



# North Carolina Spirits Association

Legislative Report  
June 21, 2019

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As House and Senate budget writers continue to spend late nights working toward a compromise budget, they also opened budget talks this week with Governor Roy Cooper. Top staffers for the House, Senate and Governor met Tuesday morning, and afterwards it became clear that an impasse over Medicaid expansion exists. House and Senate budget writers reiterated their opposition to adding any form of Medicaid expansion to the budget bill. If as expected, Cooper does veto a budget over Medicaid expansion, it is possible legislators could pass piecemeal spending bills that could fund some non-controversial parts of the budget, such as state employee raises. Also, it is possible that the discussion over Medicaid expansion could be held separately from the budget negotiations.

Budget talks between the House and Senate are going more smoothly, and none of the lingering disagreements have gone public. Senate budget writers say many sections of the final budget are largely finished, with much of the remaining work involving education provisions. If the legislature finishes their budget discussion this week or over the weekend, a conference committee report on the budget could be presented Monday night, with votes later next week. The legislature's goal is to send Governor Cooper a budget by the end of the fiscal year, June 30.

Two pieces of legislation designed to protect first-responders and more severely punish people who would harm them or put them in danger are making their way through the General Assembly. House Bill 283, titled "Conner's Law," was approved Wednesday by Senate Judiciary Committee. Representative Brenden Jones (R-Columbus), is the primary sponsor of the bill that now goes to the Senate Pensions Committee. "Conner's Law" was approved by the House on March 20 by a vote of 119 to 0. Senate Bill 29, titled the "Officer Jason Quick Act," was referred for a second time to the House Judiciary Committee on Monday. The legislation sponsored by Senator Danny Britt Jr. (R-Robeson) was approved by the full Senate on February 21. The act calls for anyone convicted of not slowing down and changing lanes to move away from an accident who then causes an accident and more than \$500 worth of property damage or injury to an emergency responder or law enforcement officer to face a Class I felony. That could mean three months to a year in jail.

Representative Rena Turner (R-Iredell), a former clerk of superior court, is resigning her seat in the North Carolina House of Representatives June 27 after six years of service to spend more time with her family. The Iredell County Republican Party will select a replacement to serve the remainder of Turner's term.

The House and Senate adjourned on Thursday and will reconvene on Monday afternoon.

## BILL STATUS

**House Bill 536, ABC Omnibus Regulatory Reform**, is likely to be considered in the House Finance Committee on Wednesday. At this time, it appears the local option Sunday sales of spirits provision will be removed from the bill, as there is not support for the provision in the House right now. The bill should contain a provision allowing local option tastings of spirits at ABC stores, with some additional requirements and regulations offered by the Association of ABC Boards.

**Senate Bill 11, ABC Regulatory Reform**, which contains provisions assisting ALE to address issues with retain permittees who violate the ABC laws, passed the House, the Senate accepted the House changes, the bill was ratified, and sent to Governor Cooper for his consideration.

**Senate Bill 290, Distiller Regulatory Reform Bill**, passed the Senate Finance and Rules Committees and is scheduled for consideration by the full Senate on June 24.

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

***Prepared By: David P. Ferrell, Esq. - NCSA Lobbyist***

***NEXSEN PRUET PLLC  
150 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1140  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601  
Telephone: (919) 573-7421  
[dferrell@nexsenpruet.com](mailto:dferrell@nexsenpruet.com)  
[www.nexsenpruet.com](http://www.nexsenpruet.com)***