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Focusing on Legislative Representation

LEGISLATIVE REPORT March 29, 2025

Gov. Stein unveiled his budget recommendations, outlining his priorities as legislators prepare for the new fiscal year starting July 1. His proposal includes modest state employee raises, large increases in starting teacher pay, and tax cuts aimed at supporting working families, such as the child care tax credit and a working family's tax cut. Stein also called for freezing some planned tax cuts, especially corporate tax reductions, to help alleviate budget constraints and focus on aiding low- and moderate-income individuals. His budget outlines \$33.6 billion in the first year and \$34.3 billion in the second year.

Stein's proposal would raise starting teacher pay to \$44,500 in 2025, with plans to increase it to \$51,200 by 2027. He also is advocating for a 10.6% average raise for teachers and 6% for principals. For state employees, he suggests a 2% raise and a \$1,000 bonus in the first year, though he expressed concern over limited funds, given the expected budget deficit starting in 2026. The proposal includes additional initiatives such as reinstating the back-to-school sales tax holiday and funding for more school resource officers. However, some of his ideas, including a \$4 billion bond for new schools, redirecting funds from private school vouchers, and efforts to freeze tax cuts, face resistance from the Republican-controlled legislature. There still may be room for bipartisan collaboration in other areas like disaster recovery, state government modernization, and salary increases for state workers. One area of agreement could be the funding for a new children's hospital partnership between UNC and Duke. However, this project's funding may be at risk due to potential cuts in federal funding, as Stein's proposal relies on the Medicaid expansion bonus. Stein's Budget Director, Kristin Walker, noted that if federal funding is compromised, alternative sources would need to be identified.

Complicating negotiations is the loss of the House Republicans' supermajority in the past election, giving Democrats slightly more leverage, along with a forecast predicting a budget deficit starting in 2026. These factors will likely shape the budget debate as legislators craft their budget proposal.

HELENE RECOVERY BILL SIGNED INTO LAW

Surrounded by Republicans and Democrats, Gov. Stein signed his first bill into law: The Disaster Recovery Act of 2025 Part 1. The bill approved \$528 million in additional funding for



NORTH CAROLINA COLLEGE OF EMERGENCY PHYSICIANS



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Helene recovery, focusing on home repairs, private road fixes, agriculture, and infrastructure. This bill also allocates \$327 million for recovery from previous storms. Although Gov. Stein had requested \$1.07 billion, the final bill was a more conservative compromise. It includes \$100 million for road repairs, \$120 million for home reconstruction, and \$200 million for agricultural recovery. It also provides \$9 million for a summer school program in affected districts. However, Stein's requests for two business grant programs were omitted, with lawmakers opting to allocate \$55 million for grants to local governments for infrastructure repairs benefiting small businesses. This is the third round of aid passed to help western North Carolina, and more will follow.

APPOINTMENT CONFIRMATIONS

The state Senate is taking its time with Gov. Stein's appointment confirmations, with a number of his selections still awaiting a confirmation bill in the General Assembly. While a few appointees have already been confirmed, several others are in various stages of the confirmation process. Please see below for an overview of where those confirmations stand.

Confirmed Appointees:

- Joey Hopkins, Secretary of Transportation
- Eddie Buffaloe, Secretary of Public Safety
- Pam Brewington Cashwell, Secretary of Natural and Cultural Resources

Appointees with Confirmation Bills in the General Assembly:

- McKinley Wooten, nominated for Secretary of Revenue
- Dr. Devdutta Sangvai, nominated for Secretary of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- Gabriel J. Esparza, nominated for Secretary of the Department of Administration (DOA)

Appointees Awaiting Confirmation:

- Lee Lilley, Secretary of Commerce
- D. Reid Wilson, Secretary of Environmental Quality
- Leslie Cooley Dismukes, Secretary of Adult Correction
- Jocelyn Mitnaul Mallette, Secretary of Military and Veterans Affairs
- Teena Piccione, Secretary of Information Technology

BILL FILING DEADLINES

The summaries in this report cover the bills filed last week. The pace of filings has increased dramatically and it is difficult to review all of the bills this time of year. The Senate bill filing deadline was Tuesday, March 25th with almost 400 bills filed in two days this week! The House deadline is next week so we expect even more to review so please bear with us as we get through the barrage!

GENERAL INTEREST BILLS

House Bill 411, Reduce Early Voting Period for Primaries, would reduce the early voting period for all elections other than the general election from seventeen days to six days.

House Bill 412, Child Care Regulatory Reforms, would decouple the child care rated license system and subsidized child care subsidy reimbursement rates and make other child care regulatory reforms.

House Bill 413, Marijuana Legalization and Reinvestment Act, would legalize and regulate the sale, possession, and use of cannabis in North Carolina.

House Bill 418, K-5 Performing and Visual Arts Requirement, would specify instruction on music and visual arts in elementary schools.

House Bill 420, Sound Basic Education for Every Child, would provide for a sound basic education for every child in North Carolina.

House Bill 423, Skip the Stuff Act, would reduce single-use foodware in take-out and delivery of prepared meals.

House Bill 424, Gaming Laws/Allow Certain Social Games, would provide that the laws regulating gaming do not apply to certain social games played in a private residence, home, or community clubhouse.

House Bill 427, CCW Permit/No Records Provided, would replace the required disclosure of records concerning the mental health or capacity of an applicant for a concealed handgun permit with a "yes" or "no" statement indicating whether the person or entity has information that the applicant has been diagnosed by a medical professional with a mental illness.

House Bill 438, Require Paid Rest Breaks, would amend the Wage and Hour Act to require employers to provide a twenty-minute paid break to any employee working a shift of six hours or more.

House Bill 439, Allow Concealed Carry of Knife, would allow the concealed carry of bladed weapons if certain requirements are met.

House Bill 440, Healthy Food Healthy Bodies, would amend the definition of *drug* as it applies to the North Carolina Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, so that it also means foods that contain a vaccine or vaccine material, and prohibit a person from manufacturing, selling, distributing, holding, or offering for sale in commerce a food product for human consumption that contains any of the nine listed substances, including potassium bromate, propylparaben, and red 40.

House Bill 443, Const. Amendment: Council of State Vacancies, would amend the North Carolina Constitution to modify the process for filling a vacancy in the Office of Secretary of State, Auditor, Treasurer, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Attorney General, Commissioner of Agriculture, Commissioner of Labor, and Commissioner of Insurance.

House Bill 448, Safe Firearm Storage/Sales Tax Exemption, would provide a temporary sales tax exemption for equipment designed to prevent unauthorized persons from accessing firearms.

House Bill 450, Private Property Rights Act, would prohibit a private detective or private investigator from installing and using an electronic tracking device without first obtaining a search warrant or other judicial order authorizing the installation and use; and to require that wildlife protectors obtain a search warrant or other similar order before conducting inspections or investigations on or in certain private property.

House Bill 454, Review of Federal Acts/Rules/Regulations, would provide for legislative review or review by the Attorney General of federal acts to determine the constitutionality of those acts and prohibit the implementation of unconstitutional federal laws, rules, and executive orders.

House Bill 459, Income Tax Rate Reduction Trigger Mods, would modify the income tax rate reduction trigger.

House Bill 469, Restoring Rivalries Act, would require high-enrollment constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina to regularly compete against one another in football, basketball, baseball, and softball.

House Bill 470, The Second Amendment Protection Act, would enact the Second Amendment Protection Act and would prohibit a public officer or employee of the State or a political subdivision of the State from: (1) enforcing, attempting to enforce, or participating in any way in the enforcement of any federal acts, executive orders, administrative orders, rules, regulations, statutes, or ordinances regarding firearms, firearm accessories, or ammunition; or (2) acceding to a request from another to give material aid or support to the efforts of the other in the enforcement of or implementation of any federal acts, executive orders, administrative orders, rules, regulations, statutes, or ordinances regarding firearms, firearm accessories, or ammunition.

House Bill 473/Senate Bill 383, Right to IVF, would protect the right to access assisted reproductive technology; and appropriate funds to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Health Benefits, to increase funding for Medicaid maternal support service.

House Bill 474/Senate Bill 413, Right to Use Contraception, would provide that the right to use contraception implicates the fundamental liberty to prevent pregnancy, and that it is the policy of the State of North Carolina that this State has no legitimate governmental interest in limiting the freedom to use contraception to prevent pregnancy.

Senate Bill 50, Freedom to Carry NC, was amended in the Senate Judiciary Committee to:

- no longer prohibit a person who has been convicted of an impaired driving offense within three years prior to the date on which the person is carrying the weapon, from carrying a concealed weapon;
- change the punishment for carrying a concealed weapon into (1) in an area prohibited by a rule adopted by the Legislative Services Commission concerning State legislative buildings and grounds, (2) in any area prohibited by federal law, (3) in a law enforcement or correctional facility, or (4) on any private premises where notice is given by posting a conspicuous notice or statement by the person in legal possession or control of the premises that carrying a concealed handgun is prohibited, from a Class 1 misdemeanor to an infraction and allows requiring the person to pay a fine of up to \$500;
- allow a sheriff to deny a concealed handgun permit to an applicant who has been discharged from the US Armed Forces under dishonorable conditions (was, under conditions other than honorable)

The bill as amended was approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee and on the Senate floor. The bill will next be considered by the House Rules Committee.

Senate Bill 296, Buy American Steel, would require state and local governments to use American iron and steel in public works projects.

Senate Bill 299, Government Transparency Act of 2025, would strengthen confidence in government by increasing accessibility to certain public personnel performance and dismissal records.

Senate Bill 303, Repeal Service Tax, would repeal the service tax and make various conforming changes necessary to effectuate the repeal.

Senate Bill 304, Reenact EITC, would reenact the earned income tax credit.

Senate Bill 305, Community Emergency Response Training, would provide \$3 million to the Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management, to expand and promote the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program and training.

Senate Bill 312, The Stars and Stripes Commitment Act, is identical to House Bill 186, summarized in the March 6, 2025, Legislative Report.

Senate Bill 324, 2025 Safe Drinking Water Act, would protect North Carolina citizens from harmful toxins in drinking water by requiring the Commission for Public Health to establish maximum contaminant levels for chemicals that are probable or known carcinogens or are otherwise toxic.

Senate Bill 327, NC Bitcoin Reserve and Investment Act, would enact the North Carolina Bitcoin Reserve and Investment Act to establish a strategic Bitcoin reserve for the State of North Carolina, promote Bitcoin investment as a financial innovation strategy, and position North Carolina as a leader in state-level cryptocurrency adoption.

Senate Bill 331, Make Legislators' Docs Public Records, would make legislators' documents public record.

Senate Bill 343, Secure Home, Secure Future Act, would create the secure home and future property tax relief benefit.

Senate Bill 346, Good Samaritan Law/Immunity, would provide limited immunity for certain actions taken by persons seeking medical assistance for drug- and 3 alcohol-related overdoses and to broaden limited immunity for certain covered offenses.

Senate Bill 347, Supporting Parents Who Serve, would permit members to be present and voting, as constitutionally mandated, through the use of proxy voting in certain circumstances.

Senate Bill 350, Marijuana Justice and Reinvestment Act, would legalize and regulate the sale, possession, and use of cannabis in North Carolina.

Senate Bill 358, Hate Crimes Prevention Act, would increase the scope and punishment of hate crimes; require the State Bureau of Investigation to create and maintain a hate crimes statistics database; require the North Carolina Justice Academy to develop and provide law enforcement officers with training on identifying, responding to, and reporting hate crimes; and require the conference of District Attorneys of North Carolina to develop and provide training to prosecutors on how to prosecute hate crimes.

Senate Bill 371, Stop Chronically Low-Performing Charters, would require charter revocation for schools that have been low-performing for four consecutive years, restrict charter schools from expanding if they are low-performing, limit charters for remote academies to three years, and require charter schools to list the school's performance grade on enrollment applications.

Senate Bill 380, Expand Certain APA Standing Provisions, would provide a rebuttable presumption of standing under the Administrative Procedure Act for trade and business associations and organizations.

Senate Bill 381/House Bill 538, Equality for All, an extensive bill that would protect North Carolinians against discrimination in all walks of life.

Senate Bill 382, Mental Health Protection Act, would prohibit conversion therapy and prohibit State funds, or any funds belonging to a municipality, agency, or political subdivision of this State, from being expended for the purpose of conducting conversion therapy, individual for conversion therapy, health benefits coverage for conversion therapy, or a grant or contract with any entity that conducts conversion therapy or refers individuals for conversion therapy.

Senate Bill 383/Senate Bill 324, 2025 Safe Drinking Water Act, would protect North Carolina citizens from harmful toxins in drinking water by requiring the Commission for Public Health to establish maximum contaminant levels for chemicals that are probable or known carcinogens or are otherwise toxic.

BILLS OF INTEREST

House Bill 47, Disaster Recovery Act of 2025 - Part I. The conference committee resolved the differences in the House and Senate versions of this bill and this is the final version as approved by the House and Senate and signed into law by the Governor. This new law:

- appropriates \$524 million from the Helene Fund as follows:
 - \$120 million to the Department of Commerce, Division of Community Revitalization (DCR), for the Home Reconstruction and Repair Program;
 - \$200 million to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for the Agricultural Disaster Crop Loss Program;
 - \$100 million to the Division of Emergency Management (NCEM) for the Private Road and Bridges Repair and Replacement Program;
 - \$55 million for the Small Business Infrastructure Grant Program (this money is for things like water service, sidewalks, electrical and other infrastructure – not for the rebuilding of the small business itself);
 - \$20 million to OSBM to distribute to State agencies and units of local government for debris and sedimentation removal unmet needs;
 - \$10 million to the Office of the State Fire Marshal to disburse grants to small and volunteer fire departments in counties in the affected area that qualify for Individual and Public Assistance Categories C-G to cover expenses incurred due to Hurricane Helene, to purchase equipment, or to make capital improvements to assist with readiness for future emergency response;
 - \$10 million dollars to NCEM to disburse grants to any member organization of Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOADs) actively involved in actual and ongoing repair and reconstruction projects;
 - \$4 million to the Department of Commerce for the nonprofit corporation with which the Department contracts for targeted media campaigns to encourage both

in-State and out-of-state tourists to return to areas impacted by Hurricane Helene in 2025. The nonprofit corporation shall (i) coordinate with the Department of Transportation to promote areas and roads that are open and accessible for tourism and travel and (ii) promote, including through advertising, awareness of segments of the Blue Ridge Parkway that are, or subsequently become, open to the public; and

- \$9 million to the Department of Public Instruction for the School Extension Learning Recovery Program;
- reduces the money allocated for the Hurricane Helene Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, a federal program to provide food assistance to low-income households with food loss or damages caused by Hurricane Helene that ended in November 2024 by \$4 million (was, \$2 million) so that the funds can be redirected to DOC for the tourism related allocations above;
- modifies the time the Governor must submit the required report to the State Auditor on all disaster relief funds allocated to Hurricane Helene relief that have been disbursed so that it is by no later than fifteen (was, seven) business days after the act becomes law, and remove provisions directing that failure by the Governor's office to comply with the reporting deadlines will trigger a hearing; and
- adds schools in Ashe County, Buncombe County, Burke County, Haywood County, Henderson County, McDowell County, Rutherford County, Transylvania County, and Watauga County to those schools provided calendar flexibility for any instructional days or equivalent hours missed due to inclement weather during the months of December 2024 through February 2025.

The bill as amended by the Conference Committee was adopted by the House and Senate and was signed into law by the Governor on March 19, 2025. Effective: March 19, 2025, except as otherwise provided.

House Bill 123, Criminal Falsification of Medical Records, would create the offense of willful destruction, alteration, or falsification of, or willful omission of information from medical records. A health care provider would be guilty of the offense if the healthcare provider knowingly and willfully destroys, alters, or falsifies a medical record, or omits information from a medical record, directs another individual to do so or conspires with one or more medical providers. **Introduced by Rep. Pless. The bill as amended was approved by the House Health Committee and will next be considered by the House Judiciary 2 Committee.**

House Bill 410, NCIOM Study/Medicaid Aid in Dying, would direct the North Carolina Institute of Medicine to study the legalization of medical aid in dying in North Carolina. The bill would appropriate \$150,000 in nonrecurring funds to fund the study. **Introduced by Reps. Harrison, Lambeth, Howard and Prather and referred to the House Rules Committee.**

House Bill 425, Protect Youth from Harms of Vaping and Nicotine, would raise the legal sales age of tobacco products to age 21 and require a tobacco retail sales permit. **Introduced by Reps. Loftis, Campbell, Ross and Willis and referred to the House Rules Committee.**

House Bill 430, Protect Youth from Harms of Vaping and Nicotine, is identical to Senate Bill 318, summarized below in this Legislative Report. **Introduced by Representatives Loftis, Campbell, Ross, and Willis and referred to the House Rules Committee.**

House Bill 433, Registered Nurses in Schools, would allow licensed registered nurses to serve as school nurses. **Introduced by Reps. Gillespie, White, Cotham and Reeder and referred to the House Education K-12 Committee.**

House Bill 434, The CARE FIRST Act, would reform health insurance utilization review processes to expedite patient access to necessary medical treatments. The bill provides that insurers must adhere to specific timelines for utilization reviews—48 hours for non-urgent services and 24 hours for urgent services. Failure to meet these deadlines results in automatic approval of the requested services. The bill also provides for enhanced transparency by requiring insurers to provide detailed explanations for any service denials, ensuring that both patients and healthcare providers understand the reasons behind such decisions. The bill also mandates that utilization reviews involve clinical peers—healthcare professionals with relevant expertise—when evaluating the necessity of specific treatments. The bill also gives the NC Medical Board enhanced oversight capabilities, including the authority to subpoena insurance records and review physicians' involvement in utilization review processes. **Introduced by Reps. Bell, Reeder, Cotham and Campbell and referred to the House Health Committee.**

House Bill 451, Diabetes Education for Parents, would require public school units to provide information about diabetes to parents and legal guardians. **Introduced by Reps. Cotham, Arp, Cunningham and Kidwell and referred to the House Education K-12 Committee.**

House Bill 452, Revise Law/Obstruction of Health Facility, would revise the criminal offense of obstruction of health care facilities. **Introduced by Reps. Greenfield, K. Brown, Johnson-Hostler and Cunningham and referred to the House Rules Committee.**

House Bill 455, Repeal Certificate of Need Laws, would repeal North Carolina's certificate of need laws. **Introduced by Reps. Kidwell, Ward and Pike and referred to the House Rules Committee.**

House Bill 456, No Surprises for Ambulance Services Act, would require insurance coverage for transportation to a medically appropriate location for screening and stabilization. **Introduced by Reps. Von Haefen, Buansi, Greenfield and Colvin and referred to the House Appropriations Committee.**

House Bill 460, Medical Equipment Right to Repair Act, would require original equipment manufacturers of medical imaging equipment and medical radiation therapy equipment to provide equipment owners and repair providers access to the support documents, tools, and parts necessary to perform diagnostic, maintenance and repair services on the equipment. **Introduced by Reps. Belk, Carney, Cunningham and Buansi and referred to the House Rules Committee.**

House Bill 462, Personal Data Privacy/Social Media Safety, would enact the North Carolina Data Privacy Act which is a comprehensive law which would regulate a wide variety of internet activity related to personal data. The bill includes many provisions but we have included only a few here that would:

- detail six consumer rights, including the right to: (1) confirm whether a controller is processing the consumer's personal data and access the personal data, unless the confirmation or access would require the controller to reveal a trade secret; (2) correct inaccuracies in the data; and (3) opt out of the processing of the personal data for any of the three described reasons. Authorizes a consumer to exercise those rights by secure and

reliable means established by the controller and described to the consumer in the controller's privacy notice;

- provide for eight duties of controllers including, (1) limiting the collection of personal data to what is adequate, relevant, and reasonably necessary in relation to the purposes for which the data is processed, as disclosed to the consumer and (2) refraining from discriminating against the consumer from exercising their rights; and
- prohibit a social media company from allowing a NC user who is a minor (under age 18) to be an account holder on its platform except with the express consent of their parent or legal guardian, and require the company to verify the age of an account holder, and require the social media company, if an account holder is a minor, to confirm that a minor has consent to become a new account holder at the time a North Carolina user opens the account.

Introduced by Representatives T. Brown, Chesser, N. Jackson, and Longest and referred to the House Judiciary 2 Committee.

House Bill 463, First Responders Mental Health Plan Act, would establish a supplemental insurance policy for first responders diagnosed with mental health conditions. **Introduced by Reps. Clappitt and Reeder and referred to the House Appropriations Committee.**

House Bill 464, Healthy Students – A Nurse in Every School, would require at least one school nurse in every school in a public school unit beginning in the 2025-2026 school year and would appropriate \$95 in recurring funds to accomplish this goal. **Introduced by Reps. Ball, Lambeth, Cunningham and White and referred to the House Appropriations Committee.**

House Bill 468, Regulate Kratom Products, would regulate the sale and distribution of kratom products. The bill would also prohibit the selling of a kratom product to a person 21 or under. **Introduced by Reps. McNeely, Cotham, Chesser and Campbell and referred to the House Committee on Agriculture and Environment.**

House Bill 480, Medical Board Licensing Efficiency Act, would modify the laws pertaining to the NC Medical Board by providing that the Board may issue a license as a physician, physician assistant, or anesthesiologist assistant in North Carolina to an applicant who submits an application for licensure by endorsement to the Board and has: 1) Held an active, full, and unrestricted license in at least one other United States jurisdiction, including any state, territory or district, for at least five years; 2) An employer submits a letter to the Board verifying that the applicant has accepted an offer of full-time employment to practice consistent with the applicant's respective licensure in person at a physical location in this State rendering care to individuals in the State; 3) Provides the Board sufficient proof of identification; and 4) Provides an attestation that the applicant meets certain additional criteria. **Introduced by Reps. Campbell and Reeder and referred to the House Health Committee.**

Senate Bill 297, Nursing Fellows & Curric. Support Funds/WSSU, is identical to House Bill 396, summarized in the March 19, 2025, Legislative Report. **Introduced by Senators Lowe, Blue, and Adcock and referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee.**

Senate Bill 300, NC REACH Act, is identical to House Bill 7, summarized in the February 3, 2025, Legislative Report. **Introduced by Senators Sanderson, Hanig, and Galey and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

Senate Bill 315, More Transparency/Efficiency in Utilization Review. The bill would change the insurance utilization review process regulations in Chapter 58 (Insurance) by requiring that:

- Insurers must notify insureds and their providers of the utilization review result within 24 hours of receiving all necessary information for urgent services via electronic health records and within 3 days for non-urgent services and urgent services where information is not submitted via electronic health records.
- Utilization review appeals must be reviewed by a (i) licensed physician with three years' experience in the same or a similar specialty as the treating physician or (ii) a licensed physician with training and experience treating the medical condition at issue. The reviewing physician cannot have any prior involvement with the case or financial interest in the outcome.
- Mental health appeals submitted by a non-physician provider may be reviewed by a licensed non-physician mental health provider.
- All clinical aspects, including literature submitted by the treating physician, must be considered in the utilization review appeals process.
- Utilization review requirements must be readily available on the insurer's website, and utilization review requirement changes may not be effective until they have been posted on the insurer's website.
- Prior authorizations that have been approved will remain in force for 90 days after an insured switches to a new health benefit plan offered by the same insurer. If the authorization is for a chronic condition, the prior authorization will remain in force for at least six months.
- Effective January 1, 2028, insurers must provide utilization review application programming interfaces that comply with the requirements of 45 CFR §156.223(b) as it existed on January 1, 2025.
- Insurers would be prohibited from using an AI-based algorithm as the sole basis for a utilization review determination.

The bill also provides that the State Treasurer and the Executive Administrator of the State Health Plan would be required to ensure the State Health Plan's compliance with all these provisions by the next plan year. The bill would be effective October 1, 2026. **Introduced by Sens. Burgin, Galey and Sawrey and referred to the Senate Health Care Committee.**

Senate Bill 316, Lower Healthcare Costs, would:

- direct hospitals to file quarterly reports with the Department of Health and Human Services on cost data for common inpatient admissions, surgical procedures, and diagnostic procedures;
- require out-of-network healthcare facilities and providers to provide information to insureds seeking treatment;
- require healthcare facilities to provide good faith estimates and would restrict them from sending unpaid amounts to collections unless a line-item bill has been provided;
- prohibit facility fees from being charged in many circumstances;
- require the State Auditor to examine cost and billing transparency at health service facilities;
- allow insurers to provide utilization review office contact information rather than the name, address, and phone numbers of the reviewers;
- eliminate certificate of need review for rehabilitation services, rehabilitation facilities, and rehabilitation beds;
- requires a health care provider who treats an insured individual for anything other than screening and stabilization in accordance with G.S. 58-3-190, (ii) schedules an

appointment or procedure for nonemergency services for an insured individual, or (iii) seeks prior authorization from an insurer for the provision of nonemergency services to an insured individual, the healthcare provider shall provide the insured individual with a written disclosure containing all of the following information: (1) A statement that the healthcare provider is not in the insurer's healthcare provider network applicable to the individual. (2) Text, using a bold or other distinguishable font, that states that certain consumer protections available to the insured individual when services are rendered by a healthcare provider participating in the insurer's healthcare provider network may not be applicable when services are rendered by a nonparticipating healthcare provider.

Introduced by Sens. Burgin, Galey and Sawrey. After amendments in the Senate Health Care and Judiciary Committees and on the Senate floor, the bill was approved by the Senate in a bipartisan vote and will next be considered by the House.

Senate Bill 318, Protect Youth from Harms of Vaping and Nicotine, would prohibit youth from the harmful effects of vaping and nicotine addiction by raising the legal sales age of tobacco products to age 21 and to require a tobacco retail sales permit. **Introduced by Sen. Adcock and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

Senate Bill 326, Economic Security Act, is identical to House Bill 339, summarized in the March 19, 2025, Legislative Report. **Introduced by Senators Murdock, Mayfield, and Grafstein and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

Senate Bill 330, LME/MCO Transparency and Accountability, would require quarterly reporting by local management entities/managed care organizations regarding access to healthcare providers and provide for specific minimally adequate services requirements to be met by local management entities/managed care organizations. The bill would require the quarterly reports to include the number of individuals served by the LME/MCO who had an emergency department stay of more than 24 hours and the length of stay. The quarterly report would also include the number of individuals who are deemed eligible for mental, behavioral, or substance use services pursuant to contract between DHHS and the LME/MCO who are not receiving any or all of those services through the LME/MCO, except when the needed service is made available by another payor. The bill also would the DHHS Secretary to adopt rules incorporating standards for minimally adequate services provided by LME/MCOs. **Introduced by Sen. Grafstein and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

Senate Bill 332, Health Care Practitioner Transparency Act, would promote health care practitioner transparency through advertisement requirements. The bill provides that an advertisement for health care services that names a health care practitioner must identify the type of license, certification, or registration held by the health care practitioner. The advertisement shall not contain any deceptive or misleading information. **Introduced by Sens. Galey, Burgin and Sawrey and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

Senate Bill 333, Prohibit Illegal Accreditation Requirements, would prohibit constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina and Community Colleges from violating state or federal law because of a requirement from an accrediting agency. **Introduced by Sens. Galey and Hanig and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

Senate Bill 335, Pharmacists/Tests and Treat/Influenza, would allow pharmacists to test and treat for certain illnesses with certain medications approved by the Board of Pharmacy, to provide for fair and equitable reimbursement of health care services or procedures that are performed by a

pharmacist within that pharmacist's scope of practice and that are equivalent to services performed by other health care professionals. **Introduced by Sens. Sawrey, Galey and Burgin and referred to the Senate Health Care Committee.**

Senate Bill 336, Interstate Medical License Compact/Intern'l Phys., would establish an interstate compact for the licensure of the practice of medicine and create a process for international physician employee licensure. **Introduced by Sens. Sawrey, Galey and Burgin and referred to the Senate Health Care Committee.**

Senate Bill 345, PA Team-Based Practice, would adjust the supervision arrangement of physician assistants and make various changes to the licensure of physician assistants. The bill provides that in order to practice as a team-based physician assistant, a physician assistant must practice in team-based settings and have more than 4,000 hours of clinical practice experience as a licensed physician assistant and more than 1,000 hours of clinical practice experience within the specific medical specialty of practice with a physician in that specialty. **Introduced by Sens. Sawrey, Galey and Hollo and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

Senate Bill 352, Community Health Center Grants for LARCS, would appropriate funds to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, to provide grants to nonprofit community health centers for the purchase and distribution of long-acting reversible contraceptives. **Introduced by Sens. Chitlik, Murdock and Bradley and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

Senate Bill 357, Pharmacists/Collaborative Practice, outlines expansion of physician-pharmacist collaborative practice by allowing pharmacists to provide health care services. **Introduced by Sens. Sawrey, Hise and Galey and referred to the Senate Health Care Committee.**

Senate Bill 360, Healthy Students – A Nurse in Every School, is identical to House Bill 464, summarized above in this Legislative Report. **Introduced by Senators Adcock, Hise, and Hanig and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

Senate Bill 360, Healthy Students – A Nurse in Every School, would require at least one school nurse in every school in a public school unit beginning in the 2025-2026 school year and would appropriate \$95 million in recurring dollars to support this initiative. **Introduced by Sens. Adcock, Hise and Hanig and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

Senate Bill 361, Protecting First Responders Act, would increase the punishment for committing an assault or affray against certain emergency responders and would criminalize exposing certain emergency responders to fentanyl or other harmful drug or chemical agents and would appropriate nonrecurring funds to the NC Office of Emergency Services to distribute as grants to use for equipment to protect first responders. **Introduced by Sens. Alexander, Brigg and Burgin and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

Senate Bill 369, Medicaid Telehealth Services, provides that DHHS shall ensure that a health provider duly licensed by the state that provides health care services exclusively through telemedicine services shall not be required to maintain a physical presence in the State to be considered an eligible provider for enrollment as a Medicaid provider. **Introduced by Sens. Galey, Sawrey and Burgin and referred to the Senate Health Care Committee.**

Senate Bill 370, Repeal Certificate of Need Laws, is identical to House Bill 455, summarized above in this Legislative Report. **Introduced by Senators Sawrey, Galey, and Jarvis and referred to the Senate Health Care Committee.**

Senate Bill 373, Vaccination Schedule Variance/Minors, provides that a health care provider cannot refuse care to a minor as a patient if the minor has not followed the vaccination and immunization schedule set forth in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Child Immunization Schedule. **Introduced by Sens. Moffitt, Sawrey and Overcash and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

Senate Bill 396, Medical Board Licensing Efficiency Act, is identical to House Bill 480, summarized above in this Legislative Report. **Introduced by Senators Britt, Sawrey, and Galey and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

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