



North Carolina Spirits Association

Legislative Report
April 2, 2021

Thursday marked the end of a busy week at the legislature. The House and Senate plan to take a “spring break” the week of April 5. Given that the bill introduction deadline is April 6 in the Senate, most Senators worked feverishly this week to have their bills introduced by the end of the week, so they would not have to work on them next week. The House and Senate also worked to pass legislation in advance of next week’s spring break. In some cases, recently introduced legislation was heard in a substantive committees Tuesday, the Rules Committee Wednesday, and approved by the full House or Senate on Thursday, in essence clearing one chamber in just one week. Things were certainly hectic this week.

North Carolina school districts would have to create a summer school program to help students who have fallen behind during COVID-19, under legislation unanimously approved Thursday by the General Assembly. The “Summer Learning Choice for NC Families” bill would require school districts to offer students at least 150 hours or 30 days of summer in-person instruction, along with enrichment activities such as sports, music and arts. The program is geared toward at-risk students, but attendance is voluntary and is open to any student, space permitting. Supporters say the summer program is needed because of how students have received little in-person instruction for the past year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Since the legislature will not hold voting sessions the week of April 5, we will not publish a legislative report on April 9, and our next legislative report will be published on April 16.

The House and Senate adjourned on Thursday and will reconvene for voting sessions on Monday April 12.

BILLS OF INTEREST

Senate Bill 453, ABC Store Tastings Permit Clarification, would clarify that a spirituous liquor special event permit for a consumer tasting in an ABC store shall be issued in the name of the business listed on the application for the permit, not an individual. This bill was introduced at the request of the NC Spirits Association. **Introduced by Senators Johnson, Britt and deViere.**

BILL STATUS

House Bill 11, Regulate Alcohol Consumables, was approved by the House Judiciary 2 Committee on Tuesday, the House Rules Committee on Wednesday, and the full House on Thursday

House Bill 73, Temporarily Waive ABC Permit Renewal Fees, was considered in the Senate Commerce Committee on Thursday. When it passed the House, House Bill 73 would allow businesses to get a year's permit for free, covering the period between May and April 2021, as a reprieve to help them recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. An amendment to the bill approved by the Senate Commerce Committee changed the fee waiver to a deadline extension. This new version of the bill would give bars and restaurants until September 1 to pay their annual permit fee. Senator Chuck Edwards (R-Henderson) proposed the amendment and said the deadline extension would give lawmakers time to "look at what other options we have to help the businesses that have been affected by this." Edwards said the House bill's sponsors have agreed to the change. House Bill 73 was approved by the Committee and was referred to the Senate Rules Committee for further consideration.

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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