

Georgia Utility Contractors Association (GUCA)

January 20, 2026

GUCA's very important and annually well attended Lobby Day is on the morning of February 3. Please make sure you attend to represent your industry, hear from Georgia's political leadership about what is going on at the Capitol, and talk about issues important to you with your local legislators.

The 2026 Georgia General Assembly had its first day of session on January 12, 2026! They were in for five days last week from January 12 - January 16. **Georgia's Legislature operates on a biennial process, so 2026 is the second year of the process for 2025-2026. All bills that were not signed or vetoed by the Governor in 2025 are "alive" for passage and they begin in 2026 in the last committee from which they came in 2026..**

This was a very busy week at the Capitol last week with meetings occurring all day every day, and the Governor giving his State of the State address to both chambers on January 15. The week of January 5 - 9 was also extremely busy with fundraisers occurring January 6 - 9 in Atlanta and throughout the State for legislators and statewide elected officials. Legislators cannot accept contributions once session starts.

This week, January 19-23, will have no official legislative days, because the House and Senate Appropriations Committees will have joint budget hearings Tuesday - Friday. There will be a lot of action also with informal meetings occurring with legislators the entire week. The Legislature will come back for official session again on January 26. **The last day of session will be April 2!**

Thrash-Haliburton has been in constant communication with GUCA leadership about issues and legislation coming up for our industry in the 2026 session.

As far as the GUCA is concerned:

HB 519 has been introduced by Rep. Ron Stephens. It would provide for a tax credit for employers that provide jobs to the unemployed and those defined by a specific definition (those with disabilities, veterans, and more). It is in the House Ways and Means Committee.

Many of our members receive good work and income from projects building and maintaining data centers. There is an attack on the data center industry and data centers in the 2026 session.

In 2025:

SB 34 calls for data centers to "pay their fair share", which is already the case under rules passed from the PSC in 2025. HB 528 deals with how data centers have to disclose water and power usage. HB 559 ends the sales tax exemption they receive for the purchase of computer equipment.

In 2026:

SB 410 would end their sales tax exemption on computer equipment upon the governor's signature or on July 1, 2026, but it would grandfather in certain data centers that are receiving this exemption as of today. SB 408 would end their sales tax exemption on computer equipment as of January 1, 2027. HB 1012 would put a moratorium on data centers until February 2027 and further consideration at that time.

As far as GUCA is concerned on other topics in 2025:

As you'll see in the legislation listed below, the Governor's bills on tort reform, SB 68 and SB 69, passed the House and Senate and were signed by the Governor! **This is a huge deal and is the most aggressive tort reform legislation passed in the country yet.**

SB 68 has caught the most focus of the two with it including negligent security, premises liability, collateral source, anchoring, bifurcation, and more sweeping changes!

As was said above, this is the most sweeping tort reform legislation the country has ever seen with all topics covered under civil litigation.

The Governor's Office and other legislators are also working on legislation to revamp state business licensing boards and to make it easier for those getting a license and renewing a license to get it completed through the Secretary of State's Office. There is also legislation you'll find below regarding bidding with local government agencies.

Our team is acting at the association's direction on all legislation and issues such as these above, and we will provide further updates in the future.

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Here's to another great year for our industry in 2026 at the State Capitol!

Thrash-Haliburton is diligently watching and working to stop any detrimental legislation to our industry and push the legislation we support. Our governmental affairs team continues every day to work on, look out for and answer requests, needs and interests, as we act at the direction of the group's leadership. Please find legislation affecting our industry below:

2025 Regular Session

We are monitoring the following legislation, and watchful for any bills that may impact our industry.

Bill	Summary	House Comm	Sen Comm	House Sponsor	Sen Sponsor
HB 34	To establish on behalf of professional licensing boards under the jurisdiction of the office of the Secretary of State a continuing education tracking solution to monitor compliance of licensees with applicable continuing education requirements; to provide for definitions; to require compliance with continuing education requirements prior to the issuance of certain licenses	Signed by the Governor	Signed by the Governor	Washburn	
HB 152	To revise contracting procedures related to the acquisition of certain professional services by counties and municipalities; to amend Chapter 91 of Title 36 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to public works	Governmental Affairs		Reeves	

	bidding, so as to revise contracting procedures related to the acquisition of certain professional services by counties and municipalities; to provide definitions; to amend Chapter 22 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to managerial control over acquisition of professional services, so as to expand such provisions to local governments				
SB 68 and SB 69	Tort reform bills from the Governor	Signed by the Governor	Signed by the Governor		Kennedy
HB 137	To increase the dollar value of certain public works contracts exempt from provisions relating to retention of contractual payments; to amend Article 10 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A., relating to contracts and purchases by public schools; to amend Article 11 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A., relating to public school property and facilities; to amend Chapter 4 of Title 32 of the O.C.G.A., relating to state, county, and municipal road systems; to amend Chapter 91 of Title 36 of the O.C.G.A., relating to public works bidding	Signed by the Governor	Signed by the Governor	Anderson	
HB 187	Professions and businesses; contractors; change certain provisions	Signed by the Governor	Signed by the Governor	Washburn	
HB 519	Workforce jobs tax credit for employers.	Ways and Means		Stephens	
SB 34	SB 34 calls for data centers to “pay their fair share”, which is already the case under rules passed from the PSC in 2025.		Regulated Industries		Hufstetler
HB 528	Deals with how data centers have to disclose water and power usage.	Ways and Means		Buckner	

HB 559	Ends the sales tax exemption data centers receive for the purchase of computer equipment.	Ways and Means		Carson	
SB 410	Ends the data center sales tax exemption on computer equipment upon the governor's signature or on July 1, 2026, but it would grandfather in certain data centers that are receiving this exemption as of today.		Finance		Brass
SB 408	Ends the data center sales tax exemption on computer equipment as of January 1, 2027.		Finance		Brass
HB 1012	Puts a moratorium on data centers until February 2027 and provides for further consideration at that time.	Not available yet		Romman	