



NC Spirits Association

Legislative Report
May 8, 2025

The legislative “crossover deadline” week brought a familiar scene as well as some surprising results. Over 65 bills went through the House Rules Committee this week in advance of Thursday’s crossover deadline. The May 8 crossover deadline is the date a bill must pass out of the chamber where it was originally introduced, in order to be eligible for consideration the remainder of this year and next year. The crossover deadline does not apply to bills that affect the state budget or impose fees. The Senate passed 20 bills on Wednesday in an attempt to move bills before crossover. In a surprising twist, both the House and Senate completed their business before crossover on Wednesday, a day early. This is a first in recent memory. So, although each chamber held a session on Thursday, no bills were considered.

With the crossover deadline in the rear-view mirror, the House will now turn their attention to the state budget bill. Next week the senior House appropriations chairs are expected to meet to finalize the House version of the state budget bill. The House is expected to pass their version of the budget by the Memorial Day weekend. The bill will then be placed in a conference committee of House and Senate budget negotiators, who will attempt to reach a compromise budget, for passage by both chambers by the June 30 end of the fiscal year. If the legislature does not pass a budget by June 30, the state continues to operate under the budget that is currently in effect. As in past sessions, the budget negotiations could last into the summer.

State Board of Elections Appoints new Executive Director

In its first meeting Wednesday, the new Republican majority on the North Carolina State Board of Elections voted to replace the agency’s longtime director with a lawyer who worked for state Republican House leaders. In a 3-2 vote, the Board appointed Sam Hayes as its executive director, which will end the current tenure of director Karen Brinson Bell, who has served in the position since 2019. Since 2021, Hayes has served as general counsel for the North Carolina speaker of the House, both under Tim Moore and Destin Hall.

Judge Griffin Concedes Contested Supreme Court Election

After contesting his narrow loss in the 2024 North Carolina Supreme Court election, Jefferson Griffin conceded the race on Wednesday following a federal judge’s ruling against his challenge. Griffin, a Republican judge on the state Court of Appeals, lost the election to Democratic incumbent Allison Riggs by 734 votes. Judge Griffin challenged the election results on various grounds, and the challenges have been making their way through state and federal courts since last November. Earlier this week, Chief U.S. District Judge Richard E. Myers ruled against Griffin’s challenge. Rather than appealing that ruling, Griffin conceded the race on Wednesday. “As a judge, I believe everybody, myself included, has a right to their day in court,” Griffin wrote in a statement. “This effort has always been about upholding the rule of law and making sure that every legal vote in an election is counted.” Although Myers had put a hold on his order

to give Griffin a chance to appeal, Griffin chose not to appeal. Griffin will remain in his position as a judge on the state Court of Appeals until 2029.

The House and Senate adjourned on Thursday and will reconvene on Monday May 12.

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

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