

Anne Bartoletti

From: Rep. Elly Dobbs [newsletters@wordexpress.ccsend.com] on behalf of Rep. Elly Dobbs [newsletters@wordexpress.info]
Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2009 5:05 PM
To: anne@vayasol.com
Subject: House District 53 Legislative Update

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Back-to-School Immunization Drive

1046 Ridge Ave. SW
Atlanta, GA 30315

Saturday, July 25
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Free immunizations for K-12 students ages 4-18 (parent/guardian must bring current immunization records). Required school screenings for K-12 students (hearing, dental & vision). Fun zone (face painting, clowns, moonwalk, music & prizes). Free school supplies given to the first 200 kids who receive health services. For more information, call 404-564-6901.

Free Admission Family Days at Zoo Atlanta for local residents

Saturday & Sunday,

State Representative Elly Dobbs

GEORGIA LEGISLATIVE REPORT

July 23, 2009

Dear Anne,

Although Atlanta has had beautiful weather for the last couple of weeks, our economic climate does not look quite as good. Our state revenue collection is below the projected figures, and as a result the Governor is having to cut back spending even further. Instead of calling a special session for the legislature, the Governor met with key legislative leaders who agreed on additional spending cuts and employee furloughs. All state employees, including the legislators, are taking three unpaid furlough days this year.



Other important state issues in the news include the federal court ruling against our state in the "water battle" with Florida and Alabama. I participated in a meeting with the Governor today regarding this crucial issue. See more about this below. Finally, do not forget to take advantage of the Georgia State Tax Holidays coming up soon. The dates are listed below.

As always, please do not forget to [contact me](#) with your views on any issue that needs to be addressed or whenever I can be of service to you.

Elly Dobbs

State to appeal Lanier water withdrawal ruling

I am among the members of the Georgia House of Representatives scheduled to meet Thursday morning with Gov. Perdue regarding the next steps in the state's response to a federal judge's ruling last week that could cut off much of metro Atlanta's consumption of water from Lake Lanier.

U.S. District Judge Paul Magnuson ruled that Georgia must obtain congressional authorization within three years to continue withdrawing water from Lake Lanier, a federal reservoir operated by the Army Corps of Engineers. The ruling was a blow to Georgia's ongoing negotiations with Alabama and Florida on the water issue.

Gov. Perdue issued the following statement Friday: "Obviously, I am deeply disappointed by Judge Magnuson's decision today. His conclusions rely on decades-old assumptions about the construction of federal reservoirs and the role those reservoirs play in providing water supply for growing states such as Georgia. Our country has changed substantially since the 1940s, when many

Aug. 8-9
9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
On Saturday, August 8th and Sunday, August 9th Zoo Atlanta will be hosting City of Atlanta and Fulton County Family Days. During this event all residents of the City of Atlanta and Fulton County and all employees of the City of Atlanta and Fulton County Government will be allowed free admission to the Zoo. City of Atlanta residents and employees of City of Atlanta Government will be asked to present one of the following identifications to be allowed free access to the Zoo: Georgia Driver's License, Georgia Voter ID Card, City of Atlanta Government Employee ID, Utility Bill (Water, Gas, Light). We are encouraging all employees and residents who plan to participate to consider using MARTA. There are 10,000 free passes available each day, so we encourage participants to arrive early for a wonderful Zoo experience.

of these reservoirs were constructed, and I will use this opportunity not only to appeal the judge's decision but, most importantly, to urge Congress to address the realities of modern reservoir usage. The judge's ruling allows a three- year window for either Congressional action or an agreement by the states and we will work diligently with Georgia's delegation and members of Congress to re-establish the proper use of federal reservoirs throughout the country."

Georgia Sales Tax Holidays coming July 30-Aug. 2

Legislation adopted during the 2009 session of the General Assembly provides for a sales tax exemption from both state and local sales taxes for certain items purchased July 30 - August 2, 2009. [HB 120](#) also provides an exemption for specific energy and water efficient products purchased October 1 - 4, 2009. Information related to that holiday will be available at later date.

During the "Back to School" sales tax holiday period, a sales tax exemption applies to purchases of tangible personal property in the following categories:

Articles of Clothing. The exemption applies to articles of clothing and footwear with a sales price of \$100 or less per item. Clothing accessories such as handbags, umbrellas, cuff links, handkerchiefs, jewelry, key cases, wallets, watches and watch bands, and ponytail holders and/or similar hair products are not exempt. [See lists of exempt items.](#)

Personal Computers. A single purchase of \$1,500 or less of personal computers and/or related accessories is exempt. If the single purchase exceeds \$1,500, the entire transaction is taxable. [See list of exempt items.](#)

General School Supplies. The exemption applies to the purchase of general school supplies with a sales price of \$20 or less per item. [See list of exempt items.](#)

The exemptions are intended for an individual's personal use. The exemptions exclude items rented, leased, purchased by businesses, or purchased for resale. The exemptions do not apply to items sold at theme parks, entertainment complexes, hotels, restaurants, and airports.

State unemployment rate hits double digits

The Georgia Department of Labor reported that the state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate jumped to 10.1 percent in June, the highest rate ever recorded in Georgia. The jobless rate was up five- tenths of a percentage point from a revised 9.6 percent in May.

"Georgia is in the midst of a deepening economic crisis," said State Labor Commissioner Michael Thurmond.

Last month, 483,394 unemployed Georgians were looking for work, an increase of 65 percent from June of 2008. Of that number, 160,249, or 33 percent, are receiving state unemployment insurance benefits, while approximately 93,000 are receiving federal extended benefits.

Thurmond added, "Georgia leaders should develop a bi-partisan recovery plan that focuses on three critical elements: protecting vulnerable citizens, including children, the elderly, and the sick; preserving our health, safety, and educational institutions; and encouraging economic development investments that promote job creation and future prosperity."

The June jobless rate was up 4.0 percentage points from 6.1 percent at this same time last year. Georgia's unemployment rate remained above the national rate of 9.5 percent for the 20th consecutive month.

The number of payroll jobs in June decreased 209,500, or 5.1 percent, from June of 2008. The over- the-year losses came in professional and business services, including temporary employment agencies, manufacturing, trade, transportation and warehousing, and in the construction industry.

On a positive note, healthcare and educational services, showed a combined increase of 12,000 jobs.

Governor calls for teacher, state employee furloughs

Gov. Perdue announced this week he will try to cut \$900 million from the state budget through spending reductions and furloughs of public school educators and other state employees.

Most state agencies are being ordered to cut spending by 5 percent, the governor said. A 3 percent spending reduction will be imposed on education, Medicaid and PeachCare, while there will be no immediate cutbacks in spending on mental health care.

The governor said state employees and teachers will also take at least three days of furloughs this year, reducing their salaries accordingly. The teacher furloughs will be administered by local superintendents after the state reduces its allotments to local school systems by an amount equal to what three days of furloughs would save.

The moves are in response to continuing declines in state revenue, but the governor stopped short of calling the legislature into special session to rewrite the fiscal year 2010 budget.

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Representative Elly Dobbs

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