



ABC of Georgia Weekly Legislative Report – 1.9.23

By ABC of Georgia Lobbying Firm, Fiveash-Stanley, Inc.

Session Begins Today, Monday, January 8

Georgia lawmakers return to the Capitol this morning, January 8, to kick off the 2024 regular session. As the second year of a two-year legislative cycle, all legislation not enacted during the 2023 session remains viable for consideration.

The session will last forty working days, typically stretching into late March. Lawmakers are expected to hit the ground running and many committees have already posted meeting notices for the first week. Looming large over the session will be the 2024 Election, which will include all state House and Senate seats.

Legal Reform Package

Governor Brian Kemp is expected to unveil the highlights of his legal reform package during the first week of session, although specific legislation won't follow until later in January. Individual legislators will also continue to introduce bills that call for various lawsuit reforms; the General Assembly can act on the Governor's legislative package and individual bills concurrently. Just yesterday, [Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse](#) released a new study that shows "the economic impact of 'excessive torts' in Georgia averages \$5,592 yearly for a family of four" and "resulted in the loss of 137,658 jobs statewide."

Judge Approves New Legislative Maps

On December 28, a federal [judge approved the state and federal legislative maps](#) passed by the legislature during its November/December special redistricting session. The maps will stand for the 2024 election cycle and make the following changes:

- Adds two majority-Black state Senate districts, although the partisan split is likely to remain unchanged;
- Adds five majority-Black state House districts, which will likely net Democrats two seats;
- Creates a new majority-Black Congressional district on the west side of Metro Atlanta, although Georgia Republicans are expected to maintain their 9-5 advantage in Congress.

Open Congressional Seat Draws Legislators' Interest

In mid-December, Congressman [Drew Ferguson announced he would not seek reelection](#). Ferguson has represented Georgia's Third Congressional District since 2017. This week, state Sen. [Mike Dugan resigned his seat to pursue the congressional post](#). The race also includes state Rep. David Jenkins, former lawmaker Philip Singleton, and others. Rumored to be considering a run are Brian Jack, former political director for President Donald Trump, and Chris West, who previously ran for Congress in Georgia's Second District. The district is solidly Republican.