

From: Representative Don Parsons

Legislation Passed in the Georgia House on Day 22 -February 17, 2016

HB 486, Sponsored by Rep. Bert Reeves, serves as a Code "clean up" bill to correct two errors resulting from the recent rewrite of the Georgia evidence code. First, it corrects the code section dealing with the State Board of Forestry and its records keeping provisions. The evidence code rewrite sought to create uniform records keeping procedures across state boards and agencies by striking each board or agency's individual records keeping provisions and moving them to the state evidence Code. Accidentally, however, these provisions were not removed from the State Board of Forestry's Code section and the Board maintains its own process.

Further, HB 486 corrects an error impacting the state Department of Public Health's (DPH) ability to use discretion when choosing to disclose an individual's confidential AIDS status. Specifically, this bill allows the DPH discretion to inform an individual's parent or guardian of their AIDS status if the individual is a minor.

HB 555, sponsored by Rep. Joyce Chandler, requires the clerk of a juvenile court to report the number of petitions granted or denied for an abortion without parental consent to the Administrative Office of the Courts on an annual basis.

HB 762, sponsored by Rep. Wendell Willard, amends Code sections related to the unlawful buying, selling, or offering to buy or sell a human body or parts to include human fetuses. This bill makes such acts punishable by a fine not exceeding \$25,000 and/or by imprisonment for one to five years.

HB 813, Sponsored by Rep. Rick Jasperse, allows for a licensed practitioner who has diagnosed a patient with chlamydia or gonorrhea to prescribe antibiotic drugs to the sexual partner of the patient without physically examining such partner. Additionally, under the provisions of this bill, prescriptions drug orders transmitted by facsimile or computer do not have to include the name and address of the sexual partner of the patient, nor is patient counseling required for the sexual partners of patients diagnosed with chlamydia or gonorrhea.

HB 818, Sponsored by: Rep. Jason Shaw is the annual omnibus "housekeeping" bill for the Board of Workers' Compensation. This bill provides that administrative law judges are subject to the Georgia code of Judicial Conduct. Furthermore, this bill increases the weekly compensation benefits cap for total disability by \$25 to \$575 and temporary partial disability by \$16 to \$383. These increases are consistent with maintaining the rate of approximately 2/3 of the statewide

Average Weekly Wage. The total compensation payable to a surviving spouse as a sole dependent at the time of death, when there are no other dependents, is increased by \$10,000 to \$230,000.

HB 869, sponsored by Rep. Alan Powell, brings Georgia law into compliance with federal regulations by removing a provision that requires real estate brokers to review offers - including those immediately rejected. Instead, brokers will only be required to review accepted offers. Furthermore, this bill requires that brokers maintain copies of closing statements only if provided to the licensee and requires licensees to ensure their clients receive a copy of the closing statement if a copy was provided to the licensee. Currently, pursuant to federal law, real estate agents and brokers are not guaranteed access to closing statements for each transaction. This conflicts with current Georgia Real Estate License Law which requires brokers to deliver a closing statement to sellers in every transaction and keep a true and correct copy of this statement for three years.