

North Carolina Legislative Update, April 18, 2019

04.18.2019

With Easter approaching, both chambers are taking work breaks. The House left Raleigh on April 16 and returns to work April 24. The Senate will be taking a break the entire week of April 22 to return April 29.

Budget Process

After recently concluding appropriations subcommittee meetings, House members are working behind closed doors to begin crafting their version of the budget bill. Leaders of this chamber have announced a goal of passing the bill by early May before sending it to the Senate.

Storm Securitization and Electricity Rates (S559)

A bill that would permit electric utility companies to finance certain storm recovery costs and make certain changes in electric rate setting began to move this week in the Senate. The Senate Finance Committee passed the bill on Tuesday and it was passed through the Senate Agricultural, Environmental, and Natural Resources Committee today. The portion of the bill allowing financing of the storm costs through “securitization” had broad support in the committees while the changes in rate setting generated more discussion. Among other things, the bill would authorize the Utilities Commission to approve multiyear rate plans.

Electric Vehicle Fees (S446)

A bill to increase the fee paid by electric vehicle owners is moving through the Senate. The latest version of the bill approved by the Senate Rules committee on Wednesday would raise the fee from the current \$130 to \$220.

Ride sharing (H391)

The House Transportation committee on Tuesday discussed a bill that would require ride-sharing companies such as Uber and Lyft to change markings on their cars including an illuminated sign. The sponsor—Representative John Bell (R-Wayne)—cited the recent death of a South Carolina college student as a result of entering what she thought was an Uber car but was not. Other ideas discussed during the hearing included requiring a designated license plate on such vehicles.

For more information, contact a member of the Brooks Pierce Government Affairs Team.

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