



House of Representatives

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STANDING
COMMITTEES:

AGRICULTURE & CONSUMER AFFAIRS
APPROPRIATIONS
HEALTH
RETIREMENT

September 1, 2026

Dear Governor Kemp:

We, the undersigned Members of the Georgia House of Representatives, are writing about a **requirement in Georgia's school funding law that appears not to have been followed for some time.**

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161 requires the Governor to appoint a task force every three years to review the effectiveness of the program weights used in the QBE funding formula and recommend any needed changes to the General Assembly. The task force is to include representatives of the General Assembly, State Board of Education, Governor's Office, and local school systems.¹

The requirement has been mandatory since 2000, when the General Assembly changed the statute from providing that the Governor was "authorized to appoint" the task force to providing that the Governor "shall appoint" it.²

This is not the first time there have been questions about whether the requirement is being followed. In 2010, the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts found that, apart from salaries and benefits, the cost components underlying QBE had not been reviewed in more than 19 years. The report noted that a QBE task force had been appointed in 2004, but that its work shifted to broader education reform and a new funding model that was never completed. The auditors recommended that the task force required by law either be convened periodically as required or that the law be changed.³

¹ O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161(f), available at <https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-20/chapter-2/article-6/part-4/section-20-2-161>.

² Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts, *Internal Control Review of the Quality Basic Education (QBE) Funding Formula*, Performance Audit 09-19, at 19 & n.5 (May 2010) (noting that the statutory language was changed in 2000 from permissive to mandatory), <https://www.audits.ga.gov/ReportSearch/download/10689>.

³ Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts, *Internal Control Review of the Quality Basic Education (QBE) Funding Formula*, Performance Audit 09-19, at 19-20 (May 2010), <https://www.audits.ga.gov/ReportSearch/download/10689>. See also Governor Sonny Perdue, "Governor Perdue Forms QBE Task Force" (Feb. 9, 2004), https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_ggpd_i-ga-bg600-b-pp1-bp7-b2004-s2-h9-belec-p-btext.

There have been broader school funding reviews since then. The State Education Finance Study Commission conducted a review in 2011-12,⁴ Governor Deal appointed an Education Reform Commission in 2015 that made recommendations concerning QBE and its program weights,⁵ and legislation introduced as recently as 2025 (by the undersigned Members) proposed changes to QBE weights based entirely on recommendations from that 2015 commission.⁶

We have not, however, been able to identify a task force appointed under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161 since then, or another gubernatorial commission that has performed the required review. Even treating the 2015 Education Reform Commission as satisfying the statute, a task force would have been due again approximately every three years thereafter, in 2018, 2021, and 2024.

If we have missed a task force or other review conducted during your administration, we would appreciate information about when it was appointed, its membership, and any report or recommendations it produced.

If there has not been such a review, we ask that you appoint the task force required by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161. The statute recognizes that the relative costs of educating students change over time. It is difficult to see how Georgia can know whether its current program weights reflect those costs when the last comprehensive review we can identify occurred more than a decade ago (and when that review, while making extensive recommendations, ultimately did not result in meaningful changes to QBE. Indeed, the QBE formula changes recommended by that bipartisan commission never resulted in legislation at all). The undersigned Members further introduced HB 1604 during the 2026 legislative session, in order to expand the task force's scope to include healthcare costs, given that, since 2010, the state eliminated funding for the employer health-insurance contribution for noncertified school employees, shifting that cost to local school systems.⁷

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

Rep. Marvin Lim
House District 98

Rep. Karen Lupton
House District 83

⁴ Georgia Senate Research Office, *State Education Finance Study Commission* (describing the commission created by H.B. 192 in 2011 to evaluate the QBE funding formula), <https://www.senate.ga.gov/sro/Documents/UpcomingIssues/LegIssues12.pdf>.

⁵ Georgia Governor's Education Reform Commission, *Final Recommendations to Governor Nathan Deal* (Dec. 15, 2015), https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_ggpd_s-ga-bg630-pe3-bm1-b2015-br4-belec-p-btext.

⁶ Georgia House Journal, Mar. 20, 2025, at 2511, H.B. 796 ("revise QBE program weights based on recommendations of the 2015 Education Reform Commission"), <https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/document/docs/default-source/house-journal-document-library/2025-house-journal.pdf>.

⁷ Cassidy Alexander, "Rising Healthcare Costs Are 'Crippling' Georgia School Systems," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (July 4, 2026).

Rep. David Wilkerson
House District 38

cc: Greg S. Griffin, State Auditor