

TELEVISION STATION WSB-TV / ATLANTA
QUARTERLY LISTING OF LOCAL PROGRAMS REFLECTING CONCERNS
AND/OR NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY
JANUARY 1, 2012 – MARCH 31, 2012

ALL PROGRAMS LISTED BELOW ARE PUBLIC AFFAIRS UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED, AND
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AFFAIRS PROGRAMS THAT ADDRESS THESE ISSUES.

(Mini-Series Documentaries are produced by WSB-TV's News Department and appear within the newscasts as a public service to the community. The Action News "mini-series" are aired one to four times daily Monday -Friday from 430am-7am; 12-1:00pm; 4-7pm; 11-11:35pm; 1:35-2:05am (repeat). On Saturdays, Action News is aired from 6-9am; 12-12:30pm; 6-6:30pm; and 11-11:35pm. Sundays: 7:30-11am; 12-12:30pm; 6-7pm; and 11-11:35pm. Segments are generally 1:00-6:00 minutes in length. The following, in date order, are the reports broadcast during first quarter, 2012)

QUARTERLY ISSUES / PROGRAMS LIST

- EDUCATION / YOUTH
 - ECONOMY
 - IMMIGRATION
- TRAFFIC / TRANSPORTATION
- LAW ENFORCEMENT & CRIMINAL JUSTICE
 - POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
- COMMUNITY/NEIGHBORHOODS

Atlanta Public Schools Redistricting Proposal

Date: 01/31/12 4pm

duration 1:07

Craig Lucie

Parent: "This would really affect East Rivers Elementary School." The biggest concern parents have here is safety. Take a look at this map. You can see where E. Rivers is now and where this new Atlanta Elementary school would be built. Under the proposed plan, they are going to rebuild E. Rivers, but some students would be pulled from that school and moved to the new one. Residents in Collier Hills, which is right next to I-75 say if their children are zoned to go to the new school, their children would never be able to ride their bike or walk to class. Not to mention, the area where this proposed campus would go is near a strip club. Parent Dan Carter: "It just doesn't seem like a safe choice. It was probably chosen by the demographers more for a location or distance to school." Parents say it would drastically affect E. Rivers volunteers and their PTA committees if the school is split up. Parents are circulating emails trying to drum up support for people to go to redistricting meetings this week and let APS leaders hear their concerns.

Date: 02/02/12 4pm

duration :35

John Bachmann

Angry parents are speaking out about their concerns with proposed redistricting in the Atlanta Public school system. Under the new plan, 100 students at Morris Brandon Elementary would be moved to Garden Hills Elementary. Last night, parents showed up in northeast Atlanta wearing matching t-shirts and holding signs. A Morris Brandon parent told us the school is not full. Kelly Trotter: "To pull us out of that school to another school that's not our neighborhood school that they are proposing for us to go to... let us use our neighborhood school." The school system says it plans to use information from the public to make its decision.

Date: 02/05/12 12pm

duration :25

Linda Stouffer

The Atlanta Public Schools redistricting controversy hits the pavement in less than two hours. Parents who packed several meetings last week plan to march in protests of the school district's proposed redistricting plan this afternoon. They plan to carry signs to E. Rivers Elementary. Many families are upset that the proposed maps would move students out of neighborhood schools and – in one case – force them to cross major roads and walk by a strip club.

Date: 02/14/12 12pm

duration :28

Fred Blankenship

The controversy surrounding the Atlanta Public Schools redistricting plan could be ironed out by the end of the month. Atlanta City Councilman Ceasar Mitchell: "The issue will get resolved in some form, our hope is that is something that can keep the community together." Parents against the plan to close schools and open new ones attended this city council meeting in protest yesterday afternoon. School superintendent Erroll Davis told us he plans to make a decision about redistricting in the next ten days and present it to the school board in March.

Date: 03/13/12 6pm

duration :27

Jovita Moore

Several meetings are scheduled in the Atlanta Public School redistricting controversy. Last night parents pressed Atlanta School Superintendent Erroll Davis about his plan to close 13 schools. They packed this meeting at Douglass High School. At 6:30, there will be meetings at these schools: North Atlanta High, Herndon Elementary, Hutchinson Elementary, and Hope-Hill Elementary. The meetings involve possible changes including closures.

Date: 04/03/12 6pm

duration :39

Richard Elliot

Some Spanish-speaking parents at a northwest Atlanta school are upset because they got an English-only letter warning their children's school could close. Atlanta Public Schools is recommending closing Towns Elementary as part of its redistricting plan. The letter is in English, but Towns is home to many Spanish speaking parents, and usually letters go out in Spanish too. Parent Ana Zarate: "I don't know, because only say, I here see they say closing." Elliot: "That was the only word you understood in there?" Zarate: "Yeah." Elliot: "So you still don't know exactly what it says?" Zarate: "No. I don't know." APS believes the problem is because the list came out during spring break and there might not have been any translators.

Georgia Appeals to DOE for "No Child Left Behind" Waiver

Date: 01/31/12 6pm

duration :33

Jovita Moore

The US Department of Education said the states that submitted waiver requests from "No Child Left Behind" all lacked accountability for the performance of *all* students. Georgia is one of 11 states that applied for waivers in the first round. To get that waiver, the state has to come up with another way to measure how schools are getting students ready for college and a career. Right now nearly every application was criticized for being loose about setting high goals for all student groups. The Department of Education is expected to notify states by early February.

State Falls Short on DOE Grant Requirements

Date: 01/02/12 4:30am

duration :27

Carol Sbarge

This morning the US Department of Education is pressuring Georgia to follow through on promises it made to win a major grant. That grant was worth \$400 million dollars. A report shows Georgia was slow to fill 21 key positions needed to reform the state's education system. That means the state is about six months behind in implementing its new teacher evaluation system. The report also says state officials are finding it difficult to spell out initiatives to the public.

Racially Charged Homework Assignment Draws Parent Outrage

Date: 01/10/12 6pm

duration 1:19

Kerry Kavanaugh

Protestors: "Fire them now" It was the clear cut message that united about two dozen protesters. On Tuesday they marched in front of Beaver Ridge Elementary School for students. It's more fallout after a controversial math homework went home with 3rd graders last week. The word problems asked questions like 'how many oranges would each slave pick.' In another, "Frederick" was picking cotton. In one, students were asked to calculate how many beatings Frederick would get in a week. Activist Derrick Bozeman: "We know no other ethnic group would have been singled out like this." A school district spokesperson said one teacher wrote them, trying to incorporate history lessons into the math. A total of four teachers sent them home with students. Parent Plechette Walker: "If you're looking through and you're passing out school work and you're not even paying attention to what's being passed out, that's a problem." But not all parents think the homework warrants firings. Parent Terrance Barnett: "My goal is to make sure that it doesn't happen again and I wanted to know why and how did it slip through the cracks." Barnett was one of the first parents to contact us after he saw his son's homework last week. Barnett says he was outraged but believes the school and the district are addressing his concerns. Barnett: "By no means am I happy about the whole entire situation. But as far as people losing jobs, that's not my goal. My goal is that my son has a good education ."

Date: 01/10/12 4:30am duration :26 Fred Blankenship

This morning a full human resources investigation is underway into the teachers involved in a controversial homework assignment. On Friday, parents showed us math questions that talked about slaves picking crops and getting beaten. The district says a group of teachers came up with the questions to reinforce social studies lessons through math. We've since learned nine teachers received worksheets. A source told us the worksheets went home to students in four classrooms.

Date: 01/09/12 6pm duration :39 Monica Pearson

Today Gwinnett County schools says it has launched a full human resources investigation into all teachers involved in a controversial homework assignment. Parents showed us math questions last Friday that talked about slaves picking fruit and getting beaten. The school district said a group of teachers came up with the questions to reinforce social studies lessons through math, but agreed these questions were inappropriate. Parent Nicole Thompson: "I definitely want an apology I want them to acknowledge that not only was this bad judgment on their behalf, but we need to do better." The NAACP of Georgia is calling for the teacher who wrote the question to be fired. The school district is not naming that teacher.

North Fulton Charter School's Future

Date: 01/19/12 4pm duration 1:30 Mike Petchenik

We were there Thursday as Fulton Science Academy's Executive Director filed a petition to official become a state charter school. "Most charter school applications are 12-21 pages, ours is over 400 pages." Last month Fulton County denied the acclaimed middle school's charter application. The school wanted a ten year charter, but the district would only extend for three. State approval would ensure the school can stay open past this year. "We're hoping everything goes well. We think the state will be very supportive." Meantime, the school is building a new campus here on Maxwell Road. We've learned that, too, could be in jeopardy. This letter we obtained from Department of Education informs Fulton Science Academy it found conflicting information, a lack of information, and a failure to follow procedures of the Department of Education in its application for state approval of the site. "Our rules and guidelines are pretty clear. If money is used for that and public school kids are going to be in the building, they have to be approved." Fulton Academy board member Angela Lassetter says the school did nothing wrong. "Our site approval was done by Fulton County because we were supposed to be chartered by Fulton County and obviously the county has to comply with state guidelines." The state will decide on the Academy's charter by this spring. And, if all goes as planned, school leaders say the new campus will be ready to go before next school year.

Graduation Controversy at Georgia State University

Date: 01/13/12 11pm duration :36 Justin Farmer

A graduation controversy is brewing on the Georgia State University campus. The college just announced it will no longer hold fall commencement services. GSU officials say graduation at the Georgia Dome costs about a half million dollars and scheduling around Falcons games and other events has become challenging. Students now will only have one ceremony a year, in the spring. GSU Junior Detra Allen: "Now it seems like I'm gonna have to wait till May anyway..so it's like why try really hard to graduate early if I have to wait anyway? The academic colleges will still hold individual convocations for the fall semester, but *not* a commencement ceremony.

Mergers Possible for State Colleges

Date: 01/04/12 11pm

duration :25

Justin Farmer

An official says the University system of Georgia is considering merging eight colleges into four. The goal is to save money. The plan would merge Waycross College with South Georgia College in Douglas; Augusta State College with the Georgia Health Sciences University; Middle Georgia College with Macon State College, and Ginesville College with North Georgia College and State University. An official announcement is expected Friday.

Clayton School Board Member Accesses Pornography on County-Issued Computer

Date: 01/09/12 11pm

duration 1:16

Michael Buczyner

Pam Adamson: "According to the samples I have reviewed, it is hardcore pornography." Clayton County school board chair Pam Adamson told me a forensic investigator discovered the images on board member Trina Garrett's county issued laptop after the board authorized an investigation last month. Adamson: "The person doing it found Ms. Garrett's laptop had been used to access over 60 pornographic sites and some 400 plus pages of pornography that the computer accessed." Board member Mary Baker: "These are very serious allegations and I find them very disturbing." We wanted to ask Garrett about the findings, but she was absent from Monday's monthly Board of Education meeting. Mary Baker told me she viewed the evidence. "It's flat-out pornography and it is very disturbing that it would be on a laptop that is school-owned and issued." Garrett will be forced to explain the images later this month when the Board holds a special hearing to decide if she violated state ethics law. Adamson: "We're going through the steps as required by law." Adamson told me the punishment could range from a slap on the wrist to asking the Governor to take action against Garrett. "It's a distraction simply because we all know it's got to happen and we're all dreading that happening because it's an unpleasant situation to discuss."

Gang Resistance Program at Atlanta Middle School

Date: 01/20/12 4pm

duration 1:17

Ryan Young

It's a celebration of potential talent and achievement and designed to influence kids to stay away from drugs and violence. Grelea Vincent: "It was fun. We learned how to stay away from gangs and violence." Grelea spoke to the crowd of her peers about making the right choices in life so they can all achieve their goals. It's a message coming not only from teachers, but from police officers, detectives, drug and gang officers." Meeting kids twice a week for 13 weeks, the officers here all volunteers. They volunteer time and effort, and their money – laying the groundwork to give life lessons the kids can use for the rest of their lives. Fourteen middle schools represented by kids here -- all of them a part of GREAT – Gang Resistance Education and Training. When the police department decided to go after gangs, they decided to do in part by inspiring kids. The idea is to catch them at this age when they are feeling that peer pressure teaching them good lessons now that they can use to push back and say "no."

Cuts to Hope Scholarship Program Proposed

Date: 01/25/12 5pm

duration 1:29

Lori Geary

The problem, quite frankly folks, is that the Hope program is going to run out of dollars. State lawmakers are sounding the alarm again when it comes to the popular Hope Scholarship and Pre-K programs. They heard from the head of the student finance commission, and the numbers are dire. Just four years from now Hope recipients may have to pay more out of pocket than the scholarship provides, unless the lottery can provide at least another \$100 million dollars a year. Some Democrats are pushing to make it a needs-based scholarship program again. Sen. Nan Orrock: "I think having a ceiling or \$150,000 of family income would make sense. We've got to do something." Jason Carter: "I think that's a non-starter." State

Senator Buddy Carter, who chairs the higher education committee did not mince words, saying he does not want Hope to become needs-based. "It was never intended to keep only the poor best and brightest in our state. We don't need the best and brightest going to universities out of this state. We need them to stay here." Some lawmakers had questions for the student finance commission which administers the Hope and gets almost \$8 million in lottery funding. Tim: "I think we work pretty cheap." Orrock: "I wanna know if they're driving around in state cars." Tim: "We have nine cars, eight cars that we lease, eight field staff. Their job is to visit middle schools and high schools." Buddy Carter: "Hope is one of – if not *the* most successful merit-based scholarships in the nation. We're very proud of it here at home and will do everything we can to make sure Hope sustains."

Valedictorian Controversy at Gainesville High School

Date: 02/03/12 5pm duration :33 Monica Pearson

In more than a week, a rally will be held over a graduation controversy. The rally will be called "Justice for Cody." Cody Stephens high school decided to honor two students as co-valedictorians even though he has the highest grade point average among seniors at Gainesville High School. Cody has a 4.75. Mother Valerie Stephens: "He is humble and to him it may not matter as much as it does to me, but the point is, it's the right thing to do." The Gainesville school superintendent says the valedictorian and salutatorian are school-based awards, and that the school followed its procedures.

Date: 02/28/12 5am duration :40 Fred Blankenship

This morning, one of two valedictorians at Gainesville High School says he will allow his classmate to stand up alone. The school board has decided to uphold a principal's choice to have *dual* valedictorians – Cody Stephens and Charlie Bryant. Stephens has the higher GPA by just 1/100 of a point. The Bryant family issued a statement, saying: "Because of Cody's unique position of being our first African American valedictorian, we propose that Gainesville High School utilize the upcoming graduation ceremony to celebrate his, and only his, academic record." The statement goes on to say the two classmates are friends, and Bryant can still share the honor – just not the ceremony.

Governor Deal Delivers Good Economic News in “State of the State” Address

Date: 01/10/12 11pm

duration 1:23

Lori Geary

Governor Deal: “Ladies and Gentlemen, the state of our state is strong.” Instead of a message of cuts, Georgians finally heard there’s some new money in the state budget. For commuters along Georgia 400, the governor wants to add another southbound lane from McFarland to the Chattahoochee River, then during rush hour, allow drivers to use the shoulders. Deal: “Within education, I have called for a new focus on our youngest learners.” Governor Deal says there will be no cuts to education. He’s calling for another \$4 million for the school nurse program; more than \$8 million to keep charters open that were impacted by the courts; and another \$60 million for teacher raises. Even education groups found it tough to criticize this Republican’s message. So this has been a good speech if you compare it to year’s past with all of the cuts? Calvin Rollins (Ga. Assoc of Educators): “Yes, we applaud Governor Deal for restoring those cuts.” Deal: “If we fail to treat the addict’s drug addiction, we haven’t taken the first step in breaking the cycle of crime.” There was an emotional moment when Governor Deal talked about his criminal justice reforms, referring to a mother in the audience who beat a meth and cocaine addiction to win back her daughter and is now helping other addicts. Stacey Abrams: “I think what the Governor has spoken to is how do we start making up the ground we lost for the last decade? It’s gonna take a long time for us to come back to where we need to be. I’m pleased with the travel he wants to take us to.”

Signs of Economic Improvement

Date: 02/17/12 5pm

duration 1:17

I think for us it was clear to come to Georgia. I toured the sight with research and development Chief Stefan Erdmann. The lab opens in June. They’ll hire 110 staff, and relocate 30 more from as far off as Korea. Novelis has a giant recycling plant in Green County – 40 billion cans per year get turned into rolled aluminum to make more cans and other products. Erdmann says despite offering 6 figure salaries, he’s had to conduct a global search for the scientists who’ll work here in metals research. Erdmann: “It’s a lot like a dream for me. I was plant manager before where I had to reduce work forces. Now I can build something new. Economies grow with a lot of small growth in a lot of different companies. State fiscal economist Ken Heaghey says Georgia’s improving economic picture is reflected in new state revenue numbers. Sales tax is up this year by 3.2%, meaning more people are spending. And more Georgians are making more money. Withholding is up 5.1%. We don’t get new unemployment figures until March 1st. Heaghey’s hoping for slow, steady improvement. It’s a long time back. This recession was extremely tough.

State Revenue Up, Encouraging Economic Indicator

Date: 03/11/12 9am

duration :21

Linda Stouffer

Some good news for Georgia’s economy. Governor Nathan Deal has announced the state’s revenues are up for February. Georgia’s net tax collections totaled \$765 million dollars last month. That’s up 7% from February of last year. So far this year, the state has collected almost \$10.6 billion. That’s up 4.7% as compared to the same time last year.

Group Seeks to Help Homeowners

Date: 01/10/12 5am

duration :31

Fred Blankenship

Homeowners are lined up in downtown Atlanta, hoping to get some help with saving their homes. People started lining up last night to be some of the first people to meet with a mortgage counselor. The

Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America (NACA) wants to help buyers get a mortgage and help current owners lower their interest rates and payments. Christy Tucker: "The economy, the way everything is going and being a single parent, it's kind of hard." Organizers say there will be about 500 mortgage counselors on hand to help homeowners.

Atlanta's Job Creation Record Among Worst in Nation

Date: **02/07/12 5pm**

duration **1:30**

Jeff Dore

A siren in downtown Atlanta almost seems to signal the alarm to go with all those signs advertising space available. Tony Dennis owns his own business, Stitchers, and says all the vacant real estate around him hurts. Dennis: "It's harmed us a lot because our growth isn't what we expected." Georgia State University economist Rajeev Dhawan tells us Atlanta's job creation is the worst in the country because three key sectors tanked, altogether in a domino effect. The real estate bubble burst, killing construction, so local governments cut back due to less real estate tax income, and we had a huge rate of bank failures. Dhawan: "You add it all up together it's about 25% of the metro economy. It's not producing jobs, but not that much and cannot overcome the negative over here." We've seen a shopping center owner offering a half-year of free rent to fill empty space with a start-up business. Dr. Dhawan says that's positive, but not enough. "You can't just have 20 startups and things will grow. Things have to be generally good. That's why the startups are formed. People are buying. People spend the money and they keep on going." Unfortunately, he said, we have to ride out this business cycle. Creating jobs takes a lot of approaches. The trick is getting the right mix when and where you need it.

DNR Cuts Lead to Ranger Shortage

Date: **02/10/12 4pm**

duration **1:18**

Jeff Dore

Mike Burgamy usually works from a boat. He's the "go-to" guy on Lake Lanier when boaters and swimmers are in trouble. But as a ranger with the Department of Natural Resources he's also with the search and rescue teams in the woods. Sgt. Mike Burgamy, DNR Ranger: "If it is an outdoor environment, more often than not, our agency is the first one to be called on a search and rescue." It's not all just about checking fishing licenses. There are real reasons these officers carry guns. Burgamy: "We have run across meth labs in the woods, we've run across stolen vehicles, assaults taken place." When the economy tanked, the state began a series of pay cuts for rangers, while sparking their counterparts in the state patrol. As cadets, their pay is close. But by six years, the gap widens - \$34,000 dollars for rangers; \$48,000 for troopers. The DNR Chief gets \$63,000 - what a sergeant makes in the state patrol. The Fraternal Order of Police is asking the legislature to fill in that gap. Cpl Craig Fulghum, F.O.P.: "We were told to come back when the economy looked a little brighter." They say poor pay costs experienced officers. Fulghum: "Individuals are recruiting them from the Feds, from the Georgia State Patrol as well.

Construction Jobs Left Out of Recovery

Date: **03/09/12 5pm**

duration **1:20**

Jovita Moore

The US Labor Department says the country added \$227,000 jobs in February. That made for the strongest three-month stretch for jobs since the beginning of the recession four years ago. President Obama: "The economy is getting stronger. Better days are ahead." It's an encouraging sign for nearly everyone - except local construction workers. The construction industry is still hemorrhaging - thanks in part to the sagging housing market. "I don't see that's going to come back as soon as everyone would hope, because we haven't fully recovered." We sat down with the US Secretary of Labor today. Hilda Solis says the return of construction jobs depends on the approval of major infrastructure projects. "Infrastructure projects like high speed rail, and helping to alleviate congestion. That and bridge repair, sewage repair, all of those will help to create more jobs as well as in construction of schools. That'll put people back to work right away." Just last month, the Associated General Contractors of America said metro Atlanta has lost more than 56,000 construction jobs over the last five years. But there's a push here

in Georgia to reverse the trend, and there are signs of progress. "Caterpillar" recently announced it will build a new plant in Athens, with plans to hire more than 1400 workers there.

State Program to Stimulate Infrastructure Jobs

Date: **03/10/12 7:30pm** duration **30:00minutes** **John Bachmann**

The host of the hit TV show Mike Rowe is spokesman for "GoBuild Georgia." Governor Nathan Deal kicked off the campaign in January. His goal is to make more Georgians aware of the good paying jobs available in the skilled trades. Deal: "We're told we have about 16,500 positions in skilled trades areas that are open." The jobs are in five fields, including manufacturing and industrial construction. Georgia needs plumbers and pipefitters, welders, even truck drivers. The training can begin as early as high school. Graduates can then pursue a degree at one of 25 technical colleges or go straight into a professional apprenticeship. Tricia: "We want to see Georgians building our cars, building our bridges, building our roads, our nuclear plants and hopefully dredging our ports. There is a lot of work to do across our state and we want to see our folks getting those jobs and making the most of every single opportunity that's out there." GoBuild Georgia's first phase includes a statewide tour to educate school counselors about the opportunities. A federal grant is paying for the tour, website and early promotion.

6PP BANK FEES GA PKG

Date: 03/08/12 6pm duration 1:40 Jim Strickland

Wells Fargo's new monthly \$7 dollar fee will hit existing basic checking accounts, unless there's a minimum \$1500 dollar balance or a modest direct deposit. So, if you have a direct deposit of \$500 dollars per month, which shouldn't be too hard for most people, then you qualify for free checking. Spokesman Jay Lawrence says 80% of customers will still qualify for free checking. Kim Cain is one of them, but she's still not happy. "People like me – single and just one income, with gas and now bank fees ... it's ridiculous." Cain responded after I posted about the fee on the Channel 2 Facebook page. The news brought more than 2 dozen responses in the first tow hours – mostly complaints. Like this woman: "at the bank, closing my account as we speak." But there was another poster who explained, "banks lose money on checking accounts that do not meet their requirements." The controversy's been gravy to institutions like Georgia's Own Credit Union. Credit Union spokesman: "In 2011 alone we opened 21,000 checking accounts – some of that being from the fee imposition that the other financial institutions were acting on. Membership was up 11% in 2010, another 10.5% last year. A credit unioin has tax advantages over a bank, and can still offer basic checking with few strings and no fees." "A majority of people are living paycheck to paycheck and they're counting every nickel they can." A notice emailed to Wells Fargo customers say these new fees will take effect in a couple of months. We'll post that notice on our web site.

4Pp POWER HEARING FUL PKG

Date: 03/19/12 5pm duration 1:30 Jim Strickland

Former Governor Roy Barnes and former State House Speaker Glen Richardson say they're suing on behalf of more than 2 million Georgians. At issue – sales taxes on utility costs. But they're suing Georgia Power – not the tax man. The controversy centers over a line item on Georgia Power bills – a fee to help Georgia Power pay for two new nuclear reactors at Plant Vogtle. That fee just went up in January, and will continue to escalate until the plants go online in 2016. Georgia Power is collecting sales tax on that fee. This lawsuit contends that's an improper tax that will cost Georgians tens of millions of dollars. "Not only do they want a refund, but they want this court to sopt it. DOR doesn't determing taxability, the PSC doesn't determine taxability – this court determines taxability. Georgia Power has paid over these funds, we have not been told by revenue that that was wrong, and that we should issue a refund. The D.O.R. has ept every penny that we have truned over to them as a result of these sales taxes. I'm working on a

new angle ... the key questions the Judge wants answered before he makes a decision, and when that decision may come.

WSB-TV Local News of Public Interest:

Immigration

Georgia's Immigration Law Potential Consequences

Date: 01/10/12 4pm

duration 1:47

Manual Bojorquez

The Georgia Association of Latino elected officials says that because a similar measure was not struck down in Alabama, they feel it could come up for debate here in Georgia. It involves requiring local schools to collect data and pass it on to the state – on how many students cannot prove citizenship. Jerry Gonzalez: “We’ve seen the devastating impact it’s had in Alabama – there’s been a mass exodus in Alabama because of those provisions that have been upheld in federal court.” Gonzalez of the Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials says they plan to fight any such measures – saying it could lead to even more losses in areas like agriculture, where some farmers reported labor shortages and losses in the millions, workers fled the state, they said, because of Georgia’s immigration law, passed last year. Gonzalez: “It hurt the economy last year. If they want to do further damage to the economy, I think if they move this forward, clearly it’ll have a significant economic consequence to it.” No so, said the bill sponsors – arguing that illegal immigrants are the real drain on public services and taxpayer money – when he introduced the bill last year, Republican state Representative Josh Clark of Buford said, “I think you’ll agree HB 296 is just a common sense bill. Schools and hospitals receiving state funds should be transparent regarding the costs of providing services to illegal aliens.” He says gathering accurate data on the costs gives the state a legitimate argument to force the federal government to enforce immigration laws. We tried, but were not able to reach Representative Clark or another of the bill’s sponsors, Mat Ramsey of Peachtree City, to see where the bill stands this year. With the new session kicking off and several other measures on the agenda, it’s unclear how far this bill may get.

Proposed Immigration Bill Would Target Schools

Date: 01/11/12 4:30am

Duration :21

Fred Blankenship

Georgia lawmakers are considering a bill requiring schools to report the number of students who cannot prove US citizenship. The Georgia Association of Latino elected officials is concerned the measure would scare away immigrants who contribute to the state’s economy. But the bill’s supporters say illegal immigrants are a drain on Georgia. A similar measure is in effect in Alabama

Date: 01/11/12 12pm

duration :23

Fred Blankenship

A local group is worried schools and even hospitals could be required to check the legal status of those receiving public services. The controversial bill is up once again before Georgia lawmakers. It would require local schools to report how many students cannot prove citizenship. The Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials believes the bill would scare away immigrants who contribute to the state’s economy.

Immigration Activist Charges City of Atlanta with Violations of New Law

Date: 03/09/12 6pm

duration :29

Justin Farmer

The mayor’s office has responded to an immigration complaint against the city. A review board had its first meeting today on that complaint filed by activist D.A. King. He claims the city violates the new state immigration law by doing business with Mexican nationals who do not have acceptable forms of ID. In a

statement just released the city says, in part “employees who handle public benefits have been trained on what is an acceptable form of ID.” The city also says it has *not* seen the complaint.

Effort to Repeal Immigration Law Proposed

Date: 01/24/12 6pm duration :37 Justin Farmer

There's a new effort to repeal Georgia's new immigration law. This time, it's coming from some lawmakers. Duluth Representative Pedro Matin: “Farmers are saying that they're going to scale back, they're gonna grow less. We should not be thinking about less, we should be thinking about more.” Representative Marin and House Democrats want to repeal the law. They say it has cost the state agriculture \$75 million dollars since workers fled the state and crops rotted. But supporters of the new law say those claims are exaggerated, and that illegal immigrants are an even bigger burden on taxpayers. A hearing on the repeal effort is scheduled for Thursday at the state capitol.

Constitutionality of Immigration Law Challenged

Date: 02/07/12 12pm duration :53 Manuel Bojorquez

Caroline Frederickson: “We can't have fifty states making different immigration policies because that would be just chaos.” Frederickson is the president of the American Constitution Society, which hosted this conference on the constitutionality of state immigration laws, like Georgia's HB 87 – which lawmakers passed last year, and supporters say is the best way to save the state from the negative impact of illegal immigration. Opponents say the law has cost the state millions in lost crops, and say one provision, currently held up in the courts, to allow police to check immigration status of suspects where there is a reasonable suspicion – will lend itself to racial profiling – Arizona's law is first to go before the Supreme Court and could affect the outcome here. Frederickson: “If the Supreme Court follows what is precedent and follows the United States in terms of federal policy towards immigration, they will decide that the Arizona law is unconstitutional.

Date: 03/02/12 4:30am duration :32 Fed Blankenship

A federal court in Atlanta is hearing arguments in a challenge to new immigration laws in Georgia and Alabama. The issue has sparked protests. Civil liberties groups say immigration is a federal issue. Supporters say states have been forced to act because Washington has failed to stop illegal immigration. The court said Thursday it will *not* issue an opinion until the US Supreme Court makes a decision on a similar law in Arizona.

Teen Immigrant Deported

Date: 03/12/12 12pm duration 1:21

With hugs and smiles, supporters of Jesus Cruz wished him luck moments before he was to face an immigration judge that would decide his fate of getting to stay or having to go. All while others held posters in support of Cruz and immigration reform. Before Cruz went in, he told me his situation. Cruz: “This is my home because I've been living here for 9 years now, and I don't want to go back to a county I don't even know.” Now 21, Cruz was brought here as a child by his mother. He says he made very good grades in school, stayed out of trouble and dreams of going to college. Recently he was pulled over, he says, for unknown reasons, and now faces deportation. Cruz: “I don't think they should deport me because I'm a good person, and I haven't gotten in any trouble.” Reverend Timothy McDonald, Concerned Black Clergy: “Immigration for me is the civil rights issue of the 21st century.” McDonald told me Cruz has earned and deserves the right to attend college here in this country. McDonald: “What do you say to the critics/lawmakers who say undocumented immigrants take the eligible spaces for citizens?”

I think the facts belie that. I don't think that's true." The state leads the way in anti-immigration, and its hurting our state. It is hurting our state in a variety of ways, not just economically." Cruz: "Hopefully, the judge will let me stay over here and follow my dream of being a lawyer."

Backlog in Immigration Cases Delays Deportation Process

Date: 01/16/12 6pm duration :23 Justin Farmer

Some US prosecutors are going over files this week to determine which illegal immigrants can stay in the country. It's because of an overwhelming backlog of immigration cases. Prosecutors in Baltimore and Denver instead are focusing on detainees with criminal backgrounds. Similar reviews are planned across the country. Republican leaders are against the move, saying it's a back door way to grant amnesty.

Some Georgia Farmers in Favor of Guest Worker Programs

Date: 02/09/12 6pm duration :21 Justin Farmer

Many Georgia farmers say they need more seasonal workers, and today, Georgia's Agriculture Commissioner in Washington DC is trying to get special rules in place for that cause. We talked with farmers last year who said they had no choice but to let crops rot in their fields because the state's new immigration law scared away workers. At the Georgia capitol today, Senators approved a resolution that allows employers to bring in foreign workers for seasonal agricultural work.

4Pp IMMIGRATION LAW GA PKG

Date: 01/03/12 5pm duration 1:28 Tom Regan

Immigration enforcement activist D.A. King strongly supports House Bill 87, which sets strict guidelines on verifiable identification for immigrants working and living in Georgia. It prohibits the acceptance of the metricula consular ID issued by the Mexican consulate, but the cards are easily obtained through other means, and unreliable as valid ID. King: "We have cases of law enforcement officers that stopped people in the country illegally that not only have one or two mexican metricula consulars, but as many as 12 , all in different names." King showed his complaint to the state's new immigrant enforcement review board. It says Atlanta is violating immigration law by accepting the matricula consular as valid ID for any city transaction. The ordinance was passed in 2004. King: "If they are accepting it as valid I.D. FOR public benefits, yes they are in violation of the law." I went to the Mexican consulate to get a comment on the controversy surrounding the ID card, but no one was available to speak with us. This Hispanic woman showed us her consular card. She said she uses it often and believes it should be accepted as identification. But King disagrees. To prove a point he obtained a consular card with the name "Al Quida Gonzalez." It appears in a latin article endorsing use of the card. King: ""My wish is that city of Atlanta will rescind their law and come in compliance with house bill." A spokesman for Atlanta's Mayor told me they would look into the ordinance and potential conflicts with state immigration law.

Mayor Reed Urges Increased Cargo Traffic at Hartsfield-Jackson

Date: 02/23/12 4pm

duration 1:07

John Bachmann

Atlanta based UPS flies tons of cargo out of Hartsfield-Jackson International, but believe it or not, Delta flies the most packages through Atlanta. Mayor Reed is pushing the world's busiest airport to boost its cargo traffic. Reed: "We're the number one passenger airport in the world but we haven't cracked the top ten air cargo airports." That leaves a big potential for growth in the cargo business. These big jetliners typically take off and land at night, when passenger traffic stops. Reed: "Right now, you come out here at 1am, the airport looks pretty empty. The airport should be running 24 hours a day. That's my goal." Thursday, Mayor Reed announced a step toward his goal. Another big global air cargo company will start flying through Atlanta. Reed: "I'm pleased to announce Air France Cargo will return to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta in late March." Bringing with it jobs and up to \$12 million dollars in economic impact to the metro area. Reed: "It's got really nice layers of employment. It's got white collar, blue collar, laborer jobs, union jobs...all a part of the mix."

Special Transportation Tax Vote Coming in July

Date: 03/18/12 11pm

duration 1:19

Amy Napier Viteri

In metro Atlanta we have a problem: one of the longest average commutes in America. This privately funded TV ad focuses on the time Atlanta drivers spend away from their families and their homes because of time spent in traffic. It's the first part of a campaign to let voters know about the upcoming regional transportation referendum in July. Key projects include improvements at major interchanges and funds for Marta upgrades and growth – in exchange for a 1% sales tax over ten years. Commuter: "I think one percent would be ok but you have to remember that anytime they tax us they're not going to take it back even when the work's finished." Patricia Ward commutes from Sandy Springs to Decatur for work. She plans to vote but is not sure yet which way she's leaning. "We already pay a congestion tax, we pay a tax in time wasted, fuel wasted [while] sitting in traffic." Bert Brantley with Metro Atlanta Voter Education Network says the focus right now is informing voters. The referendum includes project in ten counties: Fulton, Gwinnett, Cobb, Cherokee, DeKalb, Rockdale, Henry, Fayette, Clayton and Douglas. Brantley: "We have some very important companies that have looked at Atlanta and decided not to come here because of our traffic." Mary Spencer tells me she is concerned about the congested commute. But she's not convinced now is the time for another tax. "There's got to be an answer. I don't know what it is but I don't know that I would be in favor of more tax."

Date: 04/04/12 5pm

duration 1:14

Dave Huddleston

We all know metro Atlanta traffic is some of the worst in the country, but a group of civic and business leaders say a .01¢ sales tax over the next 10 years will get the job done. Citizens for Transportation Mobility kicked off their mega millions ad campaign called "Untie Atlanta's Traffic." It's to convince voters that metro Atlanta is losing jobs and quality time with family because commuters waste so much time stuck in traffic. The tax would generate \$8 million dollars and generate 157 projects to improve traffic. Former Atlanta Mayor Sam Massell says the one cent sales tax over 10 years would help build more roads and offer mass transit options for places like Cobb and Fulton counties. And one cent isn't asking a lot. Massell: "That's how little it's going to mean to you – just 1% sales tax. To change everything for us. I've asked you over the years many times to vote for me, I'm asking you now to vote for yourself and for something that I think will make a tremendous difference in our lives." Voters would decide on the sales tax increase on a July 31st referendum. And as you can imagine, not everyone likes the idea of a sales tax increase, and even some lawmakers say it doesn't do enough to fix the problem.

Hartsfield Jackson Sets Record in Number of International Travelers

Date: 02/06/12 4pm duration :30 Monica Pearson

The Atlanta airport is seeing a record number of international passengers. Officials at Hartsfield-Jackson emailed us to report it had 9.86 million people from international cities pass through the airport in 2011. That is up nearly 8% from the previous year. International flight operations also set a record with nearly 69,000 takeoffs and landings.

Airport Contract Controversy

Date: 01/02/12 11pm duration :44 Jovita Moore

Tomorrow the Atlanta City Council is scheduled to approve the multi-billion dollar contracts for shops and restaurants at Hartsfield Jackson International airport. Aviation employees gave their recommendations from the applications that were submitted, and one of the bidders says the city changed the rules half-way through the application process. Brian Maloof: "It was a one shot deal. The city of Atlanta make it clear early from the get go – you turn this thing in, you can't alter it. Then they pulled all bids. Even the ones that had no errors. We felt like how unfair is this?" Also some of the winning bids have ties to Mayor Kasim Reed, and critics say that is a conflict of interest. However, the mayor said he gave back the donated money from businesses that bid on the contracts.

Date: 01/03/12 5am duration :36 Carol Sbarge

Channel 2 Action News has kept you informed on the controversy over multi-billion dollar contracts at Hartsfield-Jackson. Today, the city council is set to vote on which restaurants and shops will get the lucrative deals. Fifteen – so far unidentified – aviation employees have made recommendations. One bidder says the city changed the rules half-way through the application process. Manuel's owner Brian Maloof: "I lost out to a diner out of California. We've lost our Jersey Mike's. I would just like for them to slow down and look at this." Critics say some of the winning bids have ties to Mayor Kasim Reed. The mayor's office says Reed returned that donated money

Date: 01/05/12 11pm duration :25 Monica Pearson

More details now on the controversy surrounding airport contracts. Just this week, a Fulton county judge ordered the mayor *not* to sign off on an airport contract for currency exchange services. The judge says she's skeptical about the city's contract process. And last year, the city paid a nearly \$4 million dollar settlement to an Atlanta businessman. He claimed the city steered a contract to a competitor with political connections.

Gas Prices Hurt Commuters in the Pocket

Date: 02/09/12 4pm duration 1:15 John Bachmann

Tony Harper's 2008 Toyota Tercel already had \$116,000 miles on it. He drive it to and from work every day. Harper: "I drive 55 miles one way from McDonough, Georgia to Suwanee, Georgia. 110 miles round trip." But even getting 30 miles a gallon, it's an expensive commute. "Last month I spent \$232 in gas – that's when I was paying \$3.30 - \$3.35 a gallon." This month he's paying closer to \$3.50 a gallon, so his commute cost will go up again. He's been doing this for years. Harper says he can't afford to move his family to the north side of town, and he says in this tough economy, he can't afford to quit. Harper: "I don't like my commute, but I have to do it because there's no money on the south side anymore. Have to drive to the north side to pay the bills and take care of my family." Harper works for a sales company. He says gas prices affect his company too, and he hopes high prices at the pump won't cost his company jobs. But some experts are warning we could see \$5.00 a gallon this summer. Harper will feel that more than most. "Gas prices go up, my wallet gets smaller and smaller."

Sandy Springs Motorists Concerned About Proposed Roundabout

Date: 04/04/12 6pm

duration :36

Justin Farmer

Plans to build a roundabout at one Roswell intersection have created some controversy in a nearby neighborhood. The city plans to turn the intersection of Houze and Hembree Roads from a four-way stop into a roundabout. Traffic engineers tell us the project will improve traffic flow and reduce crashes at the busy intersection. But a homeowner in the nearby Saddle Creek neighborhood told us her neighbors feel blindsided by the decision. Courtney Rozear: "This is going to be a very different concept, and part of my concern, is not so much the roundabout, but the lack of answers to my questions." Construction is not scheduled to begin for a few years.

WSB-TV Local News of Public Interest: Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice

Beating Posted Online Sparks Community Outrage

Date: 02/07/12 4pm duration 1:25 Ryan Young

We were there Tuesday afternoon as Atlanta police and FBI agents canvassed this neighborhood looking for clues. This video has sparked so much outrage, and my sources tell me the community has been calling Crimestoppers with tips. Devon Barrington Ward of "Change Atlanta" says the men who launched this attack are cowards. His organization plans to help the young man by extending counseling services to help him deal with the aftermath of the attack on Saturday. "Moving forward we need to rally to get hate crime legislation. We need to get traction. This has to be a teachable moment." We talked with the victim's family Monday night. Right now, they say they're too upset to speak publically, but we have learned the victim is in his 20's and was in the neighborhood visiting a family member when he was attacked outside the store. We first showed you this video Monday. We counted 8 men attacking the victim, hitting him again and again. Neighbors tell us people frequently hang out on this corner and cause problems. "We need tougher laws on the book so that this man can feel the need to come forward and not live his life in fear."

Handicapped Driver Ticketed for Parking in Handicapped Spot

Date: 01/19/12 4pm duration :33 Erin Coleman

Atlanta police tell Channel 2 they're working to resolve a ticket controversy involving a handicapped driver. Anne Harper got a ticket for parking in a handicapped space at her apartment complex. But Harper is a paraplegic whose license plate is clearly marked. Harper: "The ticket has my license plate number written on it. They obviously had to look at my plate to write it down. It's not like I just have a hang tag on my rear view mirror." Police confirmed the ticket was a mistake. Harper says she wishes they would focus more on catching those who actually do illegally park in handicapped spaces.

Trayvon Martin Case Sparks Local Controversy

Date: 03/27/12 5:00pm duration 1:18 Richard Elliot

We started the day going to Hashim Nzinga's Gwinnett County home to see if anyone was there and wanted to talk about the arrest. But no one answered when we knocked, and the neighbors who were home either didn't know him or didn't want to talk about him. This is Nzinga's mugshot – just hours after deputies arrested him on weapons charges. Adrion Bell: "They arrested him at his probation office in Lawrenceville for possession of a firearm by a convicted felon." A Gwinnett County jury convicted Nzinga last month on felony deposit account fraud. This is a photo of the type of the gun deputies say he had – an FN Herstal – not, they say, your average weapon. Bell: "From the little I've read on it, it is a high end handgun. It's not, as you said, a cheap little Saturday night special." The sheriff's office says Nzinga brought that gun here and actually pawned it, but as part of normal checks for any DeKalb County pawn shop, the name was run and Nzinga came back a convicted felon, so the sheriff's office arrested him. This is video of Nzinga we found on youtube. It was called "the New Black Panther Movie," and he says he is that organizations chief of staff. It's leader stirred up controversy Monday when he put a \$10,000 dollar bounty on George Zimmerman, the man who shot and killed Florida teenager Trayvon Martin. Mikhail Muhammad: "By next week, we are looking forward to getting \$1 million dollars for the capture of George Zimmerman. We're going to force our government to do their job properly and if they don't, we will."

Locust Grove Mayor Offers Repayment for Questionable Expense Claims

Date: 02/10/12 6pm

duration 1:31

Mark Winne

Lee Sexton: "I don't believe that this error on her part in any way affects her legacy of her service to the people of Locust Grove." Mayor Lindsey: "My intent is never to get one penny of anything that I haven't earned." That was former Locust Grove Mayor Lorene Lindsey weeks ago. Today by phone she said she's still 89 and she's doing fine – other than a cold – this being the tenth anniversary of when she became a widow, and she wishes the mistakes leading to controversy over her expenses had never happened. Sexton: "Her position has been since day one if she received any monies to which she was not entitled she wanted to pay it back." Her lawyer Lee Sexton says she's reached a settlement with the city she once led. But Henry County Chamber of Commerce President Kay Pippin says of the two major developments concerning Mayor Lindsey in recent days, her award Saturday as Henry County Citizen of the Year is more representative of her career. Sexton says it turns out his client inadvertently double-dipped on car mileage expense reports, getting reimbursed both by the city and the Atlanta Regional Commission for some driving. In a letter to the current mayor, she says "I apologize to the citizens of the city of Locust Grove for this unfortunate situation." It says "enclosed is a check for \$2,792.56 to reimburse the city for mileage expenses to ARC meetings and her proportionate share of the cost for an audit on expense reports." The letter also says "I will not run for public office in the city of Locust Grove in the future." Sexton: "We were able to resolve this issue completely. Pippin: "Mayor Lindsey is a legend in Henry County."

Limit to Lobbyist Gifts to Lawmakers

Date: 02/16/12 5pm

duration 1:27

Lori Geary

As of last week, Republican state senator Ronnie Chance was one of several Republican co-sponsors pushing for a \$100 limit on the amount of money lobbyists can spend on lawmakers. Right now, there's no limit. Senator Chance told me he'll support the bill if it gets to the floor, but as one of the two floor leaders for Governor Nathan Deal, he says he didn't want it to appear the Governor was pushing for this ethics bill. Geary: "So if that were the case you wouldn't be able to sponsor any piece of legislation that you felt strongly about." Chance: "Not necessarily. I am carrying legislation that – my name is the first one on the list, but it's not nearly as much of a controversy as it is for some people." Geary: "Why do you think this is so controversial?" Chance: "I don't know, you're the reporter. You'll have to talk to other people about that." William Perry: "The only reason this bill is controversial is because the legislative leadership gets so many gifts." Perry, of Common Cause, who is pushing for the gift cap along with members of the Tea Party points the finger at leaders like house speaker David Ralston who says he favors transparency over a gift cap. Perry: "The speaker of the house gets \$17,000 dollar trips." Also, the powerful Republican rules chairman in the senate – Don Balfour of Gwinnett who told me lawmakers are focused on job creation. Perry: "You're talking about a rules chairman who gets \$13,000 in lobbyist gifts." Balfour: "I had two opponents run against me last summer based on that very thing and I got 72% of the vote." Perry: "Those are the people standing against this bill and those are the reasons why."

Former Gubernatorial Candidate Karen Handel Caught Up in Komen Foundation Controversy

Date: 02/07/12 5pm

duration 1:33

Lori Geary

Geary: Did they ask you to resign?

Handel: It was my decision. Geary: They offered you a severance, but you declined. Did they offer you a severance to stay silent? Handel: I don't think so. They wanted to be fair with me. It's a nonprofit organization so I factored that in my head. Just after her resignation from the Susan G. Komen Foundation, and days after a controversy blew up about the organization's decision to defund Planned Parenthood, I sat down with Karen Handel to get her take on what happened. Up until this morning, Handel was the vice president of public policy for Komen. Geary: What was your particular role in the decision to defund Planned Parenthood? Handel: I was part of the decision making process, but I was not the sole decider. I embrace the fact I was involved in the project. I embrace the fact that I let the project. Handel is no newcomer to political controversies. While on the campaign trail for Georgia Governor, then fellow Republican candidate Nathan Deal attacked her for a vote on the Fulton County Commission to give \$400,000 to Planned Parenthood, but not for abortion services. Handel: There is a little odd irony – before I wasn't pro-life enough and now I'm too pro-life. Handel says she resigned from Komen to help the organization get back to its mission of helping fight breast cancer. She told me she's disappointed with Komen's decision to reverse course. Handel: To see this ratchet up the way that it did in such a personal and truly vicious way I think just speaks volumes about the real motives of Planned Parenthood and it's really disturbing.

Editorial in Atlanta Jewish Times Draws Fire Over Obama Remark

Date: 01/24/12 4pm

duration 1:47

Mike Petchenik

Publisher Andrew Adler's op-ed in the Atlanta Jewish Times sparked controversy from here to Jerusalem and ended with him resigning. Adler: "I'm sincerely sorry." A tearful Adler speaking to Atlanta Interfaith Broadcasters about an op-ed he wrote for the Atlanta Jewish Times suggesting Israeli agents take out President Obama for being "unfriendly" to the Jewish state. Adler: "I just felt I was doing my job as an editor/publisher to get people to wake up to what's going on with Iran and Israel." Adler resigned Monday after the article got world-wide negative reaction. We tried to reach Adler in person at his East Cobb County home, but nobody answered the door. I asked interim editor John McCurdy what's next for the paper. "It's time to distance ourselves from that sort of opinion piece. We have to get back to concentrating on the community." McCurdy told me it's been a difficult week. "Mr. Adler's no longer with us. I still respect him as a journalist, but he made a mistake. And we have to try our hardest never to make that mistake again. Mr. Adler's statement did not speak for us." Rabbi Joshua Heller belongs to the Atlanta Rabbinical Association. The group has severed ties with the times and is denouncing Adler's opinion. Heller: "It wasn't appropriate for him to be in a position of representing the Jewish Community as a whole." A spokesman for the Secret Service in Washington told me the agency is aware of what Adler wrote and is taking appropriate follow-up, but he declined to say whether they were actually investigating him.

Audit Reveals Inconsistencies at Atlanta Housing Authority

Date: 01/20/12 5:00pm

duration 1:21

Richard Belcher

The audit arrives months into a simmering political controversy about the authority's chief executive. Renee Glover has run AHA since 1994 but said last fall she expected to be stepping down. The impetus for that came from Mayor Reed who doesn't hide that he wants a change. He's also said he wants an in-depth audit of the nearly \$300 million dollar a year agency. But the lead auditor told me today there is no evidence that kind of examination is needed. RB: "Would you call it a good audit?" Auditor: "I would call this a very good audit. Very clean, what we call a clean audit, a clean opinion." Gregory Davis and his firm have audited the housing authority's finances for a decade. He calls the agency one of the best managed housing authorities he's dealt with. RB: "If you were giving it a letter grade, what would it be? GD: "A to

A+” Getting Renee Glover out is in the hands of Dan Halpern, a political appointee of Mayor Reed, and now Chairman of the agency’s board. Halpern told Channel 2 he’s worried that the political climate in Washington may lead to cuts for housing agencies which are almost entirely federally funded. The good news in the audit is that AHA has essentially no debt and nearly \$100 million dollars in cash reserves. It is a very good cushion to be able to carry out the mission of the organization.

Fight for Marietta's Only Remaining Public Housing

Date: 03/07/12 5:30am

duration :34

Dave Huddleston

Some community groups are fighting to save Marietta's only remaining public housing complex. Reverend Lionel Gantt says the SCLC and other groups will file court papers to prevent the housing authority from tearing down "Fort Hill Homes" on Cole Street. They fear residents will have a tough time finding another affordable place to live. Rev. Gantt: "They get that first gas bill, they get that light bill. Federal government only gives 150 for expenses. They're homeless within a year." The housing authority's director says the \$17-18 million dollars it would take to update the complex is just too much.

DeKalb Residents Fight New WalMart Center

Date: 03/11/12 8am

duration :37

Linda Stouffer

Some DeKalb County residents are continuing their fight to keep WalMart from doing business in their community. Dozens of them hit the streets of Decatur Saturday. We found them marching down Church Street from Suburban Plaza to Decatur Square. They say the proposed Super WalMart at Suburban Plaza will have a negative impact on the neighborhoods and small businesses in Decatur. "There are several hospitals in the area and the ambulances already have a hard time getting through so were concerned about that." WalMart says Saturday's protest does not represent the majority of residents and that bringing in more traffic can be good for surrounding businesses.

Residents Pushed Out of Condo Complex

Date: 01/06/12 5pm

duration 1:07

Erica Byfield

There is now a big green fence blocking what used to be the entrance to the Yorktowne Condominiums in College Park. Moments before, five residents filed out in vans and trucks loaded with their belongings. Addie White was one of the last to leave. Addie White was one of the last to leave. White: "Why would you sell me something you know that is already bad?" Standing by her car, packed with almost everything she owns, she told me if she know 9 months ago, what she does now, she would never have spent her savings on a place here. White: "I would have never moved in here." Throughout the day, in groups of 5-10, College Park police walked the complex informing residents it was time to leave. Millard Durham: "I knew it was coming for a few months, so it's no surprise." We were not allowed inside the neighborhood on Friday. The city of College Park turned off the water here on Tuesday. Officials tell us the property manager owes the city more than \$100,000 dollars in unpaid water bills. Residents tell me they're being pushed out, and it's not their fault.. Resident Kaesha Gregory: "I'm not happy. I had nowhere to go. I had to get an efficiency." The closure of the complex did come with a little controversy. Officials arrested these tree men they say were trying to steal copper. Police Chief: "We are here to protect them. They are citizens whether they are on property or not and we are going to do everything we can to maintain it."

Compost Company Seeks DeKalb Location

Date: 03/26/12 6pm

duration :38

Justin Farmer

The owners of a compost company who wanted to move to DeKalb tell Channel 2 they'd still like to head to metro Atlanta. Right now, Greenco Environmental is headquartered in Barnesville in Lamar County. The owners tell us they agreed to move because of complaints over the smell. Owner Melia Lesko: "We are optimists we are hopeful that people will stop and listen and try to gather all of the facts and understand what we're doing and some of what they've heard and read is not accurate." Greenco collects food waste from places like Emory and Hartsfield Jackson International airport. They withdrew their application for a location on Rock Mountain Road in DeKalb but could try to go somewhere else.

Residents Fight Opening of New Crematory

Date: 02/08/12 6am

duration :34

Carol Sbarge

A funeral home's new sign is causing controversy among some Gwinnett County homeowners. You can see the sign reads, "Bill Head Funeral Home and Crematory." Commissioners turned down a request for a crematory on-site in 2010. Some neighbors in Tucker say it makes it appear that there's a crematory on-site. Tia Severino: "I would really appreciate the sign not being out there. Personally, I think it was a mistake to put up a sign that says funeral home and crematory." Homeowners fear the sign will drive down their property values. The funeral home's owner says inspectors have confirmed there's no crematory on site.

Sandy Springs Want More Detail on Proposed Park

Date: 03/29/12 6pm

duration :28

John Bachman

Some neighbors have concerns about plans for a new park in Sandy Springs. Leaders want to build the park on 20 acres along the Chattahoochee River on Old Riverside Driver. One woman told us, she's worried because the city has *not* said what kind of park it will be. Susan Zweig: "The traffic concerns, the parking concerns, having adequate police protection." Last week, the city council passed a resolution to continue negotiations with Fulton County for the land. But a councilman told us, it's not a done deal yet.

Coyote Population Threatens Residents, Pets

Date: 02/06/12 12pm

duration 1:15

Michael Buczyner

Barry Batts: "It was like it was stalking. It caused me some concern." Barry Batts told me it was his cat's odd behavior that initially alerted him to the coyote. "Suddenly the cat reacted and I looked to the right to see what he was looking at and sure enough, there was a coyote." He says while standing in his Riverside back yard, the coyote approached. "How close did it get to you?" Batts: "Maybe 20 yards." Batts quickly and safely got his animals inside. "It's nothing I've seen in the 8 years I've been here." He showed me the stick he used to defend himself and his pets. "I am a little bit more concerned about myself and the safety of my pets." Neighbor Lee Coker: "We hear them late at night, and early in the morning." But some of Batts' neighbor's pets haven't been so lucky." Batts: "They found their pets mutilated out in the yards. We got some dogs that have gone missing." Coker: "There's certainly a lot of people in the area that have seen them and have lost pets." Coker told me he's not taking any chances. "With the dog, when we're taking him out in the morning, we're being better letting him run, taking him out on the leash. We're looking at the surroundings rather than just letting him fly out."

