



## Scouts clean up Macy-Brance Park

Homerville's Cub Scout Pack 427 had a service project Saturday, cleaning up the trash at Macy-Brance Park. Pictured above and Scouts and parents at the park. The pack meets at Homerville United Methodist Church every other Tuesday night at 6:30 p.m. and welcome all boys and girls grades PreK through 5th grade.

## Russ Goodman

STATE SENATOR



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## News from under the Gold Dome

The Georgia General Assembly reconvened at the State Capitol on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, to begin the sixth week of the legislative session following the President's Day holiday. By the end of the week, we completed Legislative Day 22-meaning we are officially more than half-way through the 2026 legislative session.

This week, the Senate passed the Amended Fiscal Year 2026 Budget, the first of the two budgets we pass every legislative session. Our Constitution requires a balanced budget, and this Senate body takes that responsibility seriously.

The amended budget sets the financial framework for the remainder of this fiscal year, which runs through July 1. We combed through every agency request, every program and every dollar with one question in mind: Is this a responsible use of your money?

We are investing in public safety so that law enforcement officers have the tools they need to protect our communities. We are strengthening our economic development efforts so that Georgia remains the best state in the nation to do business. Our work is making sure your state government operates efficiently and effectively, without unnecessary growth or waste.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, I was especially proud to support several of our agriculture and natural resources projects. The Senate has added \$250,000 to combat widespread avian influenza and \$300,000 to fund facility improvements for the Georgia Agriculture Exposition Authority. These investments directly impact our community and reflect the needs I hear about back home.

Every dollar in this budget comes from hardworking Georgians. It's not "government money." It's your money, which is why we deliberate carefully and move deliberately. The results of our fiscal discipline speak for themselves. Georgia maintains a AAA credit rating because we've

built strong reserves and we continue to lead the nation as the number one state to do business year after year.

I am also working on several pieces of legislation to protect our homeowners and farmers. Senate Bill 458, the Home Inspector Licensing Act of Georgia, establishes licensing procedures for home inspectors to ensure qualified professionals are working in our homes and to strengthen safety and regulatory oversight within the industry. The bill has passed the Senate Committee on Regulated Industries and Utilities and now awaits action in the Senate Committee on Rules.

Along with Georgia Agriculture Commissioner, Tyler Harper and House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Chairman, Robert Dickey, I am sponsoring Senate Resolution 800 to establish the Joint House and Senate Study Committee on the Generational Sustainability of Family Farms. Agriculture is our state's number one industry, yet our farmers face natural disasters, global trade disruptions, disease outbreaks, and increasing corporate consolidation. These pressures have also contributed to rising mental health challenges within the farming community. We must carefully study how best to support the farmers who work tirelessly to feed our families across the world. As a farmer myself, this issue is deeply personal, and SR 800 represents an important step toward protecting our family farms for generations to come.

We're halfway through the 2026 session, and I promise you that I'll keep fighting every day to protect your hard-earned dollars, strengthen our communities and keep Georgia the best place to live, work and raise a family.

*Sen. Russ Goodman represents Senate District 8 which includes Atkinson, Clinch, Echols, Lanier, Lowndes and Pierce Counties and a large portion of Ware County. He may be reached at 404.656.7454 or at [russ.goodman@senate.ga.gov](mailto:russ.goodman@senate.ga.gov)*

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