



## **Who is Georgia Bio?**

Georgia Bio (GaBio) is a private, non-profit, membership-based association and is the champion for the life sciences industry in Georgia.

GaBio members include pharmaceutical, biotech and medical companies, universities, research institutes, medical centers, government groups and other business organizations involved in the research and development of products that improve the health and well-being of people, animals and the environment.

GaBio's mission: ***Advance the growth of Georgia's life sciences industry and foster strategic partnerships that can create a healthier world.***

GaBio is an industry association whose members have a record of achievement in three areas critical to the state's future:

- Improving the health of people, animals and the environment
- Expanding the number of high paying, advanced technology jobs
- Enhancing K-12 student achievement in science education

GaBio's programs include **advocacy**; **education** outreach to K-12 schools to improve student achievement in science; **economic development** in partnership with state and local officials to grow Georgia's life sciences industry; and **business development** events to facilitate collaborations among all the elements of Georgia's life sciences community.

GaBio is the state affiliate of the national Biotechnology Industry Organization and was the local co-host of the 2009 BIO International Convention in Atlanta. This is the largest biotech conference in the world.

## **What is the impact of Georgia's life sciences industry?**

Georgia has a robust, diverse life sciences industry. It includes companies that apply life sciences technologies to improving health care, agriculture, bioenergy and environmental management.

The life sciences industry and university research have an **annual economic impact of \$17.3 billion**. By comparison the entire University System of Georgia has an \$11 billion economic impact and the Forestry Industry has a \$28 billion economic impact.

The life sciences industry is responsible for **62,000 direct and indirect jobs** in Georgia. It pays **\$4.2 billion in salaries** and **\$578 million in state and local taxes**. The industry's **average salary is \$63,000**, which is 50% higher than the average for all other industry sectors.

There are more than 340 life sciences companies with more than \$8 billion in annual sales in Georgia. These companies have more than 400 marketed products and another 350 in development, mostly for treatment of human illnesses such as cancer, infectious diseases, heart disease, neurological disorders, diabetes, and inflammatory diseases. There are also companies developing animal health care products, agbiotech crops, and biofuels.

Georgia is a center of global health innovation with the **U.S. Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, Carter Center, Task Force for Global Health, CARE International, American Cancer Society, Arthritis Foundational, American Red Cross** and the state's world renowned research universities: **Emory University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Georgia State University, Medical College of Georgia, Morehouse School of Medicine, and University of Georgia**.

Georgia also is the home of the proposed **National Health Museum**, a science-based institution with the mission of inspiring Americans to live healthier lives through access to knowledge and themed exhibits focused on the life sciences.

In 2008, biomedical scientists and researchers throughout the state were conducting **2,314 clinical tests** of potential new medicines, including **709 trials** for anti-cancer drugs, more than **300 studies** of rare disease treatments, **134 tests** of medicines for heart disease and **118 trials** of anti-HIV/AIDS drugs.

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## **2010 Georgia General Assembly Legislation**

### **Support**

**Senate Bill 129 and House 249** propose allowing portions of the state's public employees' pension funds to make alternative investments, such as investing in life sciences and advanced technology companies. Georgia is the only state in nation that does not allow these types of investments by its public employees' pension funds. This is one measure that would help attract much needed venture capital to Georgia for life sciences and other advanced technology companies.

**Senate Bill 245** proposes requiring health benefit plans that provide coverage for cancer chemotherapy to include coverage for orally administered cancer medications. Currently there exists a disparity between out of pocket costs for patients who need oncology drugs. Existing cost structures can make the more convenient oral chemotherapy products too costly, driving patients to infused medicines. This bill would correct this disparity.

**House Bill 523 and Senate Bill 49** propose that a pharmacist may not substitute generic medications for pharmaceuticals prescribed as part of immunosuppressive therapy for a patient who has received an organ or tissue transplant to inhibit or prevent immune system activity that might increase the probability of the rejection without first obtaining the consent of the patient and of the prescribing physician or designee. These bills are designed to protect patients' quality of care and make them aware of drug substitutions by pharmacists.

**House Bill 194** proposes that if a pharmacist substitutes a generic drug product for a brand name prescribed drug product, the brand name and the generic name of the drug product, with the explanation "generic for (brand name prescribed drug product)" or similar language to indicate substitution has occurred, must appear on the prescription label and be on the container or an auxiliary label, unless the prescribing practitioner indicated that the name of the drug may not appear upon the prescription label. This bill is designed to protect patients' quality of care and make them aware of drug substitutions by pharmacists.

### **Oppose**

**Senate Bill 169** proposes placing limits on embryonic stem cell research that are more restrictive than the federal government. These restrictions could have devastating economic impact on Georgia by branding the state as anti-science. By placing greater restrictions on research than the federal government and the vast majority of other states, Georgia would send a signal to the life sciences industry worldwide that it is not wanted here. The life sciences industry provides high-paying, rewarding careers and is essential for Georgia's economic growth.

**House Resolution 5** proposes holding a referendum on adoption of an amendment to the state constitution to provide that the paramount right to life is vested in each human being from the moment of fertilization. Such an amendment not only would prohibit stem cell research and in vitro fertilization, but based on reviews by legal scholars, it also would severely complicate other areas of Georgia law.

**House Bill 504** proposes requiring disposal of interavenous medications and devices used for delivery, such as hypodermic needles, pen needles, intravenous needles, lancets, and other devices, in a 'Sharps waste container' clearly labeled with a notice containing the universal recycling symbol and the following language: 'SHARPS WASTE CONTAINER.' This bill could place the burden on drug manufacturers for disposal of home-generated sharps waste.

**House Bill 820** proposes restrictions on prescriber identifiable prescription data. This bill would have the unintended consequences of negatively impacting patient safety, access to new innovative therapies, and efforts to research and develop biological medicines.