



## INTRODUCTION

After a drawn-out long session, it appears that the legislature is beginning to take steps towards adjournment. In a press conference last week, Senate Leader Phil Berger addressed the Senate's plan for the remainder of session. Sen. Berger explained that we can expect to see numerous non-controversial mini budget provisions, such as funding for historic tax credits, DOT, Raise the Age implementation, Community Colleges, and rural broadband moving through the legislature now. Sen. Berger wishes to continue to work on a compromise with Senate Democrats to over-ride the Governor's veto of the budget, but if he cannot work out a compromise or muster the votes to override the veto, he will continue to push single budget items through until no later than October 31st, at which point Sen. Berger plans to adjourn.

Sen. Berger believes the legislature is still far from expanding Medicaid, but he continued to express interest in holding a special session on health care access and coverage in order to have a thorough and thoughtful discussion on the matter and to also discuss alternative ways to improve our current health care system.

Sen. Berger also suggested that the Senate may return after the candidate filing period to consider the budget override if they haven't already done so, in order for Senate Democrats to vote their conscience without fear of retaliation from their own party or the governor. Finally, Sen. Berger made it abundantly clear that the Senate override vote will not be a surprise like it was in the House. Senate rules requires 24 hours' notice before voting on a veto override and Sen. Berger plans to adhere to that rule.

Aside from mini budget bills, few other bills have been moving as of late. Among these bills are the controversial Duke bill and the Regulatory Reform bill. The Duke bill, which went to conference committee and returned with the study language removed (see below), was adopted by the Senate with a vote of 26-16. The conference report has yet to be heard on the House floor. In addition, the annual Regulatory Reform bill was passed by both chambers and then vetoed by the governor last month. The governor cited public health and safety concerns as cause for his veto, specifically with language regarding trash valet services and septic system permits.



## NORTH CAROLINA COLLEGE OF EMERGENCY PHYSICIANS



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On Wednesday, Speaker Moore announced that the House will not be holding any votes next week, and the Senate has followed suit. The next working session is expected the week of October 21<sup>st</sup> where we expect some additional mini-budgets and a wrap up of the session.

## BILL UPDATES

The House and Senate have filed several “mini-budgets” that contain specific funding provisions from the larger State budget. These include:

- HOUSE BILL 100, DOT Budget for 2019-2021 Biennium, provides funds to the Department of Transportation.
- HOUSE BILL 387, Growing G.R.E.A.T., enacts various changes to the Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) program which provides grants for expansion of broadband access in rural areas of the State.
- HOUSE BILL 1001, Raise the Age Funding, provides funds to the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Office of Indigent Defense Services, and the Department of Public Safety to cover costs associated with increased staff and other additional resources needed to implement the Raise the Age legislation.
- SENATE BILL 61, Community Colleges Budget/2019-2021 Biennium, provides funding for the North Carolina Community College System.

**These bills were approved by the House and Senate and have been sent to the Governor for his signature.**

SENATE BILL 250, Remove Foreign Citizens from Voting Rolls, was amended in the House Rules Committee by: (1) adding United States citizenship to the qualifications of prospective jurors; and (2) requiring all applications for excuses from jury duty to allow prospective jurors to specify the reason for excusal based on disqualification, including lack of United States citizenship. **The bill as amended was approved by the House Rules Committee and the full House; however, the Senate did not agree with the changes by the House and a conference committee will be appointed to work out the differences between the versions of the bill.**

SENATE BILL 559, Storm Securitization/Alt. Rates, is the bill being pushed by Duke Energy that was amended as a conference report and makes the following changes to the fourth edition:

- eliminates all provisions of Part II, which required the Utilities Commission to study the advisability of authorizing certain alternative methods to fixing rates; and
- enacts prior language that was removed earlier (the language was in the fourth edition before the House replaced it with the study language) and authorizes the Commission to approve multiyear rate plans, banding of authorized terms, or a combination thereof, upon application by an electric public utility.

**The Conference Report was adopted by the Senate. If the House also approves the Conference Report, the bill would be sent to the Governor, who is expected to veto it.**

SENATE BILL 690, Modifications to 2019 Appointments Bill, was amended in the House Rules Committee to appoint the following persons upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tem and the Speaker of the House:

- Effective January 1, 2020, James Gussler, Jr., of Caswell County is appointed to the North Carolina Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council for a term expiring on December 31, 2023;
- Effective January 1, 2020, Dr. Lawrence R. Nycum of Forsyth County, Dr. Costa Andreou of Gaston County, and James A. "Adam" Sholar of Wake County are appointed to the

North Carolina Institute of Medicine Board of Directors for terms expiring on December 31, 2023;

- Effective October 1, 2019, Laurie T. Stickney of Wake County is appointed to the North Carolina Brain Injury Advisory Council for a term expiring on September 30, 2023.

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