **Point of personal privilege:** When lawmakers get a change to get up and talk about anything and everything, from the war in Iraq to gas bills and the history of bond ratings in Georgia.

Reader: Who reads the caption of the bill to members when it is a filed, specifically a member of the House clerk’s staff, or the clerk himself, and a member of the Senate secretary’s staff.

Reassignment: When the House speaker or lieutenant governor assigns a bill to a new committee, often because the bill is stalled in the committee it was originally assigned to.

Reconsideration: When a bill or amend-ment is brought up for another vote.

Recommit: To send a bill back to a committee.

Regents row: Where the state’s university lobbyists sit during budget negotiations, usually reserved hours before the meetings begin.

Rules: The committee that decides whether a bill gets debated by the full chamber. Later in the session, it sets the daily calendar, making it very powerful. **Sine die:** Latin for adjournment without recall. On the last day of the session, the House Speaker and lieutenant governor adjourn “sine die” and slam down their gavels.

Special-interest legislation: Just what it sounds like. Usually meant to help one industry, or even a single business or taxpayer.

Structured rule: More commonly used to be called “engrossed,” essentially meaning the bill can’t be amended.

Study committee: Where bills often go when lawmakers aren’t ready to act on them. Sometimes the bills are refined by a stud committee and will come up the next year. Other bills never resurface.

Sunset: When a law or agency expires. Usually legislation or an agency about to sunset gets renewed before it ever dies. **Supplemental budget:** See: little budget. **Sweepings and leavings:** What’s left when budget officials collect unspent funds in agencies. Or when the numbers get rounded in the budget, or any of several other things done to find “spare change” in the budget, which can add up to millions. Similar to finding lose change in a sofa, only with more zeros.

Unlock the machines: What the chamber leader says before members vote on a bill. The “unlocking” allows members to have their vote registered.

Vehicle: A piece of legislation used by lawmakers to carry another measure they really want to pass. The bill they want to pass gets amended onto the vehicle, which is often minor legislation. See: Christmas tree.

Well: The front of House and Senate chambers when lawmakers speak on bills or amendments.

Meet the Georgia elected officials



Governor - Nathan Deal

After four decades of service as a prosecutor, judge, state senator and U.S. congressman, Nathan Deal took office as governor in January 2011. Aiming to position Georgia as the country's leader for business, Governor Deal has launched the Competitiveness Initiative, pushed tax code reform and recruited businesses from all sectors to spur job growth. In his first term, he's also encouraged innovation in school systems, worked to shore up funding for the HOPE and Medicaid programs, and supported reform in the criminal justice system that promises both cost savings and better care for inmates.



Lieutenant Governor - Casey Cagle

In 2006, Lt. Governor Casey Cagle took office after serving more than a decade as a state senator. A successful businessman, Lt. Governor Cagle promotes economic development, supports innovation in transportation and calls for meaningful reduction in government spending. He also works to promote technical education, spread awareness about childhood obesity, and encourage healthcare reform that both supports market-based solutions and provides a safety net for those in need.

Georgia House of Representatives



The House of Representatives consists of 180 members from regions around the state. Each January the House convenes to set an annual operating budget, amend the prior year's budget and craft laws to address issues ranging from education reform to transportation investment.

Georgia Senate



Each January, 56 senators meet to set an annual operating budget, amend the current year's budget and craft laws that range from promoting business to keeping health care spending in check.

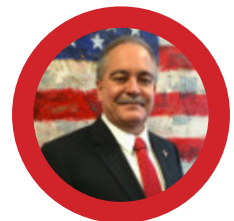
Attorney General - Sam Olens
A former Chairman of both the Cobb County Board of Commissioners and Atlanta Regional Commission, Sam Olens accepted office as the Attorney General in January 2011. Among his key issues are supporting government transparency, addressing prescription drug abuse, securing water rights for Georgians and curbing incidence of human trafficking, particularly child sex trafficking, across the state.



Secretary of State - Brian P. Kemp
A former state legislator, Secretary of State Brian P. Kemp took office in January 2010. In the Georgia Senate, Secretary of State Kemp worked to cut wasteful spending and streamline government, support small businesses and promote education. As Secretary of State, he's continued to encourage business by cutting red tape that hampers job growth and economic recovery.



State School Superintendent - Richard Woods
A 22-year public school educator and former small business owner, State School Superintendent Richard Woods took office in January 2015. He works on behalf of the 1.7 million K-12 students in Georgia's public schools, championing child-focused, classroom-centered policies.



Meet the Georgia elected officials (cont'd)



Commissioner - Gary Black

After serving more than two decades as the president of the Georgia Agribusiness Council, Commissioner Gary W. Black accepted office in January 2011. He champions food safety, science-based environmental stewardship and, through Georgia Grown, the local agriculture movement.



Commissioner of Insurance - Ralph Hudgens

A former state representative and senator, Ralph Hudgens took office as the state's Insurance & Safety Fire Commissioner in January 2011. In this capacity, he regulates some 1,600 insurance companies, licenses more than 130,000 insurance agents and oversees the state arson unit.



Commissioner of Labor - Mark Butler

A former legislator in the State House of Representatives, Commissioner Mark Butler took office in January 2011. Aiming for a full-hire economy, he focuses on helping job seekers apply for and receive unemployment benefits and forges partnership with private industry to connect those job seekers with employers.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



Commissioner Doug Everett

A former state representative, Commissioner Doug Everett took office in January 2003. He represents PSC District 1, the southern portion of the state that stretches from Macon to Savannah.



Commissioner Tim Echols

A veteran of non-profit work who focuses on consumer protection and accountability, Commissioner Tim Echols took office in January 2011. He represents PSC District 2, which covers the eastern central portion of the state running from Gwinnett to Screven counties. He works to promote clean energy initiatives and speaks the importance of safe disposal of nuclear waste.



Commissioner Chuck Eaton

Commission Chairman Chuck Eaton took office in January 2007. He represents PSC District 3, the metro Atlanta area. To gain a better understanding of the judicial issues he faces at the commission, Commissioner Eaton began attending classes at Georgia State Law School in 2009 and studies nights as he works toward his degree.



Commissioner McDonald

A former state representative and re-elected member of the commission, Commissioner Lauren "Bubba" McDonald, Jr. represents PSC District 4, which ranges across the north Georgia mountains to the north Georgia coast.



Commissioner Wise

A former Cobb County Commissioner, Commissioner Stan Wise has served continuously since he first took office in January 1995. He represents PSC District 5, the west central portion of the state that includes Cobb, Douglas and Carroll counties. He's served on the Southeastern Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners and the U.S. Department of Energy State Energy Advisory Board.

Leaders of the 2016 Assembly

Georgia House of Representatives



Speaker of the House

David Ralston

Spiro Amburn - Chief of Staff
 Terry Chastain - General Counsel
 Kaleb McMichen - Director Communications
 Dianne Hardin - Executive Assistant
 Leishea Johnson-Assistant to the Chief of Staff
 Holli Gibbs - Constituent Services
 332 State Capitol
 Atlanta, GA 30334
 404.656.5020



Majority Caucus Secretary/Treasurer

Bruce Williamson

Jan Brown - Executive Assistant
 415 State Capitol
 Atlanta, GA 30334
 404.656.5024



Speaker Pro-Tempore

Jan Jones

Beth Green - Executive Assistant
 340 State Capitol
 Atlanta, GA 30334
 404.656.5072



Minority Leader

Stacey Abrams

Ashley Robinson - Chief of Staff
 Falak Hindash - Administrative Assistant
 609-F Coverdell Legislative Office Bldg.
 Atlanta, GA 30334
 404.656.5058



Majority Leader

Jon Burns

Pat Harris - Executive Assistant
 Ben Jordan - Legal Counsel
 338 State Capitol
 Atlanta, GA 30334
 404.656.5052



Minority Whip

Carolyn Hugley

Stacy Williams - Executive Assistant
 609-A Coverdell Legislative Office Bldg.
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Majority Whip

Matt Ramsey

Caulder Childs -
 Policy & Communications Manager
 Jan Brown - Executive Assistant
 415 State Capitol
 Atlanta, GA 30334
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Minority Caucus Chairman

Virgil Fludd

Josephine Lamar - Administrative Assistant
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 404.656.0116



Majority Caucus Chairman

Matt Hatchett

Debra Stokes - Executive Assistant
 415 State Capitol
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 404.656.5025



Minority Caucus Vice-Chairman

Billy Mitchell

Rahmana Evans - Administrative Assistant
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 Atlanta, GA 30334
 404.656.0126



Majority Caucus Vice-Chairman

Sam Teasley

Fallon Brink - Administrative Assistant
 417 State Capitol
 Atlanta, GA 30334
 404.656.5146



Minority Caucus Secretary

Pat Gardner

Olivia Sims - Administrative Assistant
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 404.656.0265



Minority Caucus Treasurer

David Wilkerson

Cheryl Jackson - Executive Assistant
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 Atlanta, GA 30334
 404.656.0116

Leaders of the 2016 Assembly

Georgia State Senate



PRESIDENT
CASEY CAGLE
Lieutenant Governor
Republican
240 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-656-5030



DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS CHAIR
DOUG STONER
Fallon Brink - Administrative Assistant
417 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
404.656.5146



PRESIDENT PRO-TEMPORE
TOMMIE WILLIAMS
District 19
Republican
321 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
404.656.0089



DEMOCRATIC WHIP
VINCENT FORT
DISTRICT 39
DEMOCRAT
Bruce Williamson
Jan Brown - Executive Assistant
415 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
404.656.5024



MAJORITY LEADER
CHIP RODGERS
District 21
Republican
338 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-463-1378



ADMINISTRATION FLOOR LEADER
BUTCH MILLER
District 49
Republican
109 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-651-7738



MAJORITY CAUCUS CHAIR
BILL COWSERT
District 46
Republican
421-B State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
404.651.7738



RONNIE CHANCE
ADMINISTRATION FLOOR LEADER
District 16
Republican
109 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-651-7738



MAJORITY WHIP
CECIL STATON
District 18
Republican
421-B State Capitol
Atlanta, GA, 30334
404-656-5039



ADMINISTRATION FLOOR LEADER
BILL JACKSON
J District 24
Republican
109 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
404.651.7738



DEMOCRATIC LEADER
STEVE HENSON
District 41
Democrat
121-B State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-656-0085



SECRETARY OF THE SENATE
BOB EWING
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How a bill becomes a Law

IDEA

- A. conceived by individual legislator .
- B. Conceived by Study Committee, Ad Hoc Committee, interim Committee
- C. Conceived by citizen or citizens' group I,
- D. Conceived by special interest group or lobby

DRAFTING

- A. Drafted by any of above mentioned groups or individuals utilizing private legal resources
- B. Drafted by legislative counsel on behalf of individual legislator. legislative committee subcommittee
- C. Copied after legislation in other states

INTRODUCTION

- A. Filed with Clerk of House of Representatives.'
- B. Read for first time (by title) to entire House by clerk (assigned to committee by speaker)
- C. Read'secngtime automatically on next legislative clay

COMMITTEE ACTION

- A. Chairman sets date for action on bill, notifies interested parties
- B. Interested persons testify, for and against
- C. Committee votes with several options available
 1. Recommend "do pass' for bill in original form
 2. Recommend "do pass" for bill with committee amendment
 3. Recommend "do pass' for bill as substituted by committee
 4. Recommend 'do not pass' for bill either in original form or in amended or substituted form
 5. Pass bill with no recommendation
 6. Hold bill / no action

BILL (if given 'do pass' recommendation) RETURNED TO HOUSE

- A. Placed on calendar
- B. Called by speaker for third reading and vote
- C. Bill debated on floor I Bill may be amended orsubstituted on lioor by majority vote D. Bill passed or defeated by majority vote (2/3 vote required for tax measure or constitutional amendment resolution)"

TO THE SENATE

Bills that pass the House. in whatever form. are transmitted to the Senate where a similar process takes place

RETURN TO HOUSE

Senate amendments require House approval If House concurs with Senate amendment in its entirety measure is passed and sent to the governor

If House disagrees with the Senate amendment or changes any other language a bill is assigned to conference committee composed of three house and three senate members

Conference committee may rewrite entire bill or resolve differences on conflicting language

Conference committee report read in House and Senate which accepts or rejects the report

If accepted the bill is passed

If either chamber rejects the conference report. the measure is assigned to new conference committee or allowed 100% .

BILL GOES TO GOVERNOR

- A. Governor may sign the bill Into law
- B. May veto the bill
- C. Bills not acted on will automatically become law (has 6 days during session and 40 days alter session)

VETO OVERRIDE

General Assembly may override a veto by 2/3 vote and measure becomes law

'Many bills originate in the Senate and follow similar procedures as described in this outline.

How a Bill is Passed in Georgia Legislature



Legislator sees need for a new law or changes in existing law and decides to introduce a bill.



Legislator goes to Office of Legislative Counsel. There, attorney advises legislator on legal issues and drafts a bill.



Legislator files bill with the Clerk of the House or Secretary of the Senate.



On legislative day after filing, bill is formally introduced. In chamber, bill's title* is read during period of 1st readings.



Clerk or Secretary prepares a General Calendar* of bills favorably reported from committee. For first 10 days of session in House (15 days in the Senate) presiding officer calls up bills from this calendar for floor action.



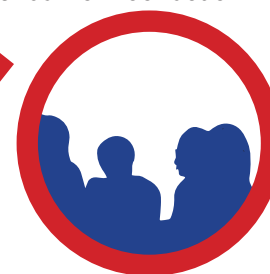
Bill considered by committee. Author and other legislators may testify. If controversial, public hearings may be held. Bill is reported favorably by committee and returned to Clerk or Secretary.



In the House only, on next legislative day, Clerk reads bill's title (2d reading) in chamber, although actual bill is now in committee. In Senate, 2d reading comes after bill is reported favorably from committee.



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Starting with 15th day in Senate, the Rules Committee meets and from bills on General Calendar prepares a Rules Calendar for the next day's floor consideration.



For the last 25 days of a regular session, the officer calls up bills from the Rules Calendar for floor consideration.



Once presiding officer calls bill up from Rules Calendar, Clerk reads bill's title (3d reading). Bill is now ready for floor debate, amendments, and voting.



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All About Grassroots Lobbying: The Way to Get Your Voice Heard!

Have a specific bill or piece of legislation you support?

Have a specific bill or piece of legislation you support?
How about an issue or cause you feel is important
and needs to be addressed on a governmental level?

But what exactly is grassroots lobbying?

Grassroots lobbying is the strategy of mobilizing citizens who all share a common interest on a specific cause, issue, or piece of legislation.

If you answered yes to any of these questions, grassroots lobbying is a great technique you can use to get your message across and trigger change on the legislative level!

When we think of grass, we typically imagine a vast field. Just as it takes thousands of shards of grass to form a field; **it takes numbers of individuals citizens banding together** to ensure their voices are heard – rather it is being a place for cattle to graze or a yard for little children to run around and play on a sunny day.

The same is true for people! While individually we are limited and can only do so much, collectively informed citizens can **band together** to make their voices heard!

There is strength in numbers!

When a group of **informed** individuals **join together** and **organize** on a grassroots level to **bring attention** to an issue/cause or to **trigger systemic change** they are more likely to get their voices heard than if they were to do it alone.

Grassroots lobbying often includes telephoning, holding rallies and meetings, the sharing of information relevant to the particular issue being addressed, person-to-person communication, and testifying before legislative communities.

Here are 10 tips for grassroots lobbying based on techniques

developed by Tom Graf:

Stick to ONE cause. Narrow the issues. While there are many different causes and issues to care about, you can't save the world all at one time. Choose one issue you're passionate about.

Get your facts straight. Don't give out less-than-accurate information just to make your cause look better. This can turn legislators off fast and damage the credibility of your cause.

Personalize your message. While petitions are a great strategy for getting a message across, personal letters and phone calls are a great way of having a more personalized tone to the message you're getting across.

Contact House and Senate leaders as well as the chairman of committees. If you're in support of a specific piece of legislation, contact the sponsoring rep(s). While it's great to have citizens on your side, it doesn't hurt to call on the help of public official and key decision-makers.

Be persistent. A large part of the fight is consistency over time. Don't let minor setbacks discourage you. Keep fighting and keep advocating.



Know exactly what you want. It's not enough to say you don't like/support something or to bring attention to an issue you feel is negatively affecting your community. Propose feasible a solution(s). No one can help you if they don't know how.

Start with the legislators of your own district, both representatives and senators, and work out from these. Even if they are not with you and you must look elsewhere for support, don't try to pull off something behind their back.

Get people to join your cause. As stated before, there is strength in numbers. We can't be an army all of ourselves and getting other people to join you in advocating for your cause will increase your impact.

Keep track of the legislation. Be sure you know when it will be coming up in committee. Ask to testify and get others to testify as well. Include experts when and if possible.

Follow through. If you promise information, supply it. If you get messages to call, call. And if your bill passes, thank your legislators.

The ABCs of Great Lobbying

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Be **ALERT** - understand the legislative process and plan your lobbying efforts.

Be **BASIC** in your facts - don't discredit your argument with unnecessary information or hearsay evidence.

Be a good **COMMUNICATOR** - listen to your legislators position; remember that she/he represents other groups with similar interests,

Be **DOWN-TOEARTH** in your approach. Legislators are human too! They get tired and many times have unreasonable demands put upon them by their constituents.

Be **ENTHUSIASTIC** - if you don't believe in your cause. then you certainly can't influence anyone else to believe in it.

Be **FLEXIBLE** - many times compromises are necessary to avoid a "no win" situation.

Be **GENEROUS** in your thanks to your legislators for their time in listening to your position

Be **HELPFUL** by providing information on an issue: her/his research time is limited.

Be **INFORMED** - research your subject before speaking out. Nothing can hurt you more than erroneous information.

Be **JUST** in your observations and always conform to the proper standard of correctness when addressing your legislator.

Be the **KEY** to your legislators making a decision that you support.

Be a **LEARNER** - there are always at least two sides to every issue.

Be a **MASTER** of detail to pertinent information.

Be **NEUTRAL** to other political causes that could harm your own.

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Be **OBJECTIVE** when presenting your facts, not allowing your personal feelings to distort your view.

Be **PRODUCTIVE** with a legislator's time. Make the most of your opportunity when speaking with her/him.

Be **QUIET** and listen to others who might share a common interest.

Be **REASONABLE** in your request for time and response from your legislator.

Be **STUDIOUS** - research legislation and other information related to your cause.

TRANSPARENT - add a personal narrative to your message. Why is this cause important to you personally?

UNIVERSAL in your approach. Express why the cause is important to and impacts everyone.

VERSATILE - have people from different backgrounds join you in your advocacy. There's strength in numbers and diversity.

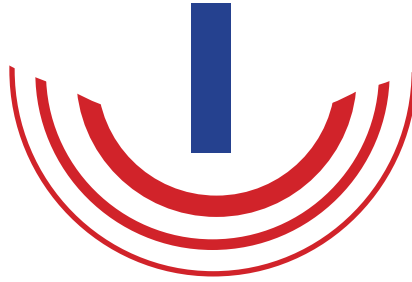
Be **WILLING** to go the extra mile.

Form a **XENIAL** community of people who care about the issue just as much as you.

Be **YOU** - nobody is expecting you to be a policy expert. Just come as a concerned and informed citizen who cares about a particular issue. That's all it takes!

Be **ZEALOUS** - passion is the best motivational tool. Let your lobbying be guided by passion and purpose.

Follow-up Action Suggestions



Learn more about one issue area or case which was presented in the symposium. Identify which one and how you will learn more about it.



2 Observe proceedings in a juvenile court, police department, or other related government agency or department. Give an oral or written report of what you experienced.

3 Intern in a law office, or other related office. Share with your classmates what you learned.

4 Collect news articles about the overall subject, one issue area, or case. Put them on a board at school for others to see, or write an essay about how you feel about the issue.

5 Share something you learned today with family members, church groups, class, friends, or others (specify what and with whom).

6 Invite speakers to come into your class to further discuss one or more issue areas. (Identify speakers and topics. Be sure to prepare the rest of the class beforehand.)

7 Write a letter to the editor about a specific issue or concern.

8 Write a letter to government, school, or agency officials who are involved in an issue which concerns you.

9 Take a survey of classmates, friends, family or others regarding their opinions on the symposium issues.



10 Write an article for your school or local newspaper.

11 Make a presentation to your class, a teachers meeting, church group, or others on a related issue which concerns you.

12 Work to raise funds or support for a family or youth serving agency you believe is important in your community.

13 If there is a community need, and no agency or organization to address that need, get others in your community involved in helping to form a group.

14 Take on a special project to help a government agency which is involved in the family which you support.

15 Write to the speakers or sponsors of the conference to tell them what you learned and your opinions on the issues.

16 Organize a petition drive in support of or in opposition to a government intervention issue in your community.

17 Contact local media (radio, tv, newspaper) about your views on the issues.



Sample letter

Representative Rahn Mayo
State Representative, District 84
511-D Coverdell Legislative Office Building
Atlanta, Ga 30334

Jane Doe
District 84 Constituent
1127 Woodcrest Place
Decatur, GA 30034

Dear Representative Mayo:

I am writing you today as a constituent and full-time college student who works three jobs to support herself. House Bill 8's proposed minimum wage of \$15 per hour with annual adjustments for inflation is an impactful piece of legislation that has the power to change the lives of thousands of Georgia's families.

Hardworking citizens feed their time, service, and lives to their employers; it's time they're able to feed their families. Airport workers servicing the busiest airport in the world, Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport, retail workers, home care and childcare workers, and adjunct professors represent some of the 42 percent of all U.S. workers earning less than \$15 per hour. No one who works 40 hours a week should live in poverty!

According to the U.S. Department of Labor in 2013, 260,000 college students worked minimum wage jobs, 22,000 of whom had Master's degrees. Yes, people with tens of thousands of dollars in student loan debt are only making \$7.25/hour. As a student who currently struggles to support myself, despite working three jobs, I've always believed attaining a college degree would ensure my financial security. But with continued inflation and stagnant wages, the prospect for economic mobility is quickly diminishing. As a current graduate school student yourself, I'm sure you can recognize the inherent issue in college graduates, already drowning in student loan debt,, struggling to support themselves on less than \$15 per hour.

Raising the minimum wage not only provides people with the money needed to support their needs, but also reduces public assistance enrollment. In October 2013, the UC Berkeley Labor Center reported the cost of public assistance to families of workers in the fast-food industry alone is nearly \$7 billion per year. It is not ethical, or even rational, that our already struggling middle class have to carry the fiscal burden of corporate negligence and greed.

Demanding mega corporations such as McDonald's to pay their workers livable wages has the power to trigger systemic change and help eradicate and/or reduce gender pay gaps and racial wage disparities, as women and minorities disproportionately represent low wage workers.

The state of Georgia is growing close to a victory in its fight to achieve a livable minimum wage as a result of House Bill 8. Please vote in support of this life-changing policy so the harsh realities of income inequality and poverty will no longer cripple the prospect of future vitality for hard working people.

Thank you for your continued commitment to public service.

Sincerely,



Jane Doe
Concerned college student and full-time worker

Your right to write

Influence your elected officials by writing a letter

As an American citizen it your civic duty to participate in the political process through voting. However, even after the ballots are cast it is important that we stay informed and engaged about what our elected officials are doing while in session. Writing a letter to your representative is a powerful way to have your voice heard and to influence policy. A single letter from a constituent advocating for or against a cause is an effective mechanism in adding a personal narrative to the policy making process. Elected officials are approached by lobbyists and special interest groups that work relentlessly to influence public policy and as an American citizen you have the right and moral obligation to do the same. Here are some examples of times when a single letter from an everyday person triggered impactful

- A letter from one woman saved football from being outlawed in Georgia in the late 1890s.
- Letters from two women to Congress led to the admission of women to the U.S. Naval Academy
- A grassroots, letter-writing campaign by Georgia cosmetologists convinced the General Assembly to change cosmetology standards in 2001.
- Letters from Georgia high school students convinced state legislators to support legislation based on their school's wetlands project.

Tips for Effective Letter Writing:

Make sure that you are

Personable. Begin your letter by identifying yourself and stating that you're a resident of the official's district. State specifically why you're passionate about the particular issue and how it affects you.

Brief. Get to the point. Elected officials are often busy and a lengthy letter may not be read.

Specific. Stick to one issue per letter. Discussing multiple issues could dilute your message.

Direct. Let your official know exactly what action you want him/her to take, such as introduce legislation, vote for or against a bill, or speak out on an issue.

Confident. Draw from your own experiences and options, which will show the reader that you're passionate about the issue that you're writing about.

Polite. If you happen to disagree with your elected official's stance on the issue, make sure your message has a positive tone. Do not threaten, insult, or call the elected official names.

Complimentary. Give credit or thanks when due. Conclude your letter with gratitude.

Timely. Keep track of when the issue will be discussed or voted on. Send your letters at the appropriate time.



ALWAYS REMEMBER letters to your own representative are much more effective than letters to a representative who is interested in the same issue as you but does not represent your district.

**Georgia State Capitol
Capitol Program
Middle School
March 8 2016
March 15-16, 2016**

**High school
March 9, 2016
March 10, 2016**

**These programs are not just
tours of the Capitol but a hands- on experience
of citizenship and active engaged participation.**

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