



Concerned Women for America of Georgia 2013 Legislative Session Wrap Up



The fast-paced 2013 Georgia legislative session came to a close on March 28. The 40-day session opened on January 14, and State Director Tanya Ditty represented your interests as a volunteer lobbyist with a physical presence at the State Capitol 35 of the 40 days.

Concerned Women for America's targeted issues are: **Sanctity of Life, Religious Liberty, Family, Anti-Pornography, Education, and National Sovereignty**. Legislation this session encompassed several of these core issues. On-the-ground lobbying efforts combined with grassroots prayer and action gets results! Without calls and e-mails from CWA members and friends, successes would have been more difficult to achieve. Below are the bills CWA of Georgia targeted for passage or defeat.

Common Core (National) Standards Initiative

[SB 167](#), a bill to withdrawal Georgia from the Common Core ~~State~~ National Standards. The Common Core is a nationwide initiative designed to herd states into national K-12 standards and national tests – which ultimately will lead to a national curriculum and silence curriculum input from local parents, taxpayers, and educators.

Legislative action: The Senate Youth and Education Committee heard three hours of testimony, but after it became apparent that the bill would not have the votes to pass out of committee, bill sponsor Sen. Ligon requested that no vote be taken on the bill. This procedure allows the bill to remain alive for the 2014 legislative session.

[SB 203](#), a bill to establish a Curriculum Content Standards Advisory Council to review and revise Georgia competencies and content standards. The Georgia Department of Education sought no parental input when they ushered in the Common Core Standards. This legislation would create an Advisory Council to oversee a bottom up, grassroots approach to approving all future content standards in Georgia.

Legislative action: SB 203 was modified near the end of the session and heard in the Senate Youth and Education Committee. Like SB 167, when it became apparent that the bill would not have the votes to pass out of committee, bill sponsor Sen. Ligon requested that no vote be taken on the bill. This procedure allows the bill to remain alive for the 2014 legislative session.

What's next for the Common Core? Our fight has just begun to regain local control of education in Georgia! Georgia should not surrender its educational standards and curriculum to Washington D.C. bureaucrats! Educational solutions for Georgia children should be made in the state of Georgia.

CWA of Georgia, the American Principles Project and several key education specialists will be traveling throughout the state over the next nine months to educate communities on why Georgia must withdraw from the Common Core standards, national tests and the student data-tracking system. [Click here](#) for the most up-to-date information on our upcoming Stop the Common Core Education Summits.

We also need your help to spread the word about the Common Core. [E-mail](#) us today and let us know that you want to be a part of the movement to eradicate "ObamaCore" from Georgia schools.

Celebrate Freedom Week

[SB 68](#), a bill to establish Celebrate Freedom Week in Georgia public schools. The purpose of this legislation is to educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom in the founding of this country and the values, principles, and philosophies on which this country was founded. The full week in September which includes Constitution Day, September 17, would be recognized in public elementary, middle, and high schools in this state as Celebrate Freedom Week.

Legislative action: The bill passed out of the full Senate and then passed unanimously out of the House Education Committee. Unfortunately, SB 68 was held hostage in the House Rules Committee and did not make it to the full House for a vote. This bill remains alive for the 2014 legislative session.

Expansion of Gambling?

[HB 487](#), a bill to regulate coin-operated machines and provide additional revenue to the HOPE scholarship program. This was touted as a bill that will bring all convenience stores or places that sell video lottery scratch-off tickets under the authority of the Georgia Lottery Commission. The bill was introduced only two weeks before crossover day and was rushed through by design. Only the Senate had a healthy 3-hour debate. CWA of Georgia, Stop Predatory Gambling and others who fought in opposition to this bill were told that this bill would in no way expand gambling in Georgia. We disagree. According to an article in [Vending Times](#), the language in HB 487 lends itself to "gambling-enabling legislation."

Legislative action: The bill passed both the House and the Senate by a wide margin, and is on its way to Gov. Deal's desk for his signature. In the end, it was the Governor's legislation and a top priority for him. CWA of Georgia would like to openly thank the 12 senators and 4 representatives for standing against what we believe will lead to the

expansion of gambling in Georgia. A list of the senators and representatives who voted against HB 487 are listed at the end of the document.

Our next challenge is horse racing and pari-mutuel betting. Rep. Harry Geisinger (R-Roswell) has introduced [HB 4](#) and Curt Thompson (D-Tucker) has introduced [SR 217](#). Their respective legislation will legalize pari-mutuel wagering or betting on horse racing and permit Georgians to vote on amending the state constitution to allow for pari-mutuel betting. The amendment would be placed on the 2014 mid-term election ballot. *CWA of Georgia will be actively opposing this legislation.*



State Director Tanya Ditty addresses the press concerning HB 487 and SB 68.

CWA of Georgia Media Coverage of HB 487

- [Fight continues over lottery and gaming machines](#)
- [Video gambling regulation up for debate at Capitol](#) (video and print)

Encourage-A-Legislator Prayer Project

This was CWA of Georgia's tenth year to pray for and send note cards of encouragement to state legislators. Scripture commands us in I Timothy 2:2 to pray for *"kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness,"* and over 60 volunteers did just that! These volunteers prayed and encouraged 110 state legislators during the 40-day session.

Thank you again to each of you who made phone calls and sent e-mails during the legislative session. We were able to move the ball down the court on Common Core and Celebrate Freedom Week. While we were not able to stop HB 487, we were able to expose the potential for the expansion of gambling in Georgia.

The following senators and representatives voted NO on HB 487. Please take time to call or e-mail these legislators and thank them for their bold vote in opposition to the possible expansion to gambling in Georgia.

Sen. Buddy Carter	(404) 656-5109	Buddy.carter@senate.ga.gov
Sen. Jason Carter	(404) 463-1376	Jason.carter@senate.ga.gov
Sen. Bill Cowsert	(404) 463-1383	Bill.cowsert@senate.ga.gov
Sen. Mike Crane	(404) 656-6446	Mike.crane@senate.ga.gov
Sen. Frank Ginn	(404) 656-4700	Frank.ginn@senate.ga.gov
Sen. Bill Heath	(404) 656-3943	Bill.heath@senate.ga.gov
Sen. Chuck Hufstetler	(404) 656-0034	Chuck.hufstetler@senate.ga.gov
Sen. William Ligon	(404) 656-0045	William.ligon@senate.ga.gov
Sen. Barry Loudermilk	(404) 656-0034	Barry.loudermilk@senate.ga.gov
Sen. Josh McKoon	(404) 463-3931	Josh.mckoon@senate.ga.gov
Sen. Renee Unterman	(404) 463-1368	Renee.Unterman@senate.ga.gov
Sen. Tommie Williams	(404) 656-0089	Tommie.williams@senate.ga.gov
Rep. Jeff Chapman	(404) 656-0126	Jeff.chapman@house.ga.gov
Rep. Barry Fleming	(404) 656-0152	Barry.fleming@house.ga.gov
Rep. Charles Gregory	(404) 656-0220	Charles.gregory@house.ga.gov
Rep. Earnest Smith	(404) 656-6372	Earnest.smith@house.ga.gov