



**LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY
2019
CASA DAY AT THE CAPITOL**

**PRESENTED BY:
ANGELA TYNER - GEORGIA CASA
ADVOCACY DIRECTOR**

OVERVIEW

- Legislative Advocacy 101
 - Legislative Process
 - Budget Cycle
 - Communications with Legislators
- Under the Gold Dome in 2019
 - Current Session
 - GA CASA Advocacy Strategy & Messaging
- CASA Day at the Capitol Logistics and Details
 - Know Before You Go

A stylized map of the state of Georgia is shown on the left side of the image. It is rendered in a light cream color with a thick blue outline, set against a dark blue background.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY 101

GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

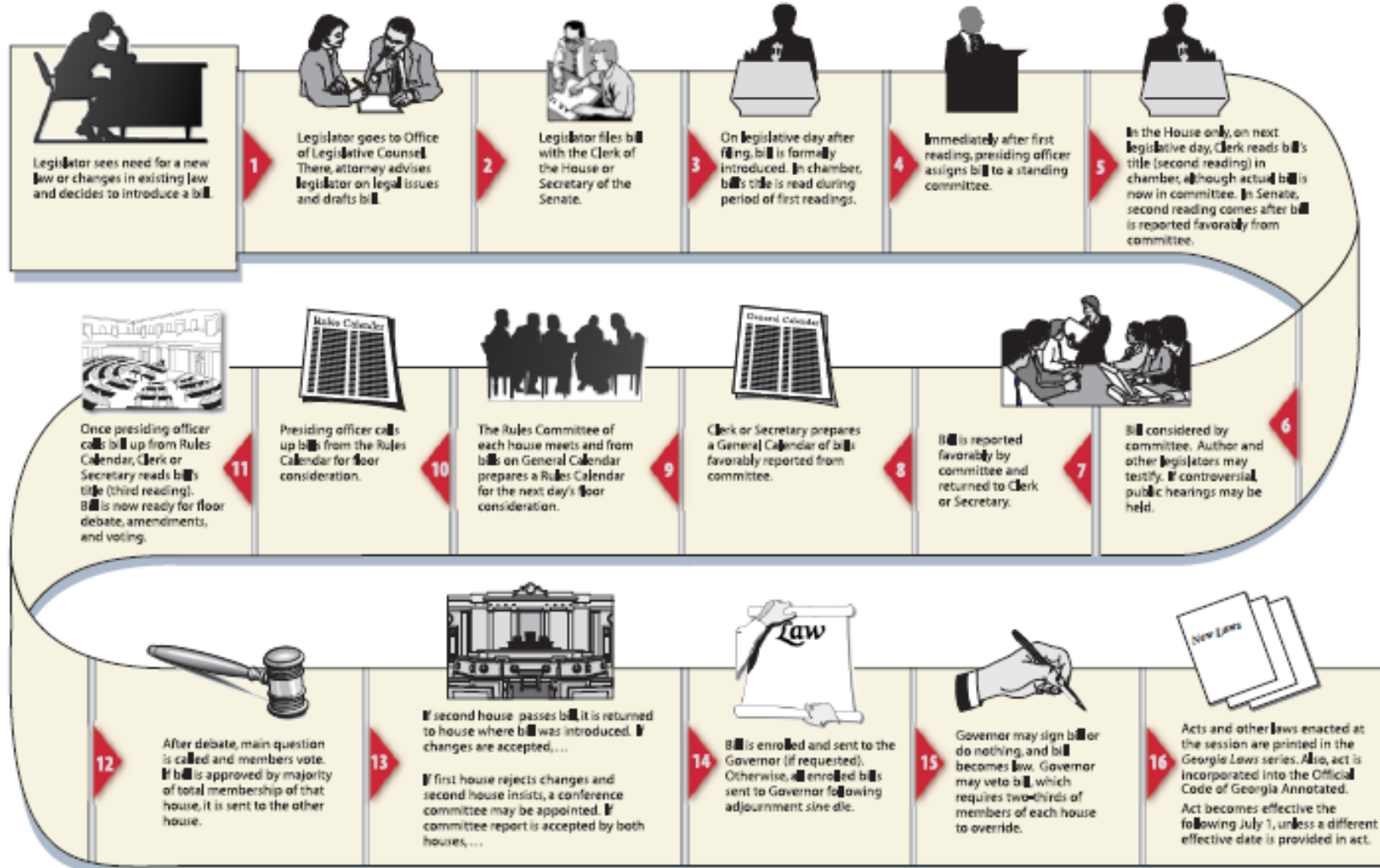
GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- Bicameral
 - 56 Senators and 180 Representatives
 - Lt. Gov. presides over Senate
 - Speaker presides over House
- Citizen Legislators
- Biennial Session
- Meets for 40 Days, beginning 2nd Monday in January
 - Day 28 is Crossover Day
- Only legislation required to pass each year is the state budget
 - Governor-strong state



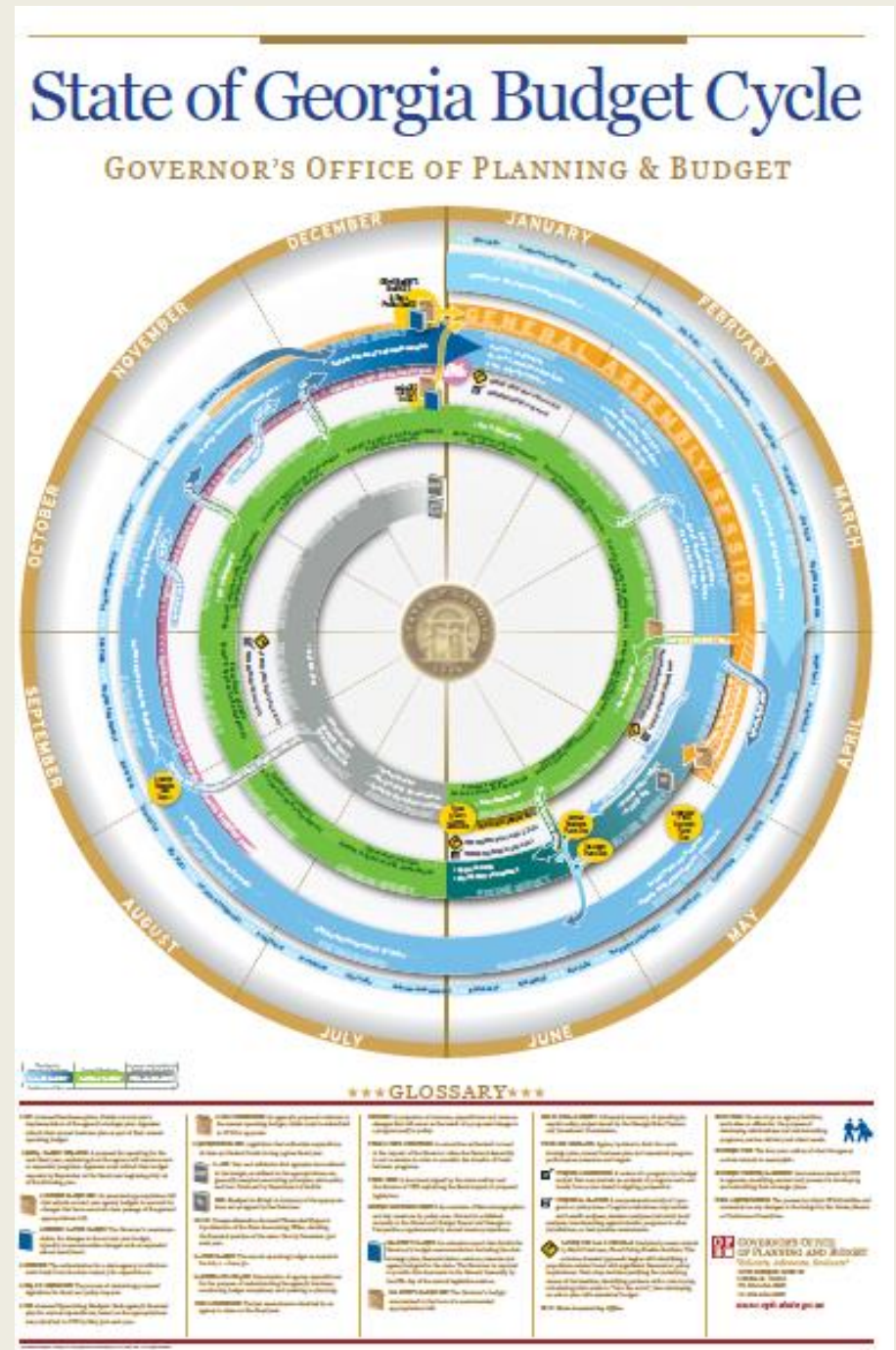
HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

How a Bill is Passed in the Georgia Legislature



BUDGET CYCLE

https://opb.georgia.gov/sites/opb.georgia.gov/files/imported/vgn/images/portal/cit_1210/44/31/162982494ga_budget_cycle.pdf



1



Budget Request Instructions Sent to Agencies:
In early summer, the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) sends guidelines to agencies for budget requests.

2



Agencies Prepare Budget Request:
Agencies prepare requests and get board approval (if applicable).

3



Budget Request Submitted:
Agencies submit all requests for current and upcoming fiscal year to OPB by September 1.

4



Budget Request Analyzed:
The governor, OPB staff, and agency leaders review and assess current and new budget requests.

5



Governor Finishes Budget:
By the end of the calendar year, the governor finalizes the budget proposals.

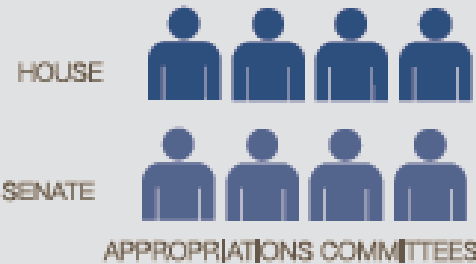
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Budget Documents Sent to the General Assembly:
In January, within the first five days of the General Assembly session, the governor presents budget proposals.

STEPS IN GEORGIA'S BUDGET PROCESS

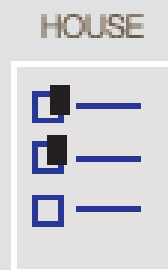
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Legislative Appropriations Process:

The Appropriations committees in the Georgia House of Representatives and Senate hold budget hearings for the current and upcoming fiscal year.

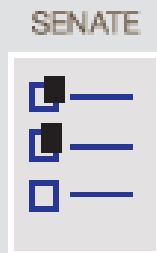
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House Approves Its Budget

The House votes on changes to governor's budget proposals, Passes its version to the Senate,

9



Senate Approves Its Budget:

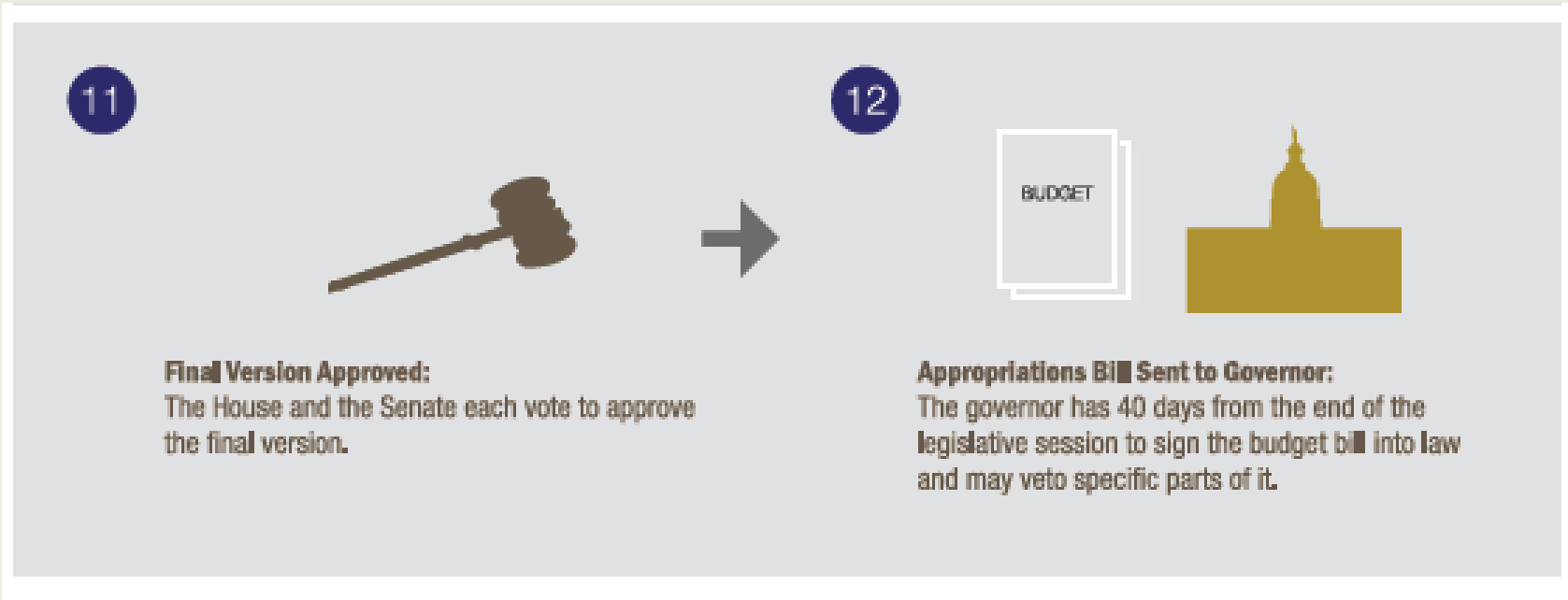
The Senate reviews the House-passed budget for the current and upcoming fiscal years, can make changes, then votes on latest versions.

10



Conference Committee Meets:

The lieutenant governor and Speaker of the House appoint a conference committee to negotiate a single version of the budget.



Source: Georgia Budget and Policy Institute 2016 Budget Primer

Pgs. 4-5

<http://gbpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Georgia-Budget-Primer-2016.pdf>

EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

- Plan ahead
- Be honest and direct, concise
- Be passionate, persistent, polite, positive
- Personalize issues
- Show appreciation
- Seize opportunity
- Work both sides of the aisle

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATIONS WITH LEGISLATORS

- Phone Calls

- Likely will speak with an assistant, intern, or staffer who will relay your message
- Identify yourself, organizational affiliation, and mention if you live in the legislator's home district
- Explain why you're calling and make your ask, have 1-2 concise points to support your position
- Provide any local or personal examples of why it matters
- Thank the person for their time

- Email

- Convenient, but may be less effective because less personal, may be preferred method for some
- Put your position in the subject line (e.g., Please support HB__)
- Form letters won't have same weight as personalized ones
- One issue per letter
- State purpose in first paragraph
- Include personal stories, highlight specific examples that support your position, including local impact
- May request a response asking whether legislator will support your position



2019

**UNDER THE
GOLD DOME**

HOW TO STAY INFORMED:

- Barton Child Law and Policy Center at Emory Law Schools' Newsletter and weekly Legislative Updates
- Voices for Georgia's Children
 - Georgia CALL “closed door” weekly meetings
 - Legislative Updates
 - Two-minute Take videos
- Legislator newsletters
- Georgia General Assembly page--www.legis.ga.gov

2019

- Tomorrow is Day 8
- First year of session
- Governor beginning his first term; 34 new Representatives; 5 new Senators
- Substantive Legislation
 - [HB 16](#), referred to as the “Higher Education Access and Success for Homeless and Foster Youth Act,” amends the code relating to postsecondary education and vocational, technical, and adult education, to ensure that youth who have been in DFCS custody or who are homeless qualify for in-state tuition at Georgia colleges
 - [HB 64](#) referred to as the “Protecting Military Children Act,” amends section relating to the reporting of child abuse, to require DFCS to notify military authorities when a parent or guardian of a child named in a child abuse report is on active duty in the U.S. armed forces
 - [SB 15](#), referred to as the “Keeping Georgia’s Schools Safe Act,” amends the code relating to loitering at or disrupting schools, to require every public and private school to have a threat assessment of its campus completed every two years. The bill creates a task force within the Georgia Information Sharing and Analysis Center to curate individual student profiles based on records from schools, DHS, and law enforcement; to evaluate threats to schools; and to share information with the director of emergency management and homeland security. Finally, SB 15 also requires schools to use certified “school safety coaches” as a resource in executing the school safety plan. Pending amendment of the Georgia constitution, those school safety coaches would qualify for a homestead exemption.

FY 19 AMENDED BUDGET/SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET/LITTLE BUDGET

- **Department of Human Services**

- \$504,000 to assess the readiness of congregate foster care settings to become accredited qualified residential treatment programs pursuant to FFPSA
- \$808,210 in existing funds to support retention initiatives for eligible relative and foster caregivers
- \$11,097,747 in total funds for out-of-home care to reflect utilization growth of 7.1%
- \$153,745 for residential child care licensing to enhance the Tracking of Residential Applications, Incidents, and Licenses System (TRAILS) and expand capacity due to passage of FFPSA

- **Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities**

- \$8,400,000 for the Georgia Apex Program to provide support counselors for mental health services in high schools

FY 20 BUDGET/BIG BUDGET

- **Department of Human Services**

- \$1,209,147 in total increased funds to reflect a 4.2% growth in adoptions services
- \$6,000,000 in total funds to make improvements to SHINES to reflect federal policies in FFPSA
- \$438,600 for a project management team to coordinate statewide implementation of FFPSA
- \$867,058 in state funds to replace federal funds to continue child care placement for priority families
- \$503,000 in total funds for new quality assurance and ongoing monitoring of child welfare support services providers
- \$940,000 to implement a pilot program for closed foster care cases
- \$808,210 in existing funds to support retention initiatives for eligible relative and foster caregivers
- \$11,097,747 in total funds for out-of-home care to reflect a 7.1% utilization growth

- **Department of Juvenile Justice**

- \$653,413 to increase salaries for certified teachers and certified employees educating youth in detention centers by \$3,000
- \$369,756 for seven additional public safety trainers
- \$384,242 to expand Career Technical and Agriculture Education Programs at five secure YDCs
- \$1,751,736 to annualize expenditures of the Cadwell RYDC

- **Judicial Council**

- \$750,000 for grants for civil legal services to Kinship Care families

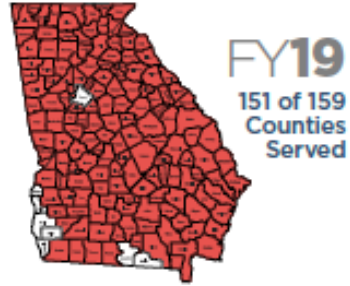
- **Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities**

- \$1,530,000 to annualize the cost of employment and education services for young adults as recommended by the Commission on Children's Mental Health

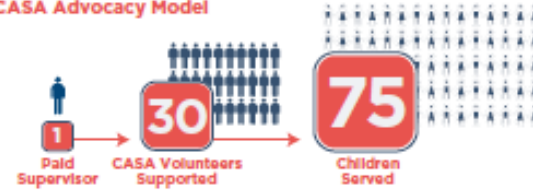


Georgia CASA 2019 FY2020 State Budget Funding Request

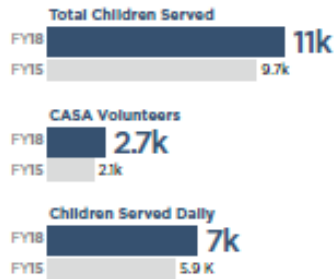
\$500k to build capacity to support CASA volunteer advocacy for additional children in DFCS custody



CASA Advocacy Model

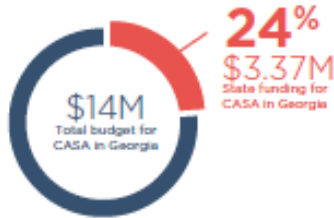


Citizen volunteers, supported by an experienced and knowledgeable staff member, offering individualized attention and best-interests advocacy



Over the past 3 years, CASA has served

- 20% more children in Fulton and DeKalb counties
- 35% more children in DFCS custody statewide
- More than half of the state's expanding foster care population



CASA Makes an Impact

For the Child

- Seeks reunification at the earliest point the child would be safe and offers after-care monitoring to preserve permanency
- Pursues a stable and permanent home as soon as possible when reunification is unlikely
- Strives for stability in foster care placement
- Ensures needed support and services are received
- Identifies and engages relatives to maintain familial connections
- Advocates for specialized needs for youth transitioning to adulthood
- Builds resiliency by providing a consistent adult presence in a child's life

"The only constant was my CASA volunteer. Without her I would have been lost in the system."

Melissa,
former foster youth

On the Child Welfare System

- Alerts the system of safety or other concerns
- Provides a unique perspective throughout a child's time in the system
- Offers individualized advocacy
- Shares unvarnished information with case managers and courts
- Brings a solution-focused, common-sense approach

"We could not adjudicate cases effectively without the hard work and tenacity of CASA volunteers. They never lose sight of why we come to court on these cases: the best interests of the child."

Judge Amanda Heath,
Augusta, GA

On the Community

- Expands public understanding of the child welfare system and fosters empathy for the front-line workers, children, and families involved
- Explores gaps in services with the ability to inform and influence decision-makers
- Makes lasting personal impressions on volunteers involved with this life-changing work

"Being a CASA has given me so much joy and purpose in my life. It is through helping the children that I too have been helped."

Connie Zessack,
Cartersville, GA

For more information

Jennifer King Executive Director
404-874-2888 • jking@gacasa.org
gacasa.org

In addition to providing ongoing training, support, technical assistance, and quality assurance for the affiliate CASA network, Georgia CASA maintains fiduciary and contractual responsibility for \$1.17 million in state funding through the application of a funding allocation formula as well as adherence to stringent audit and reporting requirements.

GA CASA LEGISLATIVE FLYER

GEORGIA CASA LEGISLATIVE STRATEGY

- Seeking a modest increase in FY 20 of \$500,000.
- Ongoing commitment to continue to build relationships with legislators both in the district and in Atlanta throughout the session:
 - Thanking legislators for their continuous support of CASA in Georgia and sharing progress and growth
 - Engaging legislators in discussions around key issues in child welfare
 - Serving as a sounding board and resource on welfare issues as the session progresses
 - Providing joint opportunities to recruit and engage constituents in supporting youth in care
 - Asking legislators to become CASA ambassadors in the community by sharing local CASA information with constituents and attending local CASA events
 - Inviting legislators to participate in a listening session or to observe CASA in action in court

MESSAGING

- CASA advocacy is essential to children who have experienced abuse or neglect in GA
 - Every child in state's custody needs the individualized attention and sense of urgency that a CASA volunteer brings in improving their experience in foster care
 - Studies have consistently shown that a child with a CASA is more likely to find a safe, permanent home; half as likely to re-enter foster care; and less likely to languish in long-term foster care
 - CASA volunteers provide consistency and continuity for a child involved in the child welfare system and help to connect information among DFCS staff, foster placements, providers, schools and many other stakeholders
 - CASA program helps to maximize community resources and support by involving community volunteers in supporting juvenile courts and children/families in foster care, resulting in additional resources, expertise and connections for children, families and services
- CASAs advocate for approximately 50-55% of children in foster care

BUDGET MESSAGING

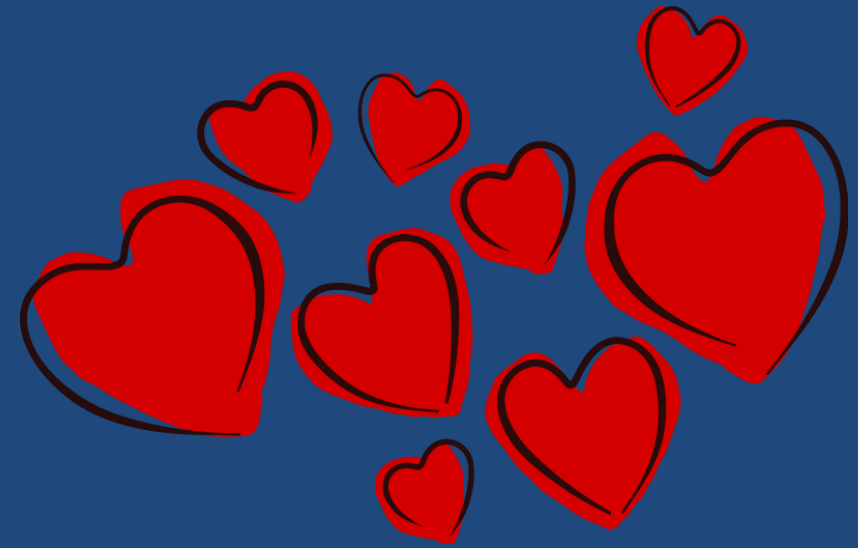
- State funding supports the recruitment, screening and training of CASA by providing 1 staff to supervise 30 volunteers
- CASA network's current operating budget is approximately \$14 million, including state appropriations of \$3.37 million
- CASA is an exemplary public-private partnership that demonstrates a 75 to 1 return on investment
 - State funding represents approximately 24% of the annual budget in GA
- Past increases have provided significant investment in network expansion
- Seeking a modest investment in expansion of CASA network statewide that will allow 47 local affiliates serving 151 counties ability to strengthen and increase efforts to recruit, train and support CASA volunteers.

MESSAGING OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

- Email message about CASA's budget request and significance of CASA's involvement in child welfare system
- Targeted outreach to House Human Services Subcommittee of Appropriations members
- Outreach to full House Appropriations Committee members
- Similar outreach to Senate
- Conference Committee member outreach as needed
- Testifying before committees
- CASA Day @ the Capitol face-to-face networking and relationship building

FOR CAPITOL DAY:

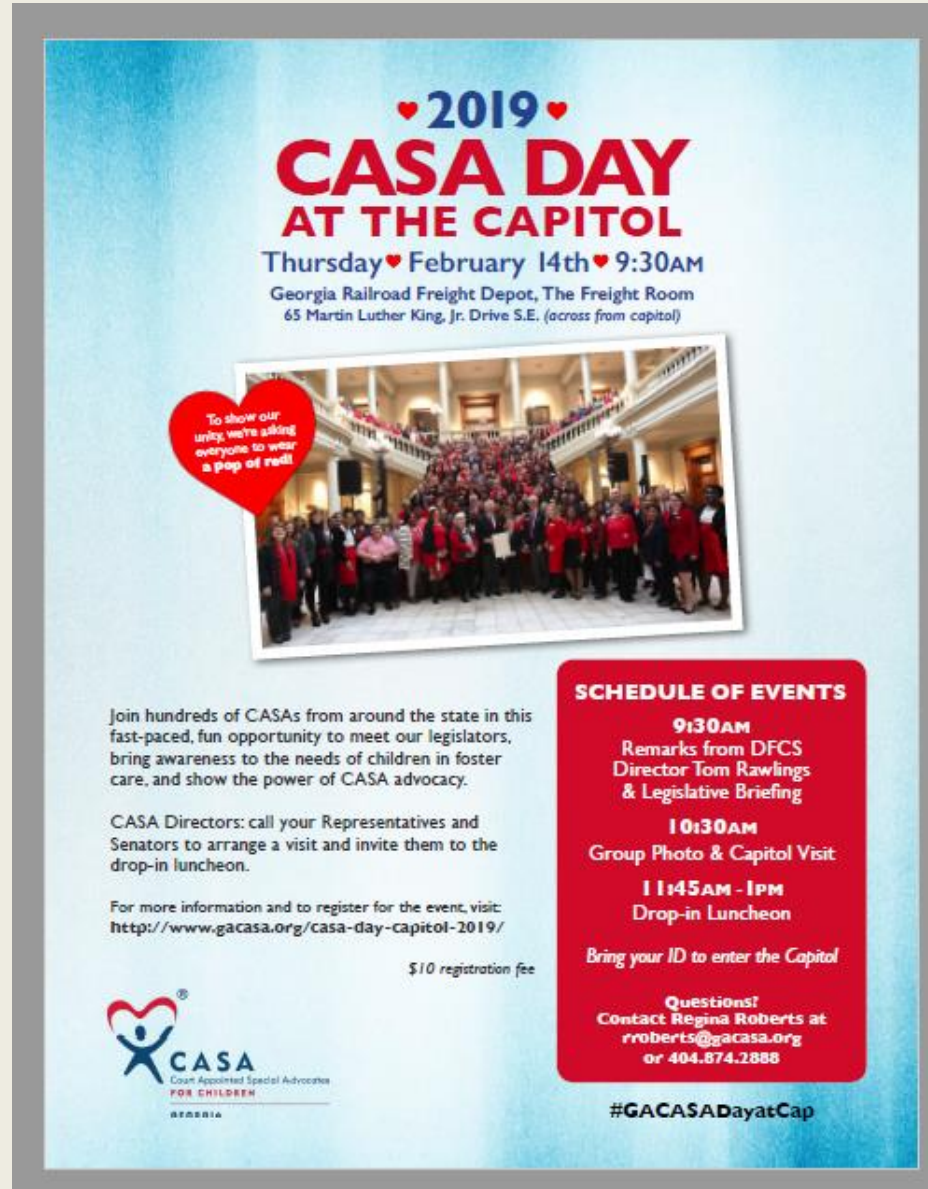
- Share your CASA story
- Express appreciation for ongoing support and request \$500,000
- Bring attention to needs of children in foster care in your community
- Engage legislators in the CASA movement



CASA DAY AT THE CAPITOL

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO!

CASA DAY AT THE CAPITOL



2019
CASA DAY
AT THE CAPITOL
Thursday ♥ February 14th ♥ 9:30AM
Georgia Railroad Freight Depot, The Freight Room
65 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive S.E. (across from capitol)

To show our unity, we're asking everyone to wear a pop of red!

Join hundreds of CASAs from around the state in this fast-paced, fun opportunity to meet our legislators, bring awareness to the needs of children in foster care, and show the power of CASA advocacy.

CASA Directors: call your Representatives and Senators to arrange a visit and invite them to the drop-in luncheon.


For more information and to register for the event, visit:
<http://www.gacasa.org/casa-day-capitol-2019/>

\$10 registration fee

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
9:30AM
Remarks from DFCS Director Tom Rawlings & Legislative Briefing
10:30AM
Group Photo & Capitol Visit
11:45AM - 1PM
Drop-in Luncheon
Bring your ID to enter the Capitol

Questions?
Contact Regina Roberts at rroberts@gacasa.org or 404.874.2888

#GACASADayatCap



For more details and to register, visit:
<https://www.gacasa.org/casa-day-capitol-2019/>

Flyer

Schedule of Events

Directions and maps

Packet Contents

Paging slips

Legislator contact info

Sample letter to invite legislator

Registration link

Hotels



PARKING

- Depot Lot -pay with exact cash or credit @ station-closest to the Capitol
- Underground Decks-pay with cash or credit
- Memorial Dr. Lots-pay w/ exact cash or credit-know license tag #
- Pete Hackney Garage-convenient to Floyd Building, \$10 pay on entry
- MARTA: Georgia State E-I on the Blue Line.Trains every 15 minutes. Station at Floyd Building.
- **Allow ample time!!!**
- <http://www.atlantadowntown.com/guide/getting-around/parking>



ALTA COUNTY COURTHOUSE

HELL ST.

WALKER COUNTY COURTHOUSE
MORGAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE
POLK COUNTY COURTHOUSE

CENTRAL AV.

TRINITY AV.

MEMORIAL DR.

GA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

MEMORIAL PARK

PRYOR ST.

UNDERGROUND ATLANTA

GEORGIA PLAZA PARK

MITCHELL ST.

WASHINGTON ST.

TRINITY VANDERBILT BLDG

MEMORIAL DR.

ALABAMA ST.

UNDERGROUND ATLANTA

CAPITOL BLDG

STATE CAPITAL

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BLDG

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UNDERGROUND ATLANTA

GEORGIA PLAZA PARK

MITCHELL ST.

WASHINGTON ST.

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MEMORIAL DR.

49 CENTRAL AVE PARKING DECK

GA RAILROAD PASSENGER DEPOT

STEVE POLK PLAZA

STATE CAPITAL

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MEMORIAL DR.

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UNDERGROUND ATLANTA

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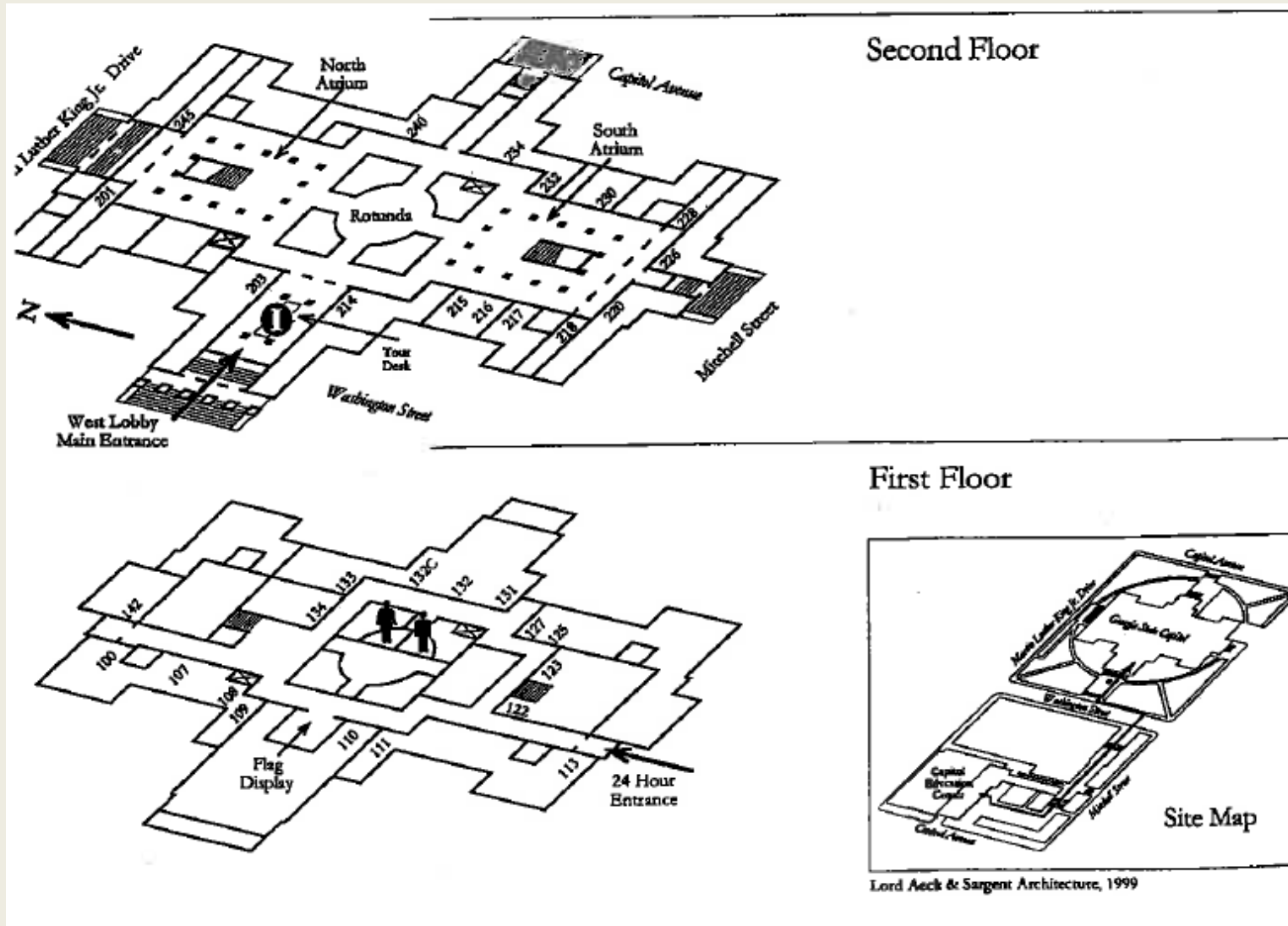
TRINITY VANDERBILT BLDG

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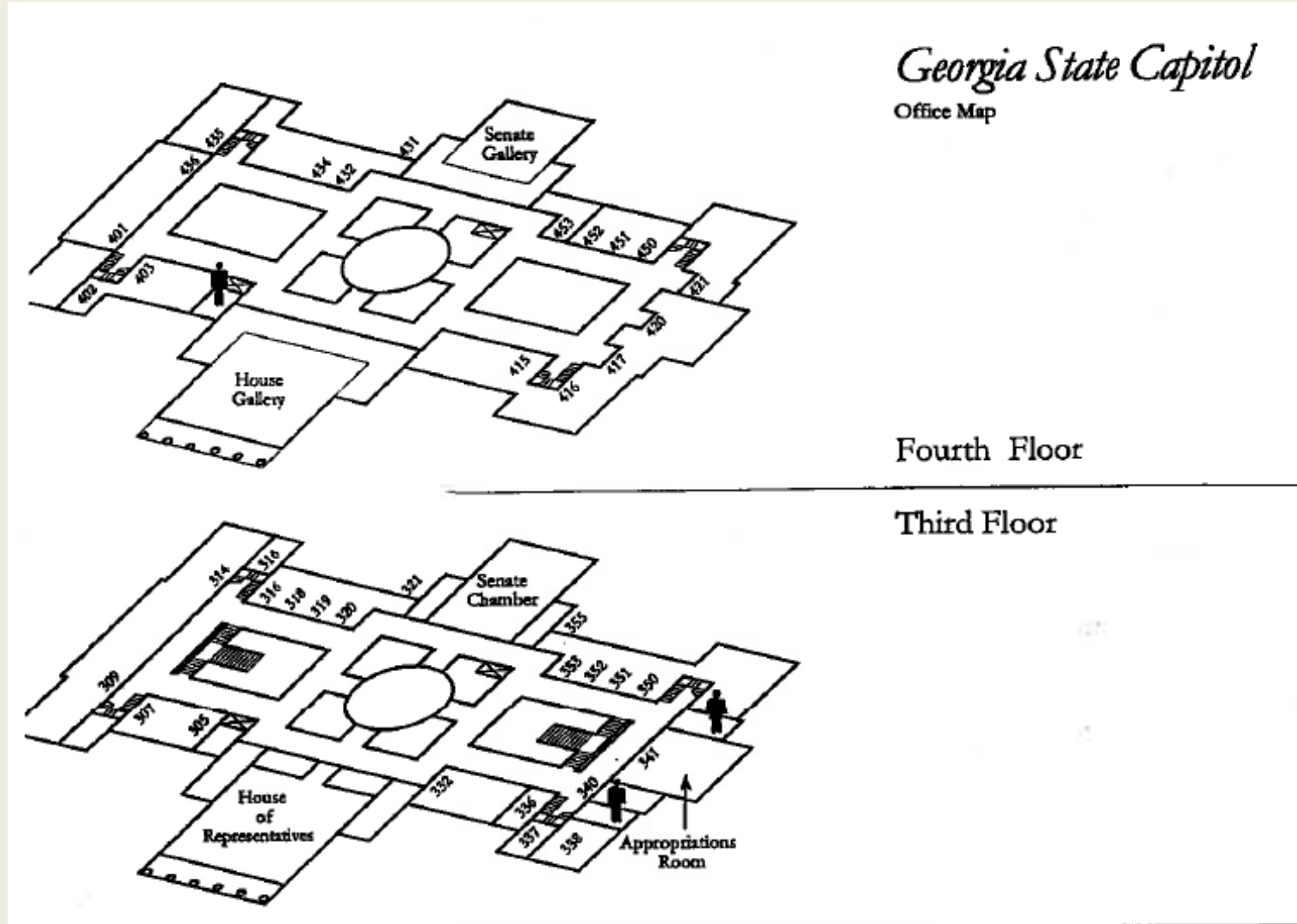
SECURITY

- Bring your driver's license or state-issued photo ID.
- You will be required to show it at the Capitol.
- Metal detectors located at the Capitol.

1ST AND 2ND FLOOR MAPS



3RD AND 4TH FLOOR MAPS



SCHEDULE

- Beginning at 8:45 am--Coffee and pastries in the Depot
- 9:30--Program begins
 - Tom Rawlings, Interim DFCS Director
 - Wendi Clifton, Legislative Briefing
- 11:00--Group photo
- 11:00--11:45--*Capitol Visit
- Luncheon--11:45-1 pm
- 1:00—Capitol Visit

*CAPITOL VISIT

- Observe from Gallery (4th floor):
 - Have been known to be strict with the use of phones, Ipads, cameras, etc.
 - No drinks.
- *Page your legislator (3rd floor)
- Stop by legislative office.
- Tour the capitol.
- Afternoon: attend a committee hearing

*PAGING

- Know your legislators in advance.
- Complete the paging slips before you get to the ropes on the 3rd floor.
 - Luncheon reminder
 - Come out to speak
- Proceed to page desk.
- Remember what your Page looks like.

LEGISLATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- Make in advance
- Stop by office and talk to Aide

LEAVE BEHINDS

- S'mores



LUNCHEON

- 11:45-1, The Depot
- Make sure someone is there the entire time.
 - Go through the buffet in shifts.
- Cheer for all legislators.
- Come greet your legislator. Fix their lunch. Make room at the table.
- There will be set seating for programs situated geographically close to be near each other to accommodate shared representatives and senators.

2018 DAY AT THE CAPITOL



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO:

- Invite your legislators.
 - If you haven't already done so, do! (sample language on website)
 - If you haven't heard back, send a reminder.
- Who is my legislator?
 - Find your district number and use the charts.
 - Or, enter your street address online at <http://votesmart.org/>
- Prepare your volunteers.
 - Have a call in advance for those attending
 - Provide info about all legislators in your program's service area
 - Photo, biographical info, committees, relevant sponsored legislation

SEE YOU ON VALENTINE'S DAY!

- Don't forget:
 - Know your legislators
 - Wear a pop of **red!**
 - Allow plenty of time for travel
 - Bring your phone and use #GACASADayatCap
 - Have fun!





THANK YOU

QUESTIONS??

ATYNER@GACASA.ORG 404-874-2888