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FISCAL YEAR 2020 STATE BUDGET HOUSE BILL 31 – HOUSE VERSION HIGHLIGHTS

House Bill 31, the Fiscal Year 2020 budget, is set by a revenue estimate of \$27.5 billion – an increase of \$1.05 billion, or 3.95%, over the FY 2019 current budget. House priorities are reflected throughout the budget, but particular emphasis is placed on women’s and children’s issues including maternal mortality; education, including funding the largest pay raise in the state’s history for teachers and certified personnel; and additional funding for our most vulnerable Georgians including the elderly and foster children. Highlights of the budget are as follows:

Economic Development

- HB 31 provides \$300,000 in the FY 2020 budget for the creation of the Blight Removal and Code Enforcement (BRACE) program in the Department of Community Affairs. This program will provide grants to communities with a population of 2,500 or less to initiate a free, neighborhood-level cleanup for their areas with the most code violations and blight. This program is a recommendation of the House Rural Development Council.
- In an effort to assist Georgia’s water resources, the House version of HB 31 restores \$212,021 to the Georgia Rural Water Association and \$100,000 to the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District. The House budget adds \$165,000 to fully restore the Resource Conservation and Development District grants.
- In addition to the 2% merit increase, HB 31 includes \$1.3 million in the State Forestry Commission to increase starting salaries and address pay parity for forest rangers and foresters.
- Bonds in the House version of the FY 2020 budget include \$2.5 million for an addition at the Atlanta Farmers Market; \$670,000 for facility repairs at Farmers Markets statewide; \$1.4 million for updates and repairs to the Gainesville location of the Georgia Poultry Laboratory Network; and \$22 million for a pedestrian mall and bus depot at the Georgia World Congress Center.

Education

- HB 31 includes a \$2,775 pay raise for certified teachers and certified personnel, including counselors, social workers, psychologists, special education specialists, speech and language pathologists, media specialists and technology specialists. The pay raise maintains one state salary schedule for certified teachers and certified employees, as stated in Georgia Code. The \$2,775 pay raise is reflected in all Department of Education programs where funds for certified teachers and certified employees are

earned on the state salary schedule, including \$483 million for the Quality Basic Education (QBE) Program and \$6 million for programs outside of QBE, including Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Supports (GNETS), Preschool Disabilities Services, Residential Treatment Facilities, and State Schools. HB 31 also includes \$2.8 million to provide bus drivers, lunch room workers, and school nurses a 2% pay raise.

- The budget provides the Department of Education with \$121.9 million for enrollment growth and training and experience. The majority of funding is for training and experience, reflecting 2,063 new teachers and corresponding health insurance costs. The budget also includes \$47.8 million for growth in charter system grants and State Commission Charter School supplements. Funds for Equalization grants are also increased by \$78.6 million bringing the total amount of funding to \$694 million. In the bond package, \$265.8 million in new bonds is provided for local school construction, renovations and additions statewide.
- The House version of HB 31 restores funding for school nurses. Also, \$500,000 is appropriated as grants to schools for feminine hygiene products for low-income students under the Non-Quality Basic Education Program.
- HB 31 includes \$818,906 in additional formula funds for pupil transportation based on the formula implemented last year that recognizes student growth. The House version also includes \$20 million in the bond package for school bus replacement and \$1.71 million to incentivize the purchase of alternative fuel school buses; last year \$1.25 million in bonds assisted in the purchase of 156 alternative fuel buses in 17 school systems across the state.
- HB 31 includes \$1 million in additional funds for extended day and extended year for Agricultural Education and Technology/Career Education programs. Extended day and extended year teachers are compensated on an hourly or daily rate based on the state salary schedule for the hands-on education of students in those afterschool and summer programs. The House version of the budget includes \$7.57 million in bonds to purchase vocational equipment and \$2 million to purchase agriculture education equipment.
- In the Technology/Career Education Program there is \$110,000 for high school industry certification in construction and \$250,000 in bonds for equipment; and \$323,000 for life science industry certification in rural school districts through a collaboration with Georgia Youth Science and Technology Centers.
- The House version of HB 31 includes \$299,216 in the Agriculture Education Program to provide for staff and operations at Camp John Hope in Fort Valley and the Georgia FFA/FFLA Center in Covington. A recommendation of the 2018 House School Security Study Committee was to ensure adequate security at facilities owned by the state and frequented by students. The House version of the FY 2020 budget adds \$83,462 to contract with local law enforcement to provide security at the two camps when students are present and \$1.2 million in bonds for infrastructure improvements at the camps, including cameras, fencing, and gates.
- Another recommendation of the 2018 House School Security Study Committee highlighted the need for school safety threat assessment trainers to work with local school systems to develop threat assessment plans. The House version includes \$174,000 within the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA) to hire two trainers.
- As passed by the House, the FY 2020 budget includes \$13.8 million in lottery funds for the \$2,775 pay raise for certified teachers under the Department of Early Care and Learning's Pre-Kindergarten

Program. Also, the Pre-K budget directs \$1.1 million in lottery funds to classroom supplies, approximately \$300 per Pre-K classroom.

- The Governor's Office of Student Achievement receives \$250,000 for 50 additional participants at the Governor's School Leadership Academy, bringing the total program cost to \$1.75 million.
- Throughout the budget, school systems receive an additional \$18.2 million for Teachers Retirement System (TRS) annual required contribution rate increases. When funding for higher education is included, the total new state fund investment in TRS for FY 2020 is \$21.3 million. These funds will support 122,687 retired and 222,902 active members.

General Government

- The FY 2020 budget includes \$119 million across all departments to provide for a 2% merit-based salary adjustment for state employees to address recruitment and retention. The budget urges the Employees' Retirement System to consider a benefit adjustment for retired state employees in accordance with sound actuarial principles.
- HB 31 contains \$527,000 for the Department of Driver Services to provide security at the highest volume customer service centers in Georgia.
- The House version of HB 31 provides \$245,054 to the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance for one safety engineer, one plan review engineer, and one building inspection engineer. These positions will aid the agency in performing mandated safety inspections, conducting permit plan reviews, and inspecting buildings to complete permits for new construction.
- The Department of Revenue receives \$3.5 million in HB 31 to facilitate upgrades to the Integrated Tax System. These upgrades will allow for the department to apply new tax policy changes and efficiently serve Georgia's taxpayers.
- HB 31 contains \$228,859 for three new criminal investigator positions with the Secretary of State to investigate complaints, including election fraud. The budget also includes \$150 million in the bond package to replace election voting systems statewide.
- The FY 2020 budget provides \$134,171 to the Environmental Protection Division of the Department of Natural Resources for two environmental compliance specialists who will be tasked with responsibilities for drinking water systems and solid waste landfill inspections.
- The FY 2020 bond package also includes \$2.5 million for the renovation of roadways at Stone Mountain Park and \$16.5 million for facility major repairs and renovations at parks statewide.

Health

- The FY 2020 budget includes \$78.4 million in the Department of Community Health for Medicaid growth as well as an additional \$68.3 million to replace federal funds in the Medicaid programs due to a reduction in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP).
- The Medicaid budget includes \$5.9 million for gene therapy drug coverage; \$6.8 million for Medicare Part B premiums; \$9.3 million for a revision to the Inpatient Prospective Payment System (IPPS); and \$3.2 million to include seven additional long-term acute care hospitals (LTACs) and three additional intermediate rehabilitation facilities (IRFs) as Medicaid providers.
- The House version of the FY 2020 budget includes funding for two new Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), one for primary care in Screven County and one for behavioral health in Chatham County.

- The budget provides \$256,500 for the Champions for Children program, which is in addition to the \$128,250 provided for the program in the Amended FY 2019 budget.
- To support Georgia's nursing homes, the House FY 2020 budget funds \$10.6 million for a rate enhancement for direct care staff; \$330,000 to support enhanced background checks; and \$109,342 for a 3% increase in the ventilator reimbursement rate. The House also includes \$200,762 in the Department of Community Health to fund a \$2.50 increase in the personal needs allowance, which is the second installment of a two-year plan to increase the personal needs allowance by \$20 for nursing home residents.
- The House version of the budget provides \$828,042 to fund 54 OB/GYN residency slots, bringing the total number of slots to 104, with 36 slots at Emory University School of Medicine, 20 slots at Medical College of Georgia, 16 slots at Memorial University Medical Center, 16 slots at Morehouse School of Medicine, and 16 slots at Navicent Health Care Macon.
- HB 31 supports additional residency programs with \$890,820 for student capitation rates at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) Georgia and PCOM South Georgia; \$352,968 for the Rural Surgery Initiative at Augusta University; and \$90,000 for a start-up grant to begin a residency program at South Georgia Medical Center.
- The House supports Morehouse School of Medicine by providing \$5 million to offset a reduction in federal matching funds as well as \$500,000 for a Center of Excellence on Maternal Mortality in order to advance maternal health in Georgia.
- HB 31 includes additional support for maternal health by providing \$1.05 million to screen, refer, and treat maternal depression and related behavioral disorders in rural and underserved areas; \$200,000 for additional nurse abstractors for the Maternal Mortality Review Committee; and \$500,000 for two satellite perinatal support sites in Jenkins and Wilcox counties.
- Within the Department of Public Health, the House version of the FY 2020 budget includes \$150,000 for a nurse peer assistance program to support nurses recovering from substance abuse; \$300,000 for regional cancer coalitions to enhance screening, awareness, prevention education, care coordination, and navigation; \$150,000 for three additional sickle cell outreach offices; and \$500,000 for county health departments to provide feminine hygiene products to low-income clients.
- HB 31 provides \$2.4 million for newborn screening to include four additional disorders that have been approved by the Georgia Newborn Advisory Committee, which are MPS-1, Pompe, X-ALD, and SMA.

Higher Education

- The FY 2020 budget funds a number of positions and services within the University of Georgia's agriculture and veterinary sciences programs, including \$641,580 for two precision agriculture faculty positions and one vegetable breeder position; \$656,640 to fund 12 4-H educator positions; and \$867,500 for the Veterinary Medicine Experiment Station for 20 poultry isolation units, an applications systems developer position, maintenance and operations, and the Athens and Tifton Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratories contract.
- Based on the recommendations of the 2018 House School Security Study Committee, the House budget provides the five 4-H Centers with \$150,000 in bonds for security improvements and \$747,600 to contract with local law enforcement to provide security when students are present;

Georgia Military College receives \$213,810 for security camera and notification system improvements.

- The FY 2020 budget includes \$88 million for the University System of Georgia and \$3.5 million for the Technical College System of Georgia based on enrollment growth and increased square footage, as well as Teachers Retirement System obligations.
- The House version of the budget seeks to meet the growing demands of the aviation industry by providing the Technical College System of Georgia with \$348,534 for additional aviation maintenance technician program instructors around the state.
- The House version of the budget includes a bond package of \$333 million for University System of Georgia and Technical College System of Georgia institutions including \$60 million for facility major improvements and renovations. In addition, \$5 million is provided to the Georgia Research Alliance (GRA) for equipment and technology infrastructure and \$1.2 million is provided to Georgia Military College for projects at Jenkins Hall and Boylan Hall.
- The House budget provides the Georgia Public Libraries Service with \$544,761 in additional funds to bring the materials grant back to the pre-recession level of \$.35 per capita. This is in addition to \$197,745 in enhanced funding due to an increase in population. The House includes \$5.48 million in bonds for public library projects, including \$1.5 million for major repair and renovation projects; \$1 million for technology improvements and upgrades; \$650,000 for repurpose grants; and \$2.3 million for renovation and expansion projects at four libraries.
- Within the Student Finance Commission, the budget provides the HOPE and Zell Miller scholarships with \$74.7 million to meet the projected need of 22,000 additional awards and increase the award amount by 3%; an additional \$3 million is provided to increase the award amount for the Zell Miller Scholarship for Private Schools from \$2,308 to \$2,808.
- Participation in the REACH scholarship continues to grow statewide. The FY 2020 budget includes \$782,000 in additional funds to provide for 162 new REACH scholars; to date the program serves 690 scholars.
- The House version of the FY 2020 budget limits dual enrollment program participation to 11th and 12th graders, with the exception of students enrolled in technical colleges who may enter the program in the 10th grade. Students may utilize up to 30 credit hours of dual enrollment funding; additional hours will count towards the HOPE scholarship cap. Finally, summer term hours will no longer be eligible for state dual enrollment funding. These budget changes result in a savings of \$4.1 million and are made to ensure the long-term viability of the program and to meet the intended purpose of preparing a skilled workforce and decreasing a postsecondary student's time to degree completion.

Human Resources

- The FY 2020 budget includes \$4.9 million in the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) for residential treatment of addictive diseases, which will add six new facilities across the regions in Georgia. The budget recognizes an additional \$29 million in behavioral health services to increase bed capacity and outpatient services, as well as annualize the cost of crisis centers.
- HB 31 provides \$9.5 million to meet the funding needs of the Administrative Services Organization (ASO) to increase efficiency and support services delivered by DBHDD. The budget also includes \$1.8

million for an additional eight forensic community coordinators, five forensic evaluators, and one community integration home; \$7.9 million is added to annualize and add 125 New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) slots for the intellectually and developmentally disabled; and \$1.5 million to annualize supported employment and education services for 500 young adults.

- The House recommends \$500,000 to provide state matching funds for the HomeFirst public-private partnership to provide behavioral health services for permanent homeless supported housing in Fulton County.
- The FY 2020 budget provides the Department of Human Services \$501,796 to meet the demands of the 4.2% growth in adoption services.
- The House budget includes several additions for some of the most vulnerable Georgians including: \$1.4 million to reduce the waitlist for home-delivered meals and serve an additional 665 Georgians and \$1.3 million to fund 17 additional adult protective services caseworkers, bringing the total to 172. This addition will lower the caseload to 1:24; national standards are 1:15. Additionally, \$1.8 million is provided for 1,000 additional slots for non-Medicaid home and community based services and an increase of \$849,951 for 50 additional Medicaid-Aged, Blind and Disabled eligibility caseworkers.
- With more than 13,000 children in the state's care, providing adequate resources for children in foster care remains a priority of the House. The budget includes \$9.8 million for Out of Home Care to meet the growth in utilization. The House supports the governor's recommendation of \$940,000 for a pilot program to follow-up on closed foster care cases.
- The House led the way two years ago on providing an increase in the per diem rate for foster care providers; in the FY 2020 budget, the House adds \$2.6 million to raise the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) relative caregiver rate by \$1 per day. Furthermore, the budget utilizes \$808,210 in existing funds to support retention initiatives for eligible relative and foster caregivers and an increase of \$867,058 to replace federal funds to continue child care placement for priority families. The budget also provides \$375,000 in the Judicial Council to provide grants for civil legal services for kinship care families.
- The budget also includes \$366,752 for five additional public guardianship caseworkers; an increase of \$250,000 to the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to enhance the statewide capacity of volunteers; and \$427,550 for new quality assurance and ongoing monitoring of child welfare support service providers.
- Within the Department of Veterans Service, the FY 2020 budget provides \$128,946 to establish an additional veteran's field service office in Clayton County. The bond package includes \$3.5 million for improvements at the Georgia War Veterans Nursing Homes in Augusta and Milledgeville.

Public Safety

- HB 31 provides the Department of Community Supervision with \$552,359 for 10 new positions to expand the Georgia Prisoner Reentry Initiative (GA-PRI) to five new locations. The GA-PRI program has reduced reconviction rates by 14% among participants transitioning back into society.
- Within the Department of Corrections, \$14 million is provided for increased dental and mental healthcare; and \$3.6 million in new and existing funds is provided for a 10% increase in the daily rate

for the 22 County Correctional Institutions which partner with the state to house the inmate population.

- HB 31 appropriates \$563,380 to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation for five additional scientists and one lab technician for the chemistry division to address the crime lab backlog. The Fiscal Year 2020 budget provides \$780,690 for six positions for the GBI unit at the Cyber Crime Center and \$500,000 to implement a GBI Gang Task Force to help local governments prosecute gang activity.
- Within the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, \$2.1 million is appropriated to expand accountability courts; \$80,472 is provided for one fidelity coordinator position to ensure accountability courts remain evidence-based during expansion.
- Funds in the amount of \$1.7 million are added to the Department of Juvenile Justice to annualize the Cadwell Regional Youth Detention Center which will house 56 youth in Laurens County.
- House Bill 31 appropriates \$195,497 to the Department of Law for support personnel to create a human trafficking team to combat human trafficking in Georgia.
- Within the Department of Public Safety, the budget provides \$2.3 million for 20 additional positions for the Criminal Interdiction Unit, including 10 K-9 handlers; \$2.1 million for one 50-person trooper school; and \$1.3 million for the creation of the Office of Public Safety Officer Support (HB 701, 2018 Session).
- The FY 2020 bond package for public safety agencies includes \$100 million for maintenance and repairs to state facilities, equipment, and new law enforcement vehicles.
- The FY 2020 budget includes \$558,963 within the Superior Courts, Prosecuting Attorneys and Public Defender Council to create two additional Superior Court judgeships, one in the Griffin Judicial Circuit and one in the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit.
- The budget includes \$328,288 for two central staff attorneys in the Court of Appeals and \$343,005 for five law clerk positions for the Superior Courts.
- Fiscal Year 2020 budget appropriates \$3 million for merit-based pay increases for assistant district attorneys and investigators for the Prosecuting Attorneys Council in addition to the 2% merit increase for recruitment and retention; \$1.5 million is budgeted for salary increases in the Public Defender Council to maintain parity on the salary scale between assistant public defenders and assistant district attorneys.

Transportation

- The FY 2020 budget recognizes an increase of \$38.6 million in new revenue for transportation, an increase of more than 7% over the current year budget. The increase includes \$32.6 million in the Capital Maintenance Program for additional resurfacing projects and \$3.04 million for the Local Maintenance and Improvement Grants (LMIG) Program. The Intermodal Program includes an increase of \$221,882 for bridge inspections of state-owned railroad assets and \$121,413 for a waterways assistant program manager position to support the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project.
- HB 31 includes \$2.48 million to establish the initial budget of the Atlanta-Region Transit Link (ATL) Authority; the authority was created in HB 930 (2018 Session) to plan and govern transit projects in the 13-county Atlanta region.
- The bond package includes the fifth installment of \$100 million in bonds to continue rehabilitation and replacement of the bridges in need around the state and \$5.4 million for rehabilitation and improvements on state-owned rail.