



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Georgia Music Partners Leaders Appointed To House & Senate Music Economic Development Study Committee**

ATLANTA — Several key Georgia Music Partners (GMP) leaders have been appointed to the Joint Georgia House and Senate Music Economic Development Study Committee. Georgia House Speaker David Ralston (R-Blue Ridge) and Lt. Governor Casey Cagle announced that board members Michele Caplinger, Mala Sharma, and advisor Matt Still, as well as members Steve Weizenecker, Brandon Bush and Charlie Brusco have been appointed to the Study Committee, which was created by Senate Resolution 1027 during the 2016 Legislative Session. The appointments result from GMP's efforts this year to coalesce Georgia's music industry community around initiatives to grow the State's music economy, which contributes over \$3.7 billion to the states coffers while live music, festivals and tourism add another \$2 Billion in annual revenue.

Georgia Music Partners is the advocacy coalition representing the 20,000 music industry professionals in Georgia, including musicians, producers, sound engineers, etc. and serves as the advocacy arm of The Recording Academy® Atlanta Chapter. Recent data has shown a vibrant music ecosystem sparks job creation, economic growth and tourism. The House and Senate Music Economic Development Study Committee will bring together 13 members of House, Senate and industry experts to examine opportunities to keep Georgia music industry professionals working here in Georgia, rather than leaving to other markets like Nashville or Austin.

"I am looking forward to joining the knowledgeable and talented members of this study committee. The film industry has created a vital economic development component for our state and we are looking forward to creating the same opportunities for music," said Representative Lee Hawkins. "Georgia has a wealth of musical talent and is the home to some of the most popular and productive performers and song writers in this nation — from R&B to Hip Hop, and country to classical music, Georgia is their home. Also, we look forward to the feasibility of expanding the present musical education programs in our colleges and universities thereby increasing the opportunities for many Georgians to join this growing job market."

The committee members who have been appointed are:

- Senator Jeff Mullis, R. Chicamauga, GA
- Senator Butch Miller, R Gainesville, GA
- Senator Tyler Harper, R. Ocilla, GA
- Representative Matt Dollar, R. Marietta, GA
- Representative Spencer Frye D. Athens, GA
- Representative Lee Hawkins, R Gainesville, GA
- Michele Caplinger, The Recording Academy Atlanta Chapter
- Matt Still, Producer, Engineer
- Mala Sharma, Endeavor Sound
- Brandon Bush, Musician
- Charlie Brusco, Red Light Management
- Steve Weizenecker, Barnes and Thornburg
- Chris Carr, Commissioner Georgia Department of Economic Development

"It is an honor to serve on the Joint Music Economic Development Study Committee. I look forward to working with members of Georgia's House and Senate to find innovative ways to promote and grow our state's music industry," said Producer/Engineer Matt Still. "We have such a rich music culture and history here in Georgia, it is of vital importance that we keep pace with other markets to protect and expand our industry's future. This Study Committee is the first step to doing just that."

“Georgia has a unique opportunity to shape legislation that will not only reflect the rich heritage of music in our state, but also help continue to retain and attract thought leaders in the creation and management of intellectual property,” said songwriter/musician/producer Brandon Bush (Sugarland, Train, Kristian Bush, John Mayer). “I’m honored and thrilled to be included in this committee and look forward to all that is ahead of us.”

The committee will study the economic impact of the music industry in Georgia and ways to measure, expand and promote the music economy statewide while fostering integration with other creative industries including film, digital media and gaming. In addition, the committee will address:

- Current mix of music content creators in Georgia and ways to retain and attract talent while expanding music content as a net cultural export
- The current state of the music and sound recording sector in Georgia and ways to support and promote that sector
- Current state of music tourism including live music and performance, music festivals and music attractions and ways to support and promote that sector
- The current state of music technology and entrepreneurship and explore ways to support and promote innovation and enterprise investment
- Musical tours and theatrical productions in Georgia and ways to develop and promote that sector of the industry
- Current state of post-secondary music education opportunities in Georgia and ways to ensure a consistent, trained and reliable future workforce and alignment with private sector needs
- The business side of music in Georgia, taking into account various industry clusters and ways to strengthen and expand the business of music
- The Georgia Music Hall of Fame and its awards ceremony and ways that the institution can promote music in Georgia while providing for continued economic development

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### **About Georgia Music Partners**

[Georgia Music Partners](#) (GMP) is the authority that grows and improves the music economy in Georgia. GMP encourages the state’s musicians, music professionals, educators and legislators to work together to further develop Georgia’s music industry through creativity and innovation. GMP is actively engaged with educators, local and state governments, business organizations, and music business leaders in pursuit of cooperation that promotes growth for all stakeholders. Through these partnerships, the organization seeks to develop programs which enable the state to better market the music business in Georgia, and works to attract investment dollars for music technology companies to headquarter here. GMP seeks not only to sustain the music industry, but also holistically grow Georgia’s economy.

### **About The Recording Academy**

Established in 1957, The Recording Academy is an organization of musicians, producers, engineers and recording professionals that is dedicated to improving the cultural condition and quality of life for music and its makers. Internationally known for the GRAMMY Awards — the preeminent peer-recognized award for musical excellence and the most credible brand in music — The Recording Academy is responsible for groundbreaking professional development, cultural enrichment, advocacy, education and human services programs. The Academy continues to focus on its mission of recognizing musical excellence, advocating for the well-being of music makers and ensuring music remains an indelible part of our culture. For more information about The Academy, please visit [grammy.com](http://grammy.com). For breaking news and exclusive content, follow @The GRAMMYs on Twitter, like "The GRAMMYs" on Facebook, and join The GRAMMYs social communities on YouTube, Tumblr, Foursquare, GetGlue, and Instagram.

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### **Georgia Music Partners Media Contact:**

Melissa A.E. Sanders, Tadpole Communications  
404.909.6726 | [Melissa@TadpoleComm.net](mailto:Melissa@TadpoleComm.net)