



## GEORGIA CONSERVATION VOTERS

### February E-Newsletter

February 10, 2009

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### Thanks for a Great Turnout at the 2009 Environmental Legislative Breakfast



More than 130 members and supporters of the environmental community joined legislators at the 2009 Environmental Legislative Breakfast at the Georgia Freight Depot on February 4th.

The breakfast included keynote speaker Sam Olens, Chair of the Atlanta Regional Commission and Cobb County Board of Commissioners and presentations by conservation organizations on the environmental community's shared legislative priorities “Leading Georgia into a Sustainable Future.”





We would like to thank everyone who helped make the breakfast a success, including the environmental organizations, businesses, and individuals that sponsored the event and everyone who attended.

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## Meet Green Business Leaders at the 6th Annual Sustainable Business Day at the Capitol



On Thursday, February 12th, we are sponsoring the 6th Annual Sustainable Business Day at the Capitol with Sustainable Business Partners, the Georgia Recycling Coalition, the U.S. Green Building Council - Georgia Chapter, Coca-Cola Recycling and the Turner Foundation.

More than 30 sustainable businesses will be on hand to help educate legislators on how economic growth and environmental protection can go hand in hand. This year will highlight companies that work in energy, transit, water, and recycling.

Click [here](#) to view the House Resolution sponsored by Representative Pat Gardner commending Georgia's sustainable and environmentally friendly businesses.

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## Update on Progress of “Leading Georgia into a Sustainable Future” Priorities

Today marks Day 16 of the 2009 General Assembly. Here's an update on the conservation community's shared “Leading Georgia into a Sustainable Future” priorities.



**Accept No Rollbacks:** *We will defend current laws that protect our natural resources (such as the moratorium on aquifer storage and recovery) and work to minimize budget cuts for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, especially the Environmental Protection Division.*

**Fund Public Transit Choices:** *To address Georgia's transportation problem and offer convenient and safe alternatives to car travel, the General Assembly must pass measures to expand the state's investment in public transportation.* **Update:** The Senate Transportation Committee met and unanimously passed [SB 39](#) and [SR 44](#), which would allow local governments to enact a regional one cent sales tax for transportation. The measures do not clarify whether existing transportation funds could be used for more than roads and bridges.

**Efficiency First:** *In response to challenges facing Georgia's water supply, legislators must champion the fastest, least expensive solutions that will ensure clean water for all. There are two bills pertaining to the Efficiency First priority.* **Update:** Representatives Judy Manning and John Meadows introduced [HB 158](#), water conservation legislation to require metering of individual units in new multi-family residential buildings. [HB 262](#), sponsored by Representatives Calvin Hill and Tom McCall, would give property owners belonging to homeowners' associations choices and options when it comes to planting drought-tolerant landscaping.

**Make Our Highways Safe and More Scenic:** *Billboards threaten health, safety and scenic beauty along Georgia highways. The General Assembly should make highways safer and more scenic by ensuring responsible management of rights of way.* **Update:** Senators Seth Harp, David Adelman, Renee Unterman, Dan Weber, Jeff Chapman, Dan Moody, and Steve Henson introduced [SB 18](#). The bill calls for the provision of an inventory of scenic areas and to restrict billboards in and near scenic areas. Senator Seth Harp and others also introduced [SB 107](#), which would restrict billboards in and near ecologically sensitive areas, like floodplains, wetlands and lands under conservation use valuation assessments.

**Create a Climate Action Plan:** *Climate change will likely affect our economy through rising shoreline levels and resulting damage to coastal development, disruption of growing seasons for agriculture and forestry, and reduced tourist trade. We urge the General Assembly to create a plan to address climate change.* **Update:** [HR 10](#) was introduced by Representatives Billy Mitchell, Harry Geisinger, Barry Loudermilk, and John Lunsford. The resolution calls for the creation of a Joint Study Committee for Clean Energy Technology to study the development of a climate action plan.

You can help make these priorities a reality and stay up to date on their progress throughout the session by being sure you are signed up for the [Georgia Environmental Action Network](#) and encouraging your friends to sign up as well.

Another option for staying informed on activity at the legislature is to sign up to receive GCV's Legislative Monitor. The Monitor provides weekly coverage electronically on activity at the legislature and the status on conservation-related bills, resolutions, and committee meetings. The cost to subscribe to the Monitor is \$100. Please call Samantha at 404-522-8144 if you would like to sign up.

# Check out the 2009/2010 Georgia Conservation Briefing Book



Be sure to check out the newly released 2009/2010 Georgia Conservation Briefing Book to find out more about the major challenges now facing Georgia's environment.

The Briefing Book expands upon the previous Briefing Books created by conservation groups across the state and published by Georgia Conservation Voters, and provides information on current conservation issues to the public, legislators, state officials and the media.

You can view and download the individual briefs or the entire book at our [website](#).

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Sincerely,  
Chris Osborne,  
Executive Director

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## About Us:

Georgia Conservation Voters works to preserve and enhance the quality of life for all Georgians by making conservation a top priority with Georgia's elected officials, political candidates and voters. GCV understands that the most important decisions made on the environment are made by elected officials, so one of the most important things we can do to protect the environment is to elect pro-conservation candidates.