



North Carolina Spirits Association

Legislative Report
July 3, 2020

Governor Roy Cooper vetoed three reopening bills on Thursday that the legislature passed to lift coronavirus-related restrictions faster than the Governor's executive orders. The vetoed bills would have reopened gyms, fitness centers, skating rinks, bowling alleys, amusement parks and entertainment venues. The bills are Senate Bill 599, Open Skating Rinks/Bowling Alleys, House Bill 806, Open Exercise & Fitness Facilities, House Bill 258, Open Amusement Parks/Arcades/Venues. Senate Bill 599 would have also increased restaurant outdoor seating and allowed outdoor seating at baseball stadiums for food service at 10% of the stadium capacity. Governor Cooper said in a statement that the reopening bills would tie the hands of public health officials and called them "dangerous, especially when case hospitalizations are rising."

Governor Cooper also vetoed House Bill 686, Freedom to Celebrate the Fourth of July, which would have prevented the governor or local governments from prohibiting fireworks displays and parades to celebrate Independence Day. And the Governor vetoed Senate Bill 105, Clarify Emergency Powers, which would require agreement from the rest of the Council of State, made up of statewide elected officials, for some orders.

Members of the House of Representatives were told Thursday that they should expect to be in session for three days next week as the legislature addresses veto override votes and perhaps other matters. During Thursday's skeletal session, House Rules Chairman David Lewis (R-Harnett) said that "members should plan on being here Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of next week," with override votes set for Wednesday and Thursday. Several of the Governor's vetoes issued Thursday have already been calendared for a Wednesday session. Senate leader Phil Berger said last week that he anticipated the remaining voting sessions before a July 11 adjournment would be primarily for veto overrides, but he said it is possible lawmakers could address an exemption to an old ban on face masks in public, which is due to expire in August.

For more information about legislation described in the legislative reports, feel free to contact me at dferrell@nexsenpruet.com or (919) 573-7421. Information is also available on the General Assembly's website: www.ncleg.gov.

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