



**Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
2020 General Assembly - Legislative Report**

**CROSSOVER DAY EDITION
March 19, 2020**

Crossover Day occurred on March 12, 2020. This is the day by which a piece of legislation must pass its chamber of origin in order to have much chance of passing both chambers by the end of the session. As a result of the on-going COVID-19 crisis, on March 13, 2020 the Georgia General Assembly adopted HR 1473, suspending the 2020 legislative session indefinitely. A determination of when it is best for the General Assembly to reconvene for the normal session will be made and announced at a future date. On March 16, 2020 legislators gathered for a Special Session to pass HR 4EX. This resolution concurred with the Governor's Executive Order No. 03.14.20.01 declaring a public health state of emergency.

The information below is relevant to the "Crossover Day" status of bills and issues GCADV has been following during the 2020 session. Though some of the bills referenced below did not officially pass their chamber of origin, GCADV will continue to maintain an eye on these issues as through the legislative process, they could potentially end up in bills that did "crossover."

- **Budget – Funding for state-certified domestic violence centers FY 2020 Amended & FY 2021**

As of March 12, 2020 both chambers passed HB 792, the amended fiscal year 2020 budget. The bill was immediately transferred to the Governor's office where it currently awaits his further action. Funding for domestic and sexual violence programs was sustained at current levels.

Details of HB 792 can be viewed at [here](#).

The FY2021 budget, HB 793, passed the House on March 10, 2020 and is currently in the Senate. As the current legislative session has been suspended, this bill will be taken



up in the near future before the new state fiscal year. Funding for domestic and sexual violence programs was sustained at current levels. HB 793 can be viewed [here](#).

- **Firearms and domestic violence:** GCADV is continuing to advocate on behalf of this issue. Aside from [SB 150](#), which was introduced during the 2019 legislative session, no new legislation was introduced to similarly align state law with federal law prohibiting individuals who have been convicted of a domestic violence misdemeanor or who are the subject of a final order of protection from owning or possessing a firearm. **SB 150 remained in the Senate Judiciary Committee on crossover day and will not move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.**
- **Expansion of “Family Violence” definition to include dating relationships:** GCADV is continuing to advocate for expansion of the definition of “family violence” to include dating relationships. No specific bill was introduced in this effort prior to crossover day. Stay tuned for future updates.
- **Domestic Violence Helping Hands Act- [HB 727](#)** would provide that individuals licensed under Georgia’s State Board of Cosmetology and Barbers receive instruction on recognizing signs of domestic and sexual violence and be made aware of what resources exist for those who experience these types of violence. This instruction would count towards the five hours of continuing education hours currently required of individuals seeking to renew their licenses. The bill was assigned to the House Regulated Industries Committee where it received no further action as of crossover day. **It will not move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.** Representative Teri Anulewicz (Smyrna) was the primary sponsor.
- **Expansion of weapons carry license reciprocity to non- Georgia residents – [HB 787](#)** would expand weapons carry license reciprocity and provide that individuals who are not residents of the state are authorized to carry a weapon in Georgia if licensed to carry in another state. **A substitute version of the bill remained in the House Rules Committee on crossover day and will not move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.** Representative Mandi Ballinger (Cherokee) was the primary sponsor.



- **Economic Justice-** Both [HB 804](#) and [HB 805](#) would have economic justice implications for survivors. HB 804 would prevent employers from being able to exercise wage discrimination against persons with a disability. HB 805 would raise the current minimum wage from \$5.15 per hour to \$7.25 per hour. Both bills were assigned to the Labor & Industry Committee and neither received further action on crossover day. **Neither bill will move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.** Representative Carl Gillard (Garden City) was serving as primary sponsor for both bills.
- **Medicaid expansion-** [HB 813](#) would provide for a Medicaid expansion program to provide healthcare coverage for individuals, age's birth to 64, who are uninsured. The bill was assigned to the Special Committee on Access to Quality Healthcare and received no further action on crossover day. **It will not move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.** Representative Donna McLeod (Lawrenceville) was the primary sponsor.
- **Commercial vehicle operation and trafficking-** [HB 823](#) would provide a lifetime disqualification from operating a commercial motor vehicle by persons convicted of trafficking individuals for labor or sexual servitude. A substitute version of this bill passed out of the House Motor Vehicle Committee and on the House floor. **As of crossover day the bill remained in the Senate for consideration.** Representative Houston Gaines (Athens) serves as lead sponsor for the original bill.
- **Reporting of pet ownership-** [HB 886](#) would require licensed veterinarians or veterinary techs to confirm a pet's owners through microchip scan and report when the microchip owner information differs from the information of the individual presenting the pet for treatment. The bill passed out of the House Committee on Agriculture & Consumer Affairs by substitute and passed on the House floor on March 12. **As of crossover day the bill remained in the Senate Assignments Committee.** Representative Andy Welch (McDonough) serves as lead sponsor on the bill.
- **Revision of school model bullying policy-** [HB 892](#) directs the Georgia Department of Education to revise the current model policy on bullying. The bill was assigned to the House Education Committee and proposes that the revised policy include requirements



for school principals or principle designees to investigate any report of suspected bullying, determine whether the incident should be reported to certain officials, include a procedure for referrals to counseling for students who are bullying and for those who have been victims of bullying, and a requirement that teachers and other school employees receive training on bullying identification and prevention annually. As of crossover day this bill remained in the House Education Committee. **It will not move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.** Representative Beth Moore (Peachtree Corners) served as lead sponsor on the bill.

- **Equitable caregivers-** [HB 1068](#) would add additional language to code section 19-7-3.1 in regards to the documentation used in the decision making of equitable caregiver establishment. This bill would have specifically not allowed the referenced code section to be used by an individual who had been previously convicted of domestic violence or by an individual whom relief had been granted against under Georgia’s family violence code section. The bill passed out of the House Juvenile Justice Committee and received no further action as of crossover day. **It will not move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.** Representative Chuck Efstrotation was the primary sponsor of the bill.
- **Anti-Sanctuary policy-** [HB 1083](#) would amend Georgia’s current definition of “sanctuary policies” for municipalities and governmental entities. The revision would more broadly define the meaning of sanctuary policies and the limitations they pose on law enforcement. **The bill passed out of the House Judiciary Committee but received no further action on crossover day. It will not move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.** Representative Jesse Petrea (Savannah) was the primary sponsor of the bill.
- **Repeal of Living Infants Fairness & Equality Act-** [HB 1134](#) would repeal the provisions of HB 481, passed during the 2019 legislative session, and restore the law to what it was before HB 481 was enacted. This bill was assigned to the House Health and Human Services Committee where it **received no further action and will not move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.** Representative Beth Moore (Peachtree Corners) was the primary sponsor of the bill.



- **Child custody and visitation-** [HB 1140](#) would revise presumption in cases where child custody is an issue and revise certain requirements and processes for the establishment and review of child custody and visitation. The bill was assigned to the House Judiciary Committee where **it received no further action and will not move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.** Representative Jasmine Clark (Lilburn) was the primary sponsor of the bill.
- **Use of firearm-** [SB 224](#) would revise Georgia code section 16-5-21 relating to aggravated assault. Within one area of this particular section, the bill would have made it possible for a licensed firearm owner to pull or show their firearm during a dispute, as long as it was not aimed in an offensive manner. The bill passed the Senate Judiciary by substitute but received no further action as of crossover day. **It will not move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.**
- **Statute of limitations on sexual assault-** [SB 287](#) and [HB 1069](#) would revise the statute of limitations on the offenses of rape, aggravated sodomy, and aggravated sexual battery. Both bills would allow the prosecution for these offenses to be initiated at any time. SB 287 was assigned to the Senate Judiciary Committee where it received a second hearing and passed out of committee unanimously. **This bill remained in the Senate Rules Committee on crossover day and will not move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.** HB 1069 was assigned to the House Judiciary Non-civil Committee and received no further action as of crossover day. **It will not move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.** Senator Harold Jones II (Augusta) was the primary sponsor of SB 287 and Representative Scott Holcomb (Atlanta) was the primary sponsor of HB 1069.
- **Definition change of primary aggressor-** [SB 477](#) would revise the current statute regarding law enforcement's arrest response during family violence calls. The current statute provides that law enforcement arrest the primary aggressor. SB 477 would revise this language to provide guidance that law enforcement should arrest the predominant aggressor which the bill defines as "the individual posing the most serious and ongoing threat." This update also further clarifies what additional consideration law enforcement should give when assessing the nature and severity of injuries. The bill



passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee and full Senate chamber. **As of crossover day the bill remained in the House Juvenile Justice Committee.**

- **Senate Domestic Violence Courts Study Committee- [SR 769](#)** would create the Senate Domestic Violence Courts Study Committee. The resolution would create a special study committee dedicated to taking an in-depth look at the conditions, needs, and issues for which the development of domestic violence courts could provide consistent accountability responses and supports for victims. **This bill remained in the Senate Rules Committee on crossover day and will not move on upon reconvening of the 2020 legislative session.** Senator Jesse Stone (Waynesboro) was lead sponsor for the resolution.