

From: Representative Don Parsons

Legislation Passed by the Georgia House on Day 24 - February 19, 2016

HB 579, sponsored by Rep. Tom McCall, creates a new Code section regarding uniform rules of the road and defines the term "farm vehicle" to mean an all-terrain vehicle or personal transportation vehicle as well as "farmer" to mean the owner, employee or family members of the owner of a commercial agricultural or silvicultural operation. For reference silviculture refers to the science of controlling the growth of forests and woodlands. Under HB 579, any person 16 years or older may operate a farm vehicle on a public road, street, or highway when the operation is connected with agricultural pursuits on a tract of land and the vehicle has a slow-moving vehicle emblem. The legislation also provides that any municipality may prohibit the operation of a farm use vehicle on public roads and highways within its jurisdiction, if such operation is determined to endanger the safety of the traveling public.

HB 751, sponsored by Speaker David Ralston; the Fiscal Year 2017 budget effective July 1, 2016, is set by a revenue estimate of \$23.7 billion. This reflects an increase of \$673.9 million, or 2.9%, over the amended FY 2016 budget and includes additional funding for transportation as a result of HB 170 (2015 Session) not reflected in the previous budget. FY17 budget highlights include:

- A \$2.3 million increase in the employer contribution rate for the Employees' Retirement System to provide a one-time benefit adjustment of 3% to more than 46,000 retired state employees.
- \$300 million for local school systems to offset austerity reductions and provide systems the flexibility to eliminate teacher furlough days, increase instructional days, and provide teacher pay raises.
- Transportation funding: \$543.1 million for capital construction and maintenance projects, \$204.7 million budgeted for routine maintenance and \$41 million in additional funding provided for Local Maintenance and Improvement Grants (LMIG).
- \$53.8 million in additional lottery funds provided to the Georgia Student Finance Commission for the HOPE Scholarship program.
- The Bond Package for FY17 totals \$903 million and provides funding for education, public safety, and transportation projects while still maintaining a debt service ratio for the state of 5.8% - well below the constitutional limit of 10%.

HB 886, sponsored by Rep. Sharon Cooper, requires any pharmacy, including specialty pharmacies, to utilize a shipping method that is in accordance with recognized standards when shipping medication to a patient. This legislation removes excessive and burdensome restrictions and rules regarding the mailing of prescriptions currently placed on pharmacies by the Georgia Board of Pharmacy to align shipping standards with those placed on drug wholesalers and manufacturers.

HB 902, sponsored by Rep. Katie Dempsey, requires assisted living communities to provide educational information on influenza to their residents each year prior to September 1st. Such information should include the risks associated with influenza, the symptoms of influenza, the means by which the disease is spread, as well as the availability, effectiveness, and known contraindications (i.e. situations in which the drug should not be used because it may be harmful) of the influenza vaccine. The assisted living community is not required to provide or pay for any vaccinations.