

## **LOCAL BILL DEADLINES LOOM**

House and Senate deadlines for introductions of local bills are fast approaching. Senate rules require local bills to be submitted to the Bill Drafting Office by March 12 and filed for introduction by 3:00 p.m. March 19. House rules require proposed local bills to be in the Bill Drafting Office by March 19 and introduced by March 26.

## **HOUSE COMMITTEES SPREAD LEADERSHIP**

House Committee assignments announced last week by newly elected co-speakers, Reps. Jim Black (Mecklenburg) and Richard Morgan (Moore), reflect an effort to share power in committee leadership position. House Committee chairs are listed below.

### **I. Finance and Appropriations**

- A. Finance – Co-chairs: Rep. Gordon Allen (Person), Rep. Julia Howard (Davie), Rep. Paul Luebke (Durham), Rep. Dan McComas (New Hanover), Rep. David Miner (Wake) and Rep. William Wainwright (Craven).
- B. Appropriations – Co-chairs: Rep. Rex Baker (Stokes), Rep. Debbie Clary (Cleveland), Rep. Jim Crawford (Granville), Rep. Beverly Earle (Mecklenburg), Rep. Robert Grady (Onslow), Rep. Bill Owens (Pasquotank), Rep. Wilma Sherrill (Buncombe), and Rep. Thomas Wright (New Hanover)
  - 1. Education Subcommittee – Co-chairs: Rep. Linda Johnson (Cabarrus), Rep. Jean Preston (Carteret), Rep. Joe Tolson (Edgecombe), and Rep. Doug Yongue (Scotland)
  - 2. General Government Subcommittee – Co-chairs: Rep. Maggie Jeffus (Guilford) and Rep. Trudi Walend (Transylvania)
  - 3. Health and Human Services Subcommittee – Co-chairs: Rep. Jeff Barnhart (Cabarrus) and Rep. Edd Nye (Bladen)
  - 4. Justice and Public Safety Subcommittee – Co-chairs: Rep. Phil Haire (Jackson) and Rep. Joe Kiser (Lincoln)
  - 5. Natural and Economic Resources Subcommittee – Co-chairs: Rep. Stan Fox (Granville) and Rep. Roger West (Cherokee)
  - 6. Transportation Subcommittee – Co-chairs: Rep. Nelson Cole (Rockingham) and Rep. Mitch Gillespie (McDowell)
- C. Ways and Means – Co-chairs: Rep. Mike Decker (Forsyth) and Rep. Louis Pate (Wayne)

## II. Judiciary Committees

- A. Judiciary #1 – Chair: Rep. Joe Hackney (Orange)
- B. Judiciary #2 – Chair: Rep. Martin Nesbitt (Buncombe)
- C. Judiciary #3 – Chair: Rep. Ronnie Sutton (Robeson)
- D. Judiciary #4 – Chair: Rep. Donovan Munford (Wake)

## III. Subject Matter Committees

- A. Aging – Chair: Rep. Jennifer Weiss (Wake)
- B. Agriculture – Chair: Rep. Dewey Hill (Columbus)
- C. Alcoholic Beverage Control – Chair: Rep. John Hall (Halifax)
- D. Children, Youth and Families – Chair: Rep. Howard Hunter (Hertford)
- E. Economic Growth and Community Development – Chair: Rep. Connie Wilson (Mecklenburg)
- F. Education – Co-chairs: Rep. Dan Bonner (Robeson), Rep. Mark Hilton (Catawba), Rep. Alex Warner (Cumberland) and Rep. Steve Wood (Guilford)
  - 1. Community College Subcommittee – Co-chairs: Rep. Marian McLawhorn (Pitt) and Rep. Wayne Sexton (Rockingham)
  - 2. Pre-School, Elementary and Secondary Education Subcommittee – Co-chairs: Rep. Jerry Dockham (Davidson) and Rep. Edith Warren (Pitt)
  - 3. Universities Subcommittee – Co-chairs: Rep. Joni Bowie (Guilford) and Rep. Mary McAllister (Cumberland)
- G. Election Law and Campaign Finance Reform – Co-chairs: Rep. Mickey Michaux (Durham) and Rep. Paul Stam (Wake)
- H. Environment and Natural Resources – Chair: Rep. Pryor Gibson (Montgomery)
- I. Ethics – Co-chairs: Rep. Pete Cunningham (Mecklenburg) and Rep. Julia Howard (Davie)
- J. Financial Institutions – Co-chairs: Rep. Walter Church (Burke) and Rep. Edgar Starnes (Caldwell)
- K. Health – Co-chairs: Rep. Verla Insko (Orange) and Rep. Carolyn Justus (Henderson)
- L. Insurance – Co-chairs: Rep. Hugh Holliman (Davidson) and Rep. Mitchell Setzer (Catawba)
- M. Legislative Redistricting – Co-chairs: Rep. Martha Alexander (Mecklenburg) and Rep. Rick Eddins (Wake)
- N. Local Government I – Chair: Rep. Tracy Walker (Wilkes)
- O. Local Government II – Chair: Rep. Alma Adams (Guilford)
- P. Military, Veterans and Indian Affairs – Chair: Rep. Marvin Lucas (Cumberland)
- Q. Occupational Safety and Health – Chair: Rep. Wayne Goodwin (Richmond)
- R. Pensions and Retirement – Co-chairs: Rep. Larry Bell (Sampson) and Rep. Gene Wilson (Watauga)

- S. Public Utilities – Co-chairs: Rep. Harold Brubaker (Randolph) and Rep. Drew Saunders (Mecklenburg)
- T. Rules – Chair: Rep. Bill Culpepper (Chowan)
- U. Science and Technology – Chair: Rep. Paul Miller (Durham)
- V. State Government – Chair: Rep. Larry Womble (Forsyth)
- W. Transportation – Co-chairs: Rep. Cary Allred (Alamance) and Rep. Lorene Coates (Rowan)
- X. Wildlife Resources – Chair: Rep. Bobby Barbee (Stanly)

## BILLS OF INTEREST

### GENERAL GOVERNMENT

#### Introductions

**H100** “To provide at the polls a means of identification for all voters parallel to that required of some voters by the Federal Help America Vote Act; to require voters to sign before voting at the polls and at early voting sites; and otherwise to bring North Carolina into compliance with the Help America Vote Act .” Rep. Cary Allred (Alamance). This bill would require precinct officials to ask voters to present identification and sign a poll book or other voting record before voting. Acceptable identification would be a current and valid photo identification or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the name and address of the voter. Voters who do not present the required identification would be permitted to cast a provisional ballot. The State Board of Elections would be required to promulgate rules to assure that the voter identification procedures are carried out in a uniform and nondiscriminatory manner. The identification requirements would apply to absentee balloting by mail and “one-stop” absentee voting at a board of elections office. A driver’s license number or the last four digits of the applicant’s social security number would appear on voter registration application forms, as well as questions concerning US citizenship that federal law requires to be on the federal voter registration form. This bill was referred to the House Committee on Election Laws.

### HUMAN RESOURCES

#### Introductions

**S204** “To implement a pilot project for local long-term care planning.” Sen. Bill Purcell (Scotland) Each of these identical bills would direct the Department of Health and Human Services to implement a communications and planning initiative to support local planning for long-term care and to pilot local lead agencies to facilitate the long-term care planning process at the county or regional level. The local long-term care initiative is intended to aid the development of core services, coordinate local planning, and streamline access to service in counties that voluntarily participate. The bill would appropriate \$70,000 for 2003-04 and \$90,000 for 2004-05 to fund the pilot project. **S204** was referred to the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services. **H172** was referred to the House Committee on Health.

- S205** “**To appropriate funds for labor enhancement payments for nurse aides in non-institutional settings.**” Sen. A.B. Swindell (Nash). This bill would appropriate \$28.6 million in 2003-04 and \$57.7 million in 2004-05 to match federal Medicaid funds to provide a 32.07 percent labor enhancement payment for Medicaid-reimbursed long-term care services. Funds would have to be used only to increase wages or benefits for long-term care aides in non-institutional settings, or to provide shift differential payments for long-term care aides in non-institutional settings who work during hard-to-fill working hours or shifts. Counties would not be required to pay any of the funds required to match the federal Medicaid funds for labor enhancement. The bill describes how labor enhancement funds would be allocated. The bill was referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee.
- S206** “**To direct the Department of Health and Human Services to study the implementation of a remediation program for long-term care facilities.**” Sen. A. B. Swindell (Nash). This bill would direct the Department of Health and Human Services to study the feasibility of implementing a program that is similar to the Collaborative Remediation Project in Michigan, where long-term care providers are furnished assistance in achieving and maintaining compliance with licensure and certification requirements. The Department would report its findings and recommendations, including costs and any necessary statutory changes to the North Carolina Study Commission on Aging by April 1, 2004. The bill was referred to the Senate Rules Committee.
- S253, H170** “**To expand the state/county special assistance in-home demonstration project by permitting the Department of Health and Human Services to increase the number of individuals who may be enrolled in the project.**” Sen. Bill Purcell (Scotland), Rep. Verla Insko (Orange). Each of these identical bills would authorize the Department of Health and Human Services to use funds appropriated to it for the 2003 biennium for the special assistance payments made to eligible individuals for in-home living arrangements. The bill directs that standard monthly payment to individuals enrolled in the project shall be 50% of the monthly payment the individual would have received had the individual resided in an adult care home and qualified for special assistance, unless the local case manager determines that a lesser amount is appropriate. The bill directs that the demonstration project be made available to all counties. The Department would make an interim report by June 30, 2004, and a final report by January 1, 2005. The Department would incorporate in its report data collection tools designed to compare the utility of life among institutionalized vs. non-institutionalized populations. The bill also directs the Department to contract with an independent consultant to develop an evaluation design that ensures that the evaluation includes an assessment of the impact of the program on the economic security, health, and well-being of the participants. **S253** was referred to the Committee on Health Care and Human Resources. **H170** was referred to the House Committee on Health.

**S255, H155** “To implement a long-term care workforce improvement program for direct care workers employed by adult care homes and home care agencies in an effort to increase skill levels, job satisfaction, and retention rate.” Sen. Bill Purcell (Scotland), Rep. Edith Warren (Pitt). Each of these identical bills would appropriate \$480,000 in 2003-04, and \$431,000 in 2004-05 to support 500 participants in the program described in the title. **S255** was referred to the Senate Committee on Health Care and Human Resources. **H155** was referred to the House Committee on Health.

**The package of legislation described above would, if enacted, accomplish a Priority Goal adopted at our Legislative Goals Conference in January, “to improve the long-term care system in North Carolina by:**

- **Providing incentives for the employment of direct care givers,**
- **Providing income tax incentives for in-home services provided for family members.**
- **Funding comprehensive long-term care planning at the county or regional level,**
- **Expanding community alternatives for disabled adults, and**
- **Increasing funds for Senior Centers.”**

## **TAXATION AND FINANCE**

### **Introductions**

**S256** “To amend the North Carolina Constitution to establish the operating budget growth factor for the General Fund.” Sen. Fred Smith (Johnston). This bill would provide for a referendum on a Constitutional Amendment to limit the General Fund operating budget each year to an amount not greater than the General Fund operating fund budget authorized for the prior fiscal year, increased by an operating growth factor (the average of annual percentage changes in personal income in North Carolina over the previous ten years). The bill was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee #1.

**S268** “To exempt local school administrative units from state and local sales tax.” Sen. Jim Forrester (Gaston). This bill would provide for a sales tax exemption for school units rather than a refund of taxes paid as provided under current law. It was referred to the Senate Finance Committee.

**S277** “To exempt from property tax educational property held by a nonprofit entity in trust for a public or private university located in North Carolina.” Sen. Tony Rand (Cumberland). This bill would provide the property tax exemption if the entity is “in trust” for the sole benefit of the university. The bill provides that operation of student housing or a dining facility would meet the “educational purpose” requirement for the property tax exemption, regardless of the extent to which the property is available to and patronized by the general public. The bill was referred to the Senate Finance Committee.

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