



# Georgia General Assembly



## *From the legislative desk of Senator Nancy Schaefer 50th District of Georgia*

March 4, 2008

Days are swiftly passing in this 2008 General Assembly and we are soon facing Crossover Day, which takes place on the 30<sup>th</sup> legislative day. Crossover Day is when bills must cross over to the other legislation body for passage during the session. The 30<sup>th</sup> day is the last day a bill can be considered unless it has passed at least one of the two chambers.

A Conference Committee is ready to begin work on House Bill 989, the amended FY 08 budget. This Conference Committee is made up of Senate and House leaders who will work to negotiate differences and work to finalize the annual budget. The only bill the State Constitution requires the members of the Georgia General Assembly to pass during the legislation Session is the State budget.

Governor Perdue announced the filing of legislation that would put a referendum on the ballot to replace the school board in school districts that lose accreditation. The legislation will be carried by Senator Ronnie Chance, one of Governor Perdue's floor leaders. In making the announcement Governor Perdue said, "We appreciate and respect local control of education, but we cannot allow Georgia's students to suffer when school board members willfully neglect to uphold the necessary standards."

A disappointment to me recently was a bill that failed to pass in the House this week. HR 413, requiring official state actions to be written in English, lost 103 to 61. Since HR 413 is a proposed Constitutional amendment, it requires a two-thirds vote in both House and Senate to pass the legislature. After passing the General Assembly, it must receive a majority of votes in the November General Election.

HR 413 was an opportunity to affirm English as our State's official language, which I deem most important. Those in the House that voted NO on HR 413 are out of step with the majority of Americans who want to defend English's historical role as America's unifying language.

**30 States have made English their official language. Hopefully, Georgia will be listed in the column of States that made English the official language, as the House has called for a reconsideration of the vote.**

**One of the reasons I brought SR 827 up again this year urging the United States Congress to withdraw the United States from the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America and from any other bilateral or multilateral activity that seeks the economic merger of the United States with any other country, is to protect the sovereignty of the United States. In protecting the English language as a priority in our State, I feel we are in essence protecting our United States sovereignty.**

**SB 415, my bill relating to juvenile proceedings, does several things. Some of the actions that it takes are following:**

- 1. It reduces the time allowed for the Department of Human Resources (DHR) to provide emergency care and supervision to a child without a court order;**
- 2. It removes certain immunities from DHR and DFCS;**
- 3. It requires a court order to enter the residence of a parent or guardian to seize a child under certain circumstances;**
- 4. It provides that juvenile deprivation hearings shall NOT be closed except upon written application of the parents or guardians of the child or children who are subject of the hearing; and**
- 5. It provides that efforts shall be made to place children with relatives prior to transferring custody of such children to DHR.**

**I had SB 415 drawn up and filed after learning of the corruption in the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) and in Child Protective Services (CPS).**

**I have hundreds upon hundreds of cases where children have been taken from their parents wrongly and without cause and many children have never been returned. The bottom line for the taking of children and the separating of families is money. Federal financial incentives that promote adoption even when loving family members are available, should be abolished. This is an out of control problem not only in Georgia but across the country. It is a criminal/political phenomenon that is driven by the government, which is supposedly in place to protect families and children. The opponents to SB 415 are many, as the bureaucracy that looks to children in State custody for job security is very large.**

**SR 822 was adopted in the Senate 52-0. This creates a Georgia – North Carolina and Georgia-Tennessee Boundary Line commission to be a joint effort of the States. The commissioners would be responsible for re-surveying and marking the boundaries between these States.**

**Research reveals that the northern boundaries of the State of Georgia and the southern borders of North Carolina and Tennessee lie at the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel, north of the southern most bank of the Tennessee River. That's where Congress set the boundaries when they were first calculated, but that's not where the surveyor drew them. The surveyor determining the boundaries made a well-known error that has never be corrected.**

**Legislators of Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee have tried repeatedly, to create committees to resolve the boundary questions.**

**So, for all of you asking about the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel south of its actual location, SR 822 is the most recent attempt to create the Georgia-North Carolina and Georgia-Tennessee Boundary Line Commission to meet with commissioners from all three States. The goal will be to establish, survey and proclaim the true boundary lines between Georgia and North Carolina and Georgia and Tennessee and to settle the dispute once and for all.**

**If the error were true that the boundary was erroneously put 1.1 mile south of the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel designated by Congress, the western bend of the River would be in the Northwest corner of Georgia. And if that were true, Georgia could exercise Tennessee River Water rights and that could be a great blessing.**

**Speaking of water, if you will take a wrench and fix that leaky water faucet, you can in a simple and inexpensive way, save 140 gallons of water a week.**

**I have enjoyed seeing many of you at the Capitol and appreciated the notes from others. Call if you need me. I am at the Capitol more now than in the District, but if you call the District, Jody Thompson will answer your calls on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.**

**Daffodils are blooming. Can spring be far away? I hope not. It is pleasure to serve you at our Capitol.**

**God Bless you.**

**God bless Georgia.**

**Senator Nancy Schaefer  
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