**GPHA Weekly Legislative Report**

Week Ending March 13, 2015

By Scott Maxwell

Friday was “crossover day” at the General Assembly, the deadline for a bill to pass out of its house of origin, or be set aside until next session. Here’s what happened to some of the bills we’ve been following:

**The Sale of Fireworks Crosses Over**

The House voted 119-49 Monday to pass legislation ([HB 110](http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/display/20152016/HB/110)) that would legalize the sale of all fireworks in Georgia. Fireworks are now available in every bordering state except North Carolina. Supporters argue that Georgians are going to buy, handle and shoot fireworks regardless, so the state should capture the sales taxes they could produce for both state and local governments. Opponents point to the lost fingers, hands and eyesight of youth who mishandle fireworks as a reason to limit local sales to sparklers, as is current law.

**Ban on Smoking in Auto with Children**

Sen. Bruce Thompson (R-White) has been on a personal quest this year to prohibit smoking in an automobile while a child is present. The personal part comes from the fact that Thompson suffers from asthma and believes it’s a result of the secondhand smoke he inhaled as a youth. His legislative effort, [SB 130](http://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/en-US/Display/20152016/SB/130), made the crossover from Senate to House on Friday with a strong 37-3 showing. The bill would make it a misdemeanor to smoke or allow smoking in a car when someone 15 years or younger is present.

Here are some other updates:

[SB 126, Ability to Prescribe Auto-injectable Epinephrine](http://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/en-US/Display/20152016/SB/126) (Sen. Chuck Hufstetler-R)

Relating to physicians, physician assistants, and others, so as to provide for emergency public access stations to allow a lay rescuer to consult with a medical professional to administer or make available auto-injectable epinephrine under certain circumstances. **Status:**  Referred to Health & Human Services Cmte, Passed Cmte by Substitute, Pending Rules Cmte, Passed Senate by Substitute, Sent to the House

[HB 34, Georgia Right to Try Act](http://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/en-US/Display/20152016/HB/34) (Rep. Mike Dudgeon-R)

Relating to health so as to provide for investigational drugs, biological products, and devices for patients with advanced illnesses; to allow manufacturers to make such drugs available; to provide that health benefit coverage is not mandatory; to prohibit sanctions against a physician’s license. **Status:** Referred to Health & Human Services Cmte, Passed Cmte by Substitute, Pending Rules Cmte, Dead for the Session

[HB 504, Vaccination of Meningococcal Disease of College Students](http://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/en-US/Display/20152016/HB/504) (Rep. Sharon Cooper-R)

Relating to meningococcal disease vaccinations and disclosures, so as to revise provisions regarding vaccination against meningococcal disease of college students. **Status:** Referred to Health & Human Services Cmte, Passed Cmte by Substitute, Pending Rules Cmte, Passed House by Substitute, Sent to Senate, Referred to Health & Human Services Cmte

[HB 219, Exempt Certain Private Swimming Pools from Inspection and Licensing](http://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/en-US/Display/20152016/HB/219) (Rep. Jeff Jones-R)

Relating to health and public swimming pools, so as to exempt certain privately owned swimming pools from inspection and licensing requirements; to authorize inspection requests to board of health by residents or owners. **Status:** Referred to State Planning & Community Affairs Cmte, Passed Cmte by Substitute, Pending Rules Cmte, Dead for the Session

[HB 426, Exemptions from Sales and Use Tax](http://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/en-US/Display/20152016/HB/426) (Rep. Darlene Taylor-R)

Relating to exemptions from sales and use tax, so as to provide a new exemption from state sales and use tax only for a limited period of time regarding the sale or use of tangible personal property to certain nonprofit health centers; to provide a new exemption for a limited period of time with respect to certain nonprofit volunteer health clinics. **Status:** Referred to Ways & Means Cmte, Passed Cmte by Substitute, Pending Rules Cmte, Passed House by Substitute, Sent to the Senate

[HB 436, HIV and Syphilis Testing of Pregnant Women](http://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/en-US/Display/20152016/HB/436) (Rep. Valerie Clark-R)

Relating to control of venereal disease, so as to require that physicians and health care providers offer HIV and syphilis testing of pregnant women in their third trimester of pregnancy. **Status:** Referred to Health & Human Services, Passed Cmte, Pending Rules Cmte, House Withdrawn, House Recommitted, Passed Cmte by Substitute, Pending Rules Cmte, Passed House by Substitute, Sent to the Senate