



North Carolina Spirits Association

Legislative Report
June 18, 2021

The Senate plans to release its budget proposal Monday with votes expected later in the week. The Senate will hold a press conference Monday afternoon to discuss highlights of the state budget bill, with the budget bill posted online at some point during the day. Committee hearings would be scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday, with floor votes on Thursday and Friday.

House legislators considered the Farm Act this week, but did not take a vote. Representative Jimmy Dixon said he wanted more time to allow experts to address questions and concerns raised at a previous committee meeting. Much of those questions related to a biogas permitting provision for hog farms, which would require the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality to issue a general permit for “biogas digesters,” which look like balloons that capture gas from hog lagoons to be sent to natural gas production facilities.

North Carolina’s constitution still requires a literacy test for voting, a Jim Crow-era tactic used to keep Black voters away from the polls. State House lawmakers plan to ask voters to remove it. Article VI, Section 4 of the state constitution requires that “Every person presenting himself for [voter] registration shall be able to read and write any section of the Constitution in the English language.” Although this provision has been outlawed by a U. S. Supreme Court opinion in 1969, the provision still exists in the state constitution. Representative Kelly Alexander (D-Mecklenburg) told the House State Government committee Wednesday that both the John Locke Foundation and the North Carolina Bar Association support the amendment. It has bipartisan sponsors and support. “I believe that this time, if we can get it out with another strong vote, we will have an opportunity in the Senate to have it heard,” Alexander said. House Bill 337, which awaits a hearing in the House Rules Committee, would put the issue on the ballot in November 2022.

The House and Senate adjourned on Thursday and will reconvene on Monday June 21.

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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