



## Senate Press Office

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For Information Contact:  
Raegan Weber, Director  
Raegan.weber@senate.ga.gov  
404.656.0028

## Heath: A Representative Government

By Sen. Bill Heath



Our nation is a representative government. As such, our federal and state officials are beholden to the people that allow them to be governed. Recently, I introduced a Constitutional Amendment on behalf of Governor Perdue to create a cabinet form of government in Georgia. Under the proposal the heads of the state's Agricultural, Insurance, Education, and Labor departments would be appointed by the Governor, subject to Senate confirmation. This is an opportunity to provide the people of Georgia an option for more efficient and cohesive ways to run government.

Through a cabinet form of government, there can be greater efficiency, less gridlock and more accountability. The governor currently hires senior advisors to represent him in agriculture, insurance, education and labor. When members of the opposing party are elected to head these agencies, often there is conflict and gridlock within the executive branch of government making it difficult to provide needed services. By making these cabinet positions, we will be eliminating a layer of government. We will have professionals running agencies who will be directly accountable to the Governor and legislature every single day they are serving

State wide campaigns are expensive and exhausting to the majority of people. Many citizens have no desire to put their families through multi-year, political mudslinging game, soliciting millions in campaign funds and filling our answering machines and mailboxes with unwanted messages. However, these same people possess great talent that is waiting to be utilized. By opening these positions to a much large pool of qualified individuals, we will be tapping into Georgia's best and brightest in those industries.

The majority of states and our federal government utilize a cabinet form of government with these offices as part of their administrations. The proposed Constitutional Amendment allows the people to choose their form of government. Before the voters get a chance to vote on a proposed Constitutional Amendment, the legislature must approve it by a two-thirds majority. Senate and House members are

representatives of the people from their districts. The legislature cannot change the Constitution, but it can give the people their opportunity to change *their* Constitution.

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*Sen. Bill Heath serves as Chairman of the Retirement Committee and Governor Sonny Perdue's Floor Leader in the Senate. He represents the 31<sup>st</sup> Senate District which consists of Haralson and Polk counties and portions of Bartow and Paulding counties. He may be reached at 404.651.7738 or by email at [billheath@billheath.net](mailto:billheath@billheath.net).*