



Bulletin #05-02

Thursday, Feb. 3, 2005

NEW LEGISLATORS BRIEFED ON COUNTY ISSUES

First term members of the General Assembly attended a briefing at Association headquarters and enjoyed breakfast on Wednesday, Feb. 2. Association staff briefed Senators and Representatives on services provided by counties and on legislative needs articulated through the Association. Approximately 25 legislators attended the briefing, raising a number of questions about Medicaid and the need to reduce county participation and cap the growth of counties' share of Medicaid service costs. **Legislators were advised to contact county officials to obtain documentation of county-specific Medicaid cost information.**

SENATE COMMITTEES ANNOUNCED

Committee assignments announced in the Senate this week reflect continuity, with little change in leadership from the 2003-04 session. Those who chair Appropriations, Finance, Judiciary and Rules committees remain the same as last session. Senate committee chairs are listed below.

I. Finance and Appropriations

- A. Finance – Co-chairs: Sens. David Hoyle (Gaston) and John Kerr (Wayne)
- B. Appropriations – Co-chairs: Sens. Linda Garrou (Forsyth), Kay Hagen (Guilford) and Walter Dalton (Rutherford)
 - 1. Transportation Subcommittee – Chair: Sen. Clark Jenkins (Edgecombe)
 - 2. Education/Higher Education Subcommittee – Chairs: Sens. Jeanne Lucas (Durham) and A.B. Swindell (Nash)
 - 3. General Government and Information Technology Subcommittee – Chair: Sen. Katie Dorsett (Guilford)
 - 4. Health and Human Services Subcommittee – Chairs: Sens. William Purcell (Scotland) and Vernon Malone (Wake)
 - 5. Justice and Public Safety Subcommittee – Chair: Sen. Scott Thomas (Craven)
 - 6. Natural and Economic Resources Subcommittee – Chair: Sen. David Weinstein (Robeson)
- C. Ways and Means – Chair: Sen. Charles Dannelly (Mecklenburg)

II. Judiciary committees

- A. Judiciary #1 – Chair: Sen. Dan Clodfelter (Mecklenburg)
- B. Judiciary #2 – Chair: Sen. Fletcher Hartsell (Cabarrus)

III. Subject matter committees

- A. Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources – Chair: Sen. Charles Albertson (Duplin)
- B. Commerce – Chair: Sen. R.C. Soles (Columbus)
- C. Education and Higher Education – Chairs: Sens. Jeanne Lucas (Durham), A.B. Swindell (Nash) and John Garwood (Wilkes)
- D. Health and Human Services – Chairs: Sens. Bill Purcell (Scotland) and Stan Bingham (Davidson)
- E. Information Technology – Chair: Sen. Vernon Malone (Wake)
- F. Mental Health and Youth Services – Chair: Sen. Ellie Kinnaird (Orange)
- G. Pensions and Retirement – Chairs: Sens. Linda Garrou (Forsyth), Kay Hagen (Guilford), Walter Dalton (Rutherford) and Austin Allran (Catawba)
- H. Rules and Operations – Chair: Sen. Tony Rand (Cumberland)
- I. State and Local Government – Chairs: Sens. Robert Holloman (Hertford) and Don East (Surry)
- J. Transportation – Chair: Sen. Larry Shaw (Cumberland)

BILLS OF INTEREST

CORRECTIONS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Introductions

- S6** “To prohibit the possession or operation of video gaming machines except by a federally recognized Indian Tribe as authorized by the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act and a valid tribal-state compact.” Sen. Charlie Albertson (Duplin). **This bill, if approved, would accomplish one of the Association’s Legislative Goals.** It would ban video gaming machines as stated in the title, unless “conducted by a federally recognized Indian tribe on federal Indian Trust Lands within the state in accordance with a Tribal-State Gaming compact applicable to that tribe.” The bill was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee No. 1.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Introductions

- H4** “To abolish the second primary.” Rep. Paul Miller (Durham). **This bill, if approved, would accomplish one of the Association’s Legislative Goals.** As stated in the title, it would eliminate the second primary. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Election Laws.

PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE

Introductions

- S19** “To restore the pre-1959 annexation law by requiring a referendum on annexation on petition of the residents being annexed, and to allow the city to provide for a referendum on annexation.” Sen. Andrew Brock (Davie). This bill would require a referendum on a municipal annexation if a petition is filed and signed by 15 percent or more of the qualified voters in an area proposed to be annexed. The county Board of Elections would be required to publicize and administer the referendum but all costs of the election would be paid by the city or town. The bill was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee No. 1.

PUBLIC EDUCATION Introductions

H3 **“Giving counties the authority to allow the operation of a lottery in that county, to provide for state regulation of locally approved lottery operations, and to distribute to each county and the cities located in the county 25 percent of the net proceeds of lottery operations to the counties for school construction and to use additional funds to implement and enhance education programs.”** Rep. Bill Owens (Pasquotank). This bill would provide for county-by-county referenda on authorization of a lottery. When 25 counties have approved a lottery, a lottery commission will “proceed to operate a lottery in the approving counties.” Of net proceeds, 25 percent would be “distributed to the counties in which the lottery is operated on the basis of the ratio of the sales of lottery tickets in that county to the total sales of lottery tickets in all counties in which the lottery is operated.” These funds are to “be used for school construction.” Remaining net proceeds would be appropriated “to establish or enhance education programs, including, but not limited to, a voluntary statewide pre-kindergarten program to prepare at-risk 4-year-olds for school in order to close the achievement gap that now exists; enhanced technology programs and infrastructure; programs to reduce class sizes in the public schools; and programs to provide more one-on-one instruction to allow teachers to teach and children to learn so that more children will stay in school, graduate, and go on to college.” The bill has been referred to the House Rules Committee.

TAXATION AND FINANCE Introductions

H15 **“To increase the excise tax on cigarettes to provide funding for vital state services such as public health.”** Rep. Paul Miller (Durham). **This bill, if enacted, would accomplish one of the Association’s Legislative Goals.** The bill would raise the tax on a pack of 20 cigarettes from five cents to \$1.20. It was referred to the House Finance Committee.

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