

AGC Georgia Legislative Update

2026 Session of the Georgia General Assembly



GOVERNMENTAL
AFFAIRS



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11 of 40 legislative days complete

The 2026 session kicked off on January 12, and despite some winter weather, we have successfully made it through two legislative weeks, as well as budget week.

Given this is the second year of a two-year legislative cycle, the General Assembly started quickly, addressing legislation proposed during the 2025 session. We are also seeing plethora of new legislation being introduced, as well.

We'd like to offer our sincere appreciation to our members who braved 14-degree weather to join us for our annual Building Georgia Legislative Meet & Greet at the Capitol last week. Even with limited activities under the gold dome due to the recent winter storms, our group was well represented and connected with state officials interested in learning more about the work members perform around the state.

Of particular note, we provided legislators and their teams with our recent newsletter highlighting the industry's amazing support for the recent Skills Challenge series which connected more than 2,300 high school students with construction professionals throughout the 8-city tour. The publication is a great way to share tangible ways AGC Georgia members are collaborating to bring more young people into the construction industry and maximizing the state funding for construction workforce development initiatives.

On the following pages you'll find summaries of AGC Georgia's primary points of focus at this stage of the 2026 session of the Georgia General Assembly.

Additionally, we are beginning to build this report to track key bills our team is tracking.

As always, if you have any questions or comments, please reach out to us at woodall@agcga.org or graddick@agcga.org. It's our privilege to serve AGC Georgia members each year, and we look forward to kicking off another great session under Georgia's Gold Dome.



2026 Session Core Initiatives

Construction Workforce Development Funding

1) K-12 Funding: During the 2025 session, AGC Georgia was instrumental in securing \$1M in the base budget for construction workforce development. Traditionally our request was a line-item budget item, but we were appreciative of legislative support that added our request in the state's base budget. This shows a clear nod of approval from the General Assembly and acknowledges leaderships understanding of the clear return on investment. In 2026, we are monitoring the status of this base budget request and working to secure \$1M.

As with each year, there will be many groups advocating for funding in the budget, but given our track record, and the good news the 2025 session brought, we are optimistic. Since the passage of the CONNECT Act in 2018, (Creating Opportunities Needed Now to Expand Credentialed Training) the \$1M in funding secured during the 2025 session marked the seventh straight year AGC Georgia secured funding in the appropriations budget for construction industry workforce development programs.

***Status Update:** We are connecting with key legislators throughout the House Appropriations process and understand there is no plan as of right now to remove the K-12 funding from the budget. However, we have been cautioned to monitor the appropriations process closely as the 2026 session progresses to ensure this does not change due to possible funding cuts due to budget changes from the federal level.*

2) Apprenticeship Funding: The workforce shortage is an alarming reality for all industries across Georgia. However, there are state-led initiatives in place bearing fruit that we believe can help address this issue. The High Demand Apprenticeship Program (HDAP) (*formerly the High Demand Career Initiative*) resulted in \$720,000 of a total source of \$1.1M allocated for 72 construction apprentices in 2024. We are waiting for final statistics from calendar year 2025.

Although the HDAP is a step in the right direction in its current state, increased apprenticeship funding is still a massive need for our state. AGC Georgia recognizes the capabilities of the HDAP and we will push for increased funding. As a program that aims to promote workforce development for all industries, and as a program that is showing proven results for construction, we are posing the question . . . *What could this program achieve for Georgia if it were funded at a much higher level?* In our eyes, increased funding could be a tremendous leap forward in addressing one of Georgia's largest issues.

***Status Update:** Alongside a coalition of other interested stakeholders, we are talking with both the House and Senate Education Chairmen for the Appropriations Committees. Chairman Rep. Mark Newton and Chairman Sen. Billy Hickman are encouraged by the coalition and continue pursuing this initiative. The current request is for the House to add \$500,000 in funding in their proposed budget, with hopes that the Senate will match this addition resulting in \$1,000,000 added for HDAP funding. If all goes to plan, this will result in the funding doubling from \$1 million to \$2 million.*

Tort Reform Follow Up

***Status Update:** In the first few weeks of the session, it was oddly quiet on the tort reform front. This could be attributed to the fact that it is an election year at the Capitol and legislators may be wary of reopening the legislative Pandora's box that tort reform presents. We will continue to monitor for any new legislation on this front.*

Tort Reform took main stage last year with passage and signage of Governor Kemp's package that included Senate Bills 68 and 69. Legislators in both bodies, Governor Kemp and his team, and interested stakeholders spent the entirety of last session advocating for comprehensive change to this area of Georgia law. After a session packed with heated debate, SB 68, which included the bulk of the proposed changes, narrowly passed in the House with 91 votes in its favor (*1 vote above the magic number of 90*).

AGC Georgia's Governmental Affairs team was heavily involved in this fight. With the support of the association's Board of Directors, we aligned with two tort reform coalitions: *Competitive Georgia* and *It's Time Georgia*. *Competitive Georgia* is a coalition of business leaders across all industries from around the state. We donated \$100,000 to this organization and joined forces with them in their lobbying efforts at the Capitol. *It's Time Georgia* is a coalition of business organizations from around the state formed by the Georgia Chamber of Commerce. We supported their efforts with \$15,000 in donations.

In partnership with *Competitive Georgia*, we will work to stop any bills throughout this session that could attempt to peel back the tort reform passed in 2025.

Private Plan Review & Inspection

At the end of the 2025 session, homebuilder advocates dropped HB 812 which revolves around permitting. AGC Georgia supports the residential building community pursuing this legislation. Recently, we've heard from members in various regions of Georgia who have encountered issues with private plan review and inspection processes. With the homebuilder group opening the door to the permitting conversation at the Capitol, we opened talks with the engineers and other interested parties about introducing a bill in the Senate to compliment HB 812 in the House. The main goal with this potential legislation is to ensure once a contractor has paid the premium to trigger private plan review and inspection by a third-party licensed architect or engineer, the municipalities cannot come out and re-inspect, thereby stalling progress.

***Status Update:** Talks have been held with key legislators who sit on the House Governmental Affairs committee to comb through HB 812. With a committee substitute in play, tweaks and concessions are being made by those who support and oppose the bill. AGC Georgia applauds efforts of the Homebuilders. It is our long-held belief that transparency, expediency, and fairness are crucial in the inspection and permitting process. As this legislation moves through the House Governmental Affairs committee, we are watching to see the General Assembly's appetite for continued improvements in this policy area with the idea of potential legislation of our own.*

Subrogation

Subrogation is the ability of an employer/insurer to enforce a lien against a judgement entered against a third-party tortfeasor where the employer/insurer has already paid out workers' compensation claims for the accident at hand. The ability to do so is highly limited in Georgia thanks to Georgia's "Made Whole" Doctrine. The inability to do so hurts Georgia's construction companies beyond just the ability to recover workers' compensation that has been paid out due to the impact this can have on a company's safety mod score. One of the key factors considered when a company's safety mod is calculated is a company's actual losses which include costs incurred by workers' compensation packages that are paid out. If an employer/insurer were able to recover these costs via subrogation, then no actual loss would need to be weighed when calculating the safety mod score. As previously referenced though, since it is overly difficult to subrogate in Georgia, in simple terms this means that accidents that are no fault of the employer/employee are directly impacting safety mod scores in Georgia. Given that these scores can directly impact a company's ability to successfully bid and receive jobs, it is clear change is needed.

***Status Update:** Following conversations with other interested stakeholders at the Capitol, AGC Georgia's Governmental Affairs team is investigating a potential formula adjustment with the National Council on Compensation Insurance (NCCI). Given how subrogation is handled in Georgia's court system, if the NCCI were to no longer weigh the actual losses stemming from a no-fault accident (on behalf of the employer or the employee) in the calculation for the safety mod rating, this would provide an instance impact in lowering safety mod scores for Georgia's construction companies. This could potentially be a much quicker fix than a potential legislative approach. We will continue to update you as we traverse this intricate issue.*

2026 Session Legislative Spotlight: Data Centers

House Bills: 1012, 1059, and 1063

Senate Bills: 34, 408, 410, and 421

***Summary:** As shown above, 7 bills are focused on data centers. SB 34 is a carryover bill from 2025 and the other six have all been introduced in recent days. A study performed by University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute created a lot of conversation about this topic. This study determined that only 30 percent of data centers being built in Georgia are a result of the tax incentive offered by the state of Georgia. This is down from a 2022 report showing the number was 90 percent. These findings have lit a fire under the General Assembly.*

While each of these bills focus on the same issue, they differ in their approaches. A few hope to move up the sunset of the original legislation, ending the tax incentive as soon as 2027. Others hope to stop the issuance of new certifications for data center tax incentives but wish to leave the law in place to govern certifications that have already been granted. Other more extreme bills wish to halt the building of data centers in Georgia altogether while state leaders are charged with gathering more data on the centers impact. A few pieces hope to ensure the general public does not bear the costs born from data centers in their personal energy bills. Alongside these bills, there are others that focus on the state and its resource management. This topic is by far the predominant discussion at the State Capitol so far this session.

With this debate comes an interesting proposition. While there are compelling public policy arguments when discussing data centers and their continued influx to Georgia, this is an issue Governor Kemp has already weighed in on. As always with Governor Kemp, Georgia and its economic competitiveness with other states is his top priority. Upon that basis, Governor Kemp vetoed a bill in 2024 that aimed to end the data center tax incentive. It is unclear if this will be his stance again, but it is not out of the question. Given the data provided since 2024, and given the General Assembly's fervor for change this session, will Governor Kemp change his stance if data center legislation reaches his desk this year?

As for AGC Georgia, while we do support the notion that the costs born from data centers should not impact the general public's costs, we oppose any legislation that reduces the chances of new construction projects coming to Georgia. Governor Kemp has sent the message throughout his time in office that Georgia is open for business. The data center tax incentive serves as just one example of his message in action. We believe it would be a mistake to cut this program before its original sunset date, giving other states a competitive edge in attracting data centers in the process.

2026 Session: House Bills of Interest

House Bill 613 – Public Works Preferences for Participants in Registered Apprenticeship Programs

Rep. Tyler Paul Smith (*District 18 – Bremen*)

AGC Georgia opposes this legislation

***Status:** This bill has been read and referred to the House Governmental Affairs Committee. This legislation was recently taken off of the agenda of the House Governmental Affairs committee in hopes of additional edits being put in place before the committee considered it. If the bill is to move forward, it will need to be heard and passed out of the House Governmental Affairs Committee.*

This legislation provides a preference in the public works bidding process to contractors or subcontractors that participate in registered apprenticeship programs. While AGC Georgia believes it is a worthwhile state initiative to incentivize industry participation in registered apprenticeship programs, we do not believe preference in the public works bidding process is a fair and balanced way of doing so.

House Bill 669 – Capital Outlay Grants that Award Contracts for Roofing

Rep. Steven Meeks (*District 178 – Screven*)

AGC Georgia opposes this legislation

Status: Currently awaits the first hearing by the House Education Committee.

This bill creates capital outlay grants that would be provided to eligible low wealth school systems. These grants would be utilized to procure roofing improvements for these school systems. The provider of these services would be chosen via a cooperative purchasing agreement, dependent upon approval from the GA Department of Administrative Services. While AGC Georgia applauds such capital outlay grant programs, the concern is that these types of initiatives have led to service providers cornering a specific market in certain communities. AGC Georgia remains steadfast in our belief that, absent an emergency situation, all public works projects above the threshold of \$250,000 must be publicly advertised and competitively bid. We contend that any process that would result in only a certain set of service providers getting consideration for a job does not meet these requirements.

House Bill 676 – Bogus Mechanic Liens

Rep. Rob Clifton (*District 131 – Augusta*)

AGC Georgia supports this legislation

Status: This bill currently awaits a vote by House Rules. If passed, it will move to a vote by the full House.

This bill mandates that if a bogus mechanic lien is filed, meaning liens without merit or that or filed with malicious intent, the filer will be subject to a \$1,500 fine, as well as attorney's fees and court costs of the opposing party.

House Bill 812 – Homebuilder's Legislation – Rep. Mike Cheokas (*District 151 – Americus*)

AGC Georgia supports this legislation

Status: Awaits consideration by the House Governmental Affairs. The bill has yet to be called in committee during session following an out of session hearing. A committee sub has been prepared to be heard in committee.

This bill was introduced at the end of the 2025 session. AGC Georgia applauds this initiative from the Homebuilders, as the legislation promotes fairness, transparency, and expediency from local governing bodies in the permitting and plan review process.

House Bill 1071 – Georgia Workplace Safety and Heat Protection Act – Rep. Kim Schofield (*District 63 – Atlanta*)

AGC Georgia opposes this legislation

Status: House Industry and Labor: This bill is yet to be heard in committee.

This legislation aims to codify new standards when it comes to heat safety on jobsites in the State of Georgia as well as penalties for those that do not conform to these regulations. This has been a longstanding battle at the federal level for AGC of America. While we applaud any bill with a focus on promoting public health, AGC and the construction industry has long promoted rest, shade, and water guidelines during the summer months. The standards presented in this legislation could impose unnecessary and time-consuming regulations, costing construction companies time they do not have to spare.

2026 Session: Senate Bills

Senate Bill 437 – Virtual Inspections in the Permitting Process

Sen. Clint Dixon (*District 45 – Buford*)

Status: Senate State and Local Government Operations Committee. This bill is yet to be heard in committee.

This legislation codifies the ability to utilize virtual inspections in the permitting process in Georgia. It also shortens key timelines cities and counties must abide by in the permitting process. We are in talks with the bill sponsor to ensure this bill does not alter any long-standing provisions in the private permitting and plan review process, but we are receptive to the General Assembly codifying virtual inspections as an acceptable avenue in Georgia.

Senate Bill 442 – Revocation and Expiration of Commercial Drivers’ Licenses for Non-citizens

Sen. Jason Dickerson (*District 21 – Canton*)

Status: *This bill is yet to be heard in the Senate Public Safety Committee.*

SB 442 would mandate the revocation and expiration of CDLs for non-citizens in Georgia. AGC Georgia’s governmental affairs team has been approached by several legislators voicing concerns about this legislation and the precedent it could set for immigrant workers in Georgia. Considering that the construction industry’s top challenge right now is the workforce shortage, we are engaging in further discussion with these legislators to ensure no damage is done by this legislation.

Reminder: AGC Georgia PAC

Please consider donating to AGC Georgia’s Political Action Committee. The 2026 election cycle will prove to be one of the most impactful yet. With the number of current legislators vying for higher office, it will undoubtedly lead to a shifting landscape. To support the legislators that support Georgia’s construction industry, the AGC Georgia PAC needs financial support. As always, thank you for your help in allowing us to promote common sense legislation for our state’s construction industry.

If AGC Georgia’s Governmental Affairs team can ever be of assistance, please contact us at woodall@agcga.org or graddick@agcga.org.

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POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE



Please contribute to the AGC Georgia PAC!

AGC Georgia maintains a visible and active presence throughout the year with elected and appointed state officials and policy makers advocating for what is in the best interest of our members and the commercial construction industry.

During each year's session of the Georgia General Assembly, AGC Georgia is front and center regarding pending legislation, proposed policy changes, and other regulations that can negatively impact your firm and our industry. In addition to maintaining a strong defensive posture, AGC Georgia is also very proactive in identifying opportunities to better the business climate for your company.

We firmly believe electing pro-business officials to Georgia's General Assembly who objectively listen to our concerns, understand them and act accordingly is critical to the industry's success.

Please consider donating to the AGC Georgia PAC to help our association continue a long tradition of being a respected voice in the legislative process. Since actions taken under Georgia's Gold Dome significantly impact the construction industry, it's important for AGC Georgia's PAC to be a vibrant source of support for pro-business candidates seeking office throughout our state.

AGC Georgia's PAC can accept both corporate and personal contributions.

Contact Will Graddick, Associate Director of Governmental Affairs, at 678.298.4142 or graddick@agcga.org to learn more about our legislative and advocacy efforts and opportunities to get more involved.

Please accept the following ☐ Corporate or ☐ Individual contribution to AGC Georgia PAC.

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THANK YOU!