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From: Rep. Elly Dobbs [newsletters@wordexpress.ccsend.com] on behalf of Rep. Elly Dobbs [newsletters@wordexpress.info]
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In this issue...

- [CAPITOL UPDATE](#)
- [LEGISLATION IN PROGRESS](#)
- [MORE LEGISLATIVE NEWS](#)
- [Earth Hour: March 28, 8:30 p.m.](#)
- [www.ellydobbs.com](#)
- [JOB HUNTING RESOURCES](#)
- [INTERNSHIPS](#)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Plant the community gardens for the Atlanta Community Food Bank

Saturday, April 4
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Join Democrats Work volunteers to help plant community gardens in low-income areas of Atlanta. Working with the Atlanta Community Food Bank, we will help make sure neighborhoods have fresh, nutritious food to eat. We will know the location of the garden two weeks prior to our work day, so stay tuned!

Democrats Work

State Representative Elly Dobbs

GEORGIA LEGISLATIVE REPORT

March 25, 2009

Greetings!

There are only 5 days remaining before the end of the 2009 session of the General Assembly. Two more days are scheduled this week and three more next week with Sine Die scheduled on Friday, April 3rd. I expect that there will be a flurry of activity the last week of the session and my next newsletter will be a final wrap up of the General Assembly.

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

CAPITOL UPDATE

FY 2010 STATE BUDGET

The House of Representatives voted Thursday to adopt an \$18.6 billion annual state budget for fiscal year 2010, which begins July 1. In the House plan, a \$3 billion shortfall in state tax revenues is offset by \$1.6 billion in spending cuts from the governor's original proposal and \$1.4 billion in additional funding from the federal stimulus package.

I am pleased to report the House budget restores more than \$200 million in Medicaid payments to hospitals and physicians that the governor had proposed to cut. This will hopefully allow many struggling Georgia hospitals to keep their doors open and our doctors to continue treating all their patients.

The House also put \$30 million in the budget to retain school nurses and \$33 million for the state's trauma care network.

On the negative side, [HB 119](#) fails to include funding for the state's Homeowner Tax Relief Grants. The elimination of these grants will cause a \$200 to \$300 increase for the average Georgia homeowner on the property tax bills they receive later this year. The House budget proposal also cuts another \$197 million in state funding to local school systems, which pushes to approximately \$2 billion the total amount of these cuts by Gov. Perdue and the legislative majority during his administration.



Job Announcements

Georgians for a Healthy Future

Please send (via mail, e-mail or fax) a cover letter, resume, three references, and a salary history to: Terri Theisen, Theisen Consulting LLC, 7140 Northgreen Drive NE, Atlanta, GA 30328, fax 770-396-2385

E-mail

2010 Census Jobs Available

For more information, contact the local Census office or call the agency's toll-free jobs line at (866) 861-2010.

Link to website

Director of Communication

Georgia Budget and Policy Institute

Please send resume, writing sample (i.e. clips of published op-eds, press releases, or other published works), cover letter, names and contact information of three references, and salary requirements to Georgia Budget and Policy Institute, Communications Director Search, 100 Edgewood Ave, Suite 950, Atlanta, Georgia 30303.

E-mail

The budget plan now goes to the Senate for its consideration. During the House debate, Speaker Glenn Richardson predicted the General Assembly may be called back into session later in the year to adjust the budget if state revenues continue to fall short of projections.

HOUSE RESOLUTIONS

The House also passed two significant resolutions this week. [HR 161](#) would award \$700,000 in compensation to Jerome White, who was wrongly convicted of rape in 1979 and served almost 30 years in prison before he was exonerated by DNA evidence. The payments to White, now 48 years old, would be disbursed over a 20-year period.

[HR 562](#) encourages all Georgia motorists to be aware of blind pedestrians and their rights. It also directs the Department of Driver Services to review and assess current efforts to inform new and experienced drivers that persons with visual impairments have the right of way at all times.

[HR 673](#), a resolution to honor President Barack Obama on his election and inauguration and recognize him as an honorary lifetime member of the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus, was defeated in a partisan vote. Such resolutions are generally adopted without controversy. The House did vote Friday to reconsider the resolution later in the session. Hopefully, partisanship can be put aside at that time.

LEGISLATION IN PROGRESS

With only five legislative days remaining in the 2009 session, the House has been busy approving bills that have already passed the Senate and are now on their way to the governor's desk for his signature. Last week, those included:

INSURANCE REPORTING

[SB 76](#), which would remove the requirement for workers' compensation insurers to submit an annual report to the Department of Insurance in paper format. Instead, this report would be filed electronically.

ACCESS TO RECORDS

[SB 79](#), which would expand access to child abuse records in cases of "near fatality." Currently, records can only be released when there is a fatality.

FOOD SAFETY

[SB 80](#), which would make it a felony for any company or individual to fail to report the discovery of salmonella or other food-borne disease to the State Department of Agriculture. This legislation addresses the problems resulting from salmonella-tainted peanut butter products manufactured at the Peanut Corp. of America in Early County.

WILDLIFE TRAPPING

[SB 110](#), which would provide an exception to a law against trapping wildlife on the rights of way of public roads or highways.

NIGHT HUNTING

As a member of the House Game, Fish & Parks Committee, I presented [SB 111](#), which would require people hunting alligators, raccoons, opossums, foxes, bobcats or hogs at night to wear a light on their person, affixed to a helmet, hat or belt system of the hunter. The bill passed by an overwhelming 164-3 vote.

STREAM BUFFERS

[SB 155](#) - was passed by the House Natural Resources and Environment Committee. The bill would eliminate the 25 foot buffer requirement for Georgia's ephemeral streams.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE

[HR 334](#) - was adopted in the House by a vote of 92-55. The resolution urges the Congress of the United States to oppose the Freedom of Choice Act which supports a woman's right to make her own reproductive choices. However, the Freedom of Choice Act is not up for debate in the current Congress.

MORE LEGISLATIVE NEWS

JOBLESS RATE CLIMBS

Georgia's unemployment rate hit its highest recorded level ever as it rose to 9.3 percent in February, according to the state Department of Labor. The previous unemployment record had been set the month before in January when it rose to a revised high of 8.5 percent, the Labor Department said.

The number of payroll jobs in February decreased by 189,800, or 4.6 percent, from February 2008. There were job losses in manufacturing and construction, trade, transportation and warehousing, along with professional and business services, including temporary employment agencies. Jobs were added in educational and health services, state and local education, and with the federal government, the Labor Department said.

The February rate was 3.9 percent higher than the 5.4 percent for February of last year. Georgia's unemployment rate remained above the national rate of 8.1 percent for the 16th consecutive month.

Earth Hour: March 28, 8:30 p.m.

Turn out. Take action.
Be part of this historic event.
March 28, 2009, 8:30 pm local time

World Wildlife Fund is asking individuals, businesses, governments and organizations around the world to turn off their lights for one hour - Earth Hour - to make a global statement of concern about climate change and to demonstrate commitment to finding solutions.

Free Tax Assistance Available at Libraries: Fulton County residents who are preparing their taxes can find assistance at branches of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System. Federal and state forms are available at all 34 library locations, and volunteers are available at 12 libraries to assist.

Tax Aide Sites, Dates, Times <http://www.fultoncountyga.gov/images/stories/Library/Tax%20Aide%20Sites%202009.pdf>

List of Library Locations for Tax Forms http://www.afplweb.com/cms/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=10&Itemid=11

Atlanta-Fulton County Public Library website http://www.fulton_countyga.gov/

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JOB HUNTING RESOURCES

Georgia Department of Labor: <http://www.dol.state.ga.us/>

Careers.ga.gov: <https://www.careers.ga.gov/careersLocations.asp>

AJC Jobs - Atlanta listings: <http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/job-search-l-Atlanta-GA-m-0?partner=ajcjobs>

SimplyHired - Atlanta listings: <http://www.simplyhired.com/a/jobs/list/l-Atlanta%2C+GA>

CNN - Job Hunting articles and resources:
<http://money.cnn.com/news/specials/jobs/index.html>

INTERNSHIPS

Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper For more information on how to apply, [click here](#).

The Democratic Party of Georgia is currently accepting Intern applications for the spring semester. For more information visit the party [website](#).

The White House Project Women Helping Women Win Internship Program - To apply please send your resume and cover letter to [Stacey Chavis](#). The subject line should be Capitol Internship: Your Name.

Quick Links

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Representative Elly Dobbs

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