

VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Leading Businesses.  
Leading Communities.™



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## Chamber meets with local delegation at the Capitol

ATLANTA—The Valdosta-Lowndes Chamber Government Affairs Council met with state elected officials Feb. 16 at the Georgia Capitol to discuss current legislation that could potentially impact the business community in Valdosta-Lowndes County. Delegation members in attendance included: Sen. Tim Golden and Reps. Ellis Black, Amy Carter and Jason Shaw.

Members of the GAC addressed issues concerning education and workforce development, energy and environment, economic development and taxation, health care, transportation, business and industry.

Carter confirmed that efforts to fine-tune the HOPE scholarship are in place, the scholarship will now have a component that truly rewards the high achievers while still helping those who maintain a 3.0 GPA. The new HOPE requirements will be available on Tuesday. Carter also discussed the implementation of a financial literacy course in the school systems, which would educate students on financial matters in an effort to decrease the amount of debt acquired post graduation.

Black discussed his support of the sales tax holiday. Black dispelled the criticism that the sales tax holiday does not have a net positive effect. Furthermore, Black discussed the transportation issue in Georgia, expressing gratitude for the quality of roads we currently have, but acknowledging that the condition is slowly deteriorating and creating a need for maintenance funding.

Golden discussed Health Insurance Mandates (SB 17), which he introduced as a way to drive down the cost of providing health insurance. This bill would create a state commission to review proposed and existing health insurance mandates, which typically drive up the cost. Additionally, Golden addressed HB 47, which could lower health care cost by expanding options for individual health insurance. Golden cautioned that while this bill would provide more choices, consumers need to be aware of their coverage.

The Chamber's GAC is enhancing the pro-business environment of Valdosta-Lowndes County by listening to businesses and ensuring that they have a voice. For more information on the GAC, visit [www.ValdostaChamber.com/GAC](http://www.ValdostaChamber.com/GAC).