

CAPITOL UPDATE

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Strategic Plan for Science and Technology

This week, Georgia State Senator, Barry Loudermilk introduced a resolution for the creation of a joint study commission to review and develop a strategic plan for science and technology. The resolution, SR 68, calls for public and private sector participation as we look to advance the technology industry. The commission would see how we, as a state, can leverage some of our great assets and make Georgia a nationwide leader for innovation and technology growth. TAG, along with our supporters, couldn't be more pleased with this resolution and will work to see its passage. We need to do everything we can to get jobs here in Georgia, and this plan will work to see that new jobs are created in the technology industry.

Over the past few years, TAG has worked with other technology leaders in the state to research and review other states' strategic plans for science and technology. This is the first year that a resolution for a joint commission has been created. Currently it is in the Senate Science and Technology Committee which is scheduled to be voted on, and hopefully passed out of committee on February 7. Pending a favorable vote, the resolution would then go to the Senate Rule Committee where it would be scheduled for a vote by the entire Senate.

As SR 68 moves through the legislative process, we will keep you informed.

To view the legislation in its entirety, please [click here](#).

High-Tech Day At the Capitol
February 9, 2011

Don't forget that each year TAG hosts High-Tech Day at the Capitol, where members of TAG can meet with members of the General Assembly and voice their concerns on important issues. For more information about the event, please [click here](#).

State of the State Address

Recently, Governor Nathan Deal presented his State of the State Address to the General Assembly and members of the public. In his address he confronted one of Georgia's most troubling issues—the budget. His new budget calls for an elimination of 14,000 state jobs that currently are unfilled. In addition to that, the Governor has made other cuts that will ensure the state's \$1.7 billion budget shortfall is met.

Governor Deal has refocused his attention on education, pledging \$15 million dollars for specific science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education programs. We are excited about the Governor's commitment to STEM education and look forward to working with him and members of the General Assembly to institute programs that will train tomorrow's workforce.

Special Council on Tax Reform

As you know, the Special Council on Tax Reform and Fairness for Georgians made their report to the General Assembly at the beginning of the legislative session. While there were a number of bold proposals made in the report, little has been done to advance those new tax changes. While there are some aspects of the plan that have gained more attention than others, such as the energy exemption on manufacturing and the communications tax, the legislature seems hesitant about moving any proposals forward at this time. We will continue to monitor the situation and update you on any changes that develop.

Government Relations Task Force Updates

Jeff Wansley has recently resigned Vice-Chairman for the government relations task force because of a new job opportunity. We are excited for Jeff and his new role and wish him the best of luck. Please join me in welcoming Loretta Lepore as the new Vice-Chairman for the 2011-2012 legislative session. Loretta has been a valued member of the task force and we are confident she will excel in her new role.