

Legislative Report #2, February 2, 2013

The General Assembly reconvened on January 28th at 10:00 am for the 5th day of the 40 day session.

Last week the General Assembly was in recess to allow the Joint House and Senate Appropriations Committees to hold budget meetings where they heard from agency and department heads on their propose spending plans.

Department of Community Health Budget - Within the Department of Community Health's proposed budget there is a reimbursement cut of .74 percent for providers, excluding hospitals, primary care, FQHC, RHC, and hospice providers. Access to care for Medicaid patients who require services such as dental care, oncology, gynecology, and obstetrics and other non-primary care services could be jeopardized under this spending plan.

To view the proposed DCH budget click [here](#).

Provider Fee - By a vote of 147 to 18 the Georgia House of Representatives passed Senate Bill 24 on Friday, February 1st. The legislation transfers decisions on the hospital provider fee from the Legislature to the Department of Community Health and allows them to fill a \$500 million shortfall in the state Medicaid program. This will protect hospitals from having to cut important services to Medicaid patients, and keep the doors open for many rural hospitals avoiding possible closure because they would have faced a 20 percent reimbursement cut or more. The current provider fee expires in June.

The DCH Board will still have to approve the assessment when they meet later this month.

To watch Senator Charlie Bethel (R-Dalton) discuss the measure click [here](#).

SB 24 now heads to the Governor for his signature.

SB 24 was a top legislative priority for GRHA and the hospital and health care community in Georgia.

Amended FY 2013 Budget – The Amended FY 2013 Budget, a revised spending plan for the current fiscal year which ends June 30th, is expected to be up for a floor vote the week of February 11th.