



2026 ABC of Georgia Weekly Legislative Report

Pre-Legislative Session | Week ending January 9, 2026

By ABC of Georgia Lobbying Firm, Fiveash-Stanley

Legislature Convenes Monday

Georgia lawmakers return to the Capitol today, January 12 to kick off the 2026 legislative session. As the second year of a two-year legislative cycle, all bills not enacted in 2025 remain eligible for consideration, alongside a new slate of proposals.

Lawmakers are expected to hit the ground running, and many committees have already posted meeting notices for the first week. Looming large over the proceedings is the 2026 Election, which includes the Governor and other state-wide constitutional officers, all 236 seats in the state House and Senate, plus Georgia's fourteen congressional seats and the US Senate. Georgia law prohibits incumbent lawmakers from accepting or soliciting political contributions during the session, creating a strong incentive for a fast-paced assembly and early adjournment.

State Senate

The Senate has new leadership. Larry Walker (R-Perry) will serve as President Pro Tempore, Janson Anaviatarte (R-Dallas) as Majority Leader, and Shawn Still (R-Johns Creek) as Majority Caucus Chair. Lt. Governor Burt Jones (R-Jackson) and about 20% of the Senate are seeking higher office, while two Republicans have already resigned to campaign. A reduced majority and political gamesmanship are sure to create a chaotic environment.

State House

The House's leadership remains largely unchanged, providing welcome stability in an otherwise tumultuous Capitol. Speaker Jon Burns (R-Newington) has appointed several new committee chairs, and his Appropriations leaders are already working on the amended FY26 and FY27 budgets. State spending is expected to remain flat with no new programs, service expansions, or pay increases recommended by the Governor. Here too, several vacancies will not be filled for several months.

Legislative Tax Priorities

This week, Senate Republicans unveiled a plan to eliminate the state's income tax. State auditors suggest this would reduce revenue by about \$16 billion annually. Lt. Governor Burt Jones (who is running for Governor) and Senate Appropriations Chair Blake Tillery (who is running for Lt. Governor) propose closing this gap through the elimination of some of the state's \$30 billion in tax breaks. Meanwhile, on the other side of the Gold Dome, Speaker Burns has vowed to focus on cost-of-living issues. He is looking specifically at property tax reform.

Open Seats

Voters in northwest Georgia will head to the polls on March 10 to select a successor to US Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene. As many as 19 Republicans are rumored to be considering a run; qualifying begins January 12. We are also monitoring four vacant state legislative seats, including the Macon-based Senate District 18 post. John Kennedy resigned from the seat late last year to focus on (and fundraise for) his bid for Lt. Governor.

What does it all mean?

We anticipate a chaotic, fast-paced session filled with political traps and acrimony. So... business as usual.