The General Assembly reconvened this week, with the House meeting on Tuesday November 19 and the Senate on Wednesday November 20. The Republicans in both chambers held offsite caucus elections ahead of their respective sessions. Here are the results:

House Republican Leadership Elections:

* **Speaker:** Rep. Destin Hall (R-Caldwell)
* **Speaker Pro Tem:** Rep. Mitchell Setzer (R-Catawba)
* **Majority Leader:** Rep. Brendan Jones (R-Columbus)
* **Deputy Majority Leader:** Rep. Steve Tyson (R-Craven)
* **Rules Chair:** Rep. John Bell (R-Wayne)
* **Whip:** Rep. Karl Gillespie R-(Cherokee)
* **Conference Co-Chairs:** Rep. Matthew Winslow (R-Franklin) and Rep. Jeff Zenger (R-Forsyth)
* **Joint Caucus Liaison:** Rep. Harry Warren (R-Rowan)
* **Freshman Leader:** Rep. Heather Rhyne (R-Lincoln)
* **Freshman Whip:** Rep. Blair Eddins (R-Wilkes)

Senate Republican Leadership Elections:

* **Senate Pro Tem:** Sen. Phil Berger (R-Rockingham)
* **Deputy Pro Tem:** Sen. Ralph Hise (R-Mitchell)
* **Majority Leader:** Sen. Paul Newton (R-Cabarrus)
* **Whips:** Sen. Amy Galey (R-Alamance) and Sen. Todd Johnson (R-Union)
* **Joint Caucus Liaison:** Sen. Carl Ford (R-Rowan)

Other than the House Democrats selecting Rep. Robert Reives (D-Chatham) and Rep. Cynthia Ball (D-Wake) as Minority Leader and Deputy Minority Leader respectfully, the House and Senate Democrat Caucuses have not yet selected their full slate of leaders for next session.

The legislature considered the override of the Governor’s veto of House Bill 10, Require ICE Cooperation & Budget Adjustments this week. On Tuesday, the House successfully voted to override the Governor’s veto of House Bill 10 with the support of three (3) Democrats. The bill:

* + - mandates North Carolina Sheriffs to cooperate with ICE.
    - fully funds the Opportunity Scholarship waitlist.
    - implements various related budget adjustments.

On Wednesday, the Senate followed with a party-line vote to override the veto, officially enacting the bill into law.

Senate Bill 382, Disaster Relief-3/Budget/Various Law Changes received the most discussion this week.On Tuesday afternoon, legislators unveiled a Conference Report for Senate Bill 382, which is a comprehensive piece of legislation addressing disaster relief for Western North Carolina, technical budget adjustments, modifications to appointment powers and other powers of the executive branch, and various other technical and substantive law changes. The bill was considered and voted on in the House Tuesday night, and in the Senate Wednesday afternoon. Following extensive debate where Democrats questioned the process and lack of notice, as well as questioned the merits of the provisions of the bill, both chambers passed the bill along party lines. The bill now heads to the Governor’s desk, where a veto is anticipated. The Senate is expected to meet to attempt to override the veto during the first week of December, with the House likely to follow suit in mid-December.

Here is a summary of noteworthy provisions in Senate Bill 382**:**

·         Transfers $227 million from the Savings Reserve to the Helene Fund for hurricane relief efforts.

·         Allocates $33.75 million to continue the compensation grants portion of the Child Care Stabilization Grants, providing a third quarter of reduced funding.

·         Transfer the State Board of Elections from an independent agency under the Governor to the Department of the State Auditor. While the State Auditor will oversee the Board’s budget, they will not direct its management functions. The Auditor will assume responsibility for appointing members of the State Board and county board chairs. Key implementation milestones include:

* + New State Board appointed in May 2025**.**
  + New county boards and chairs appointed in June 2025.
  + Budget oversight transferred to the Auditor starting with the 2025-26 fiscal year**.**

·         Modifies the Governor’s appointment process and clarifies the Senate’s authority of advice and consent regarding appointments

·         Requires the Governor to fill Supreme Court and Court of Appeals vacancies from a list of three recommendations provided by the political party of the vacating judge or justice at the time of their election.

·         Removes the Attorney General's authority to intervene in matters before the NC Utilities Commissionand clarifies that the Judicial Department and Council of State agencies are not required to seek approval from the Attorney General or the Governor to retain private counsel.

·         Establishes the State Highway Patrol (SHP) as an independent, cabinet-level department, and transfers the State Capital Police and the License and Theft Bureau within the Division of Motor Vehicles to this new department. ALE is not transferred to this new agency.

* Eliminates one Governor-appointed seat on the NC Utilities Commission and assigns this appointment to the State Treasurer; and requires the Chair of the Utilities Commission to be elected by a vote of the Commission members (was, designated by the Governor)

The legislature adjourned on Wednesday and will reconvene on Monday December 2.

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