

## Brooks Pierce Capital Dispatch: Updates from the NC General Assembly and Governor's Office, August 13, 2021

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This week, the House passed the budget bill and legislators considered various bills.

### **House Budget Bill**

The House passed its version of the biennial budget bill (S 105) this week by a vote of 72-41. The Senate passed its version of the bill earlier. Although a new budget bill was not enacted before the end of the state's fiscal year on June 30, state government operations are continuing pursuant to state law with spending at the FY 21 recurring funding levels.

Although the House and Senate budget bills agree on many items, the House bill allocates more money for education and some other items. The Senate tax reductions are larger than those in the House budget. Raises for state employees and teachers are larger in the House bill.

Here is a link to the House budget bill Committee Report, which is often called the "Money Report" since it provides details on spending by category.

A link to the text of the House budget bill can be found here.

Legislators will now meet in a conference committee seeking to produce a bill that will pass both chambers. The bill then goes to Gov. Roy Cooper for his consideration.

### **Sports Betting**

The Senate Commerce committee this week passed a bill (S 688) that would permit online sports betting (termed "wagering" in the bill) in North Carolina. It would allow for 10 to 12 betting sites in the state and allow betting on professional sports, college sports, electronic sports and amateur sports. The bill will next be considered by the Senate Rules committee.

### **Energy Bill**

The Senate Agriculture, Energy, and Environment committee this week heard public comments about a bill (H 951) that would significantly change state laws governing energy generation and rate setting. The House previously passed the bill by a 57 to 49 margin. Among other things, the bill adjusts the retirement timeline of some coal-fired electric plants, outlines competitive

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procurement of renewable energy resources and empowers the North Carolina Utilities Commission to approve multi-year ratemaking. Some business groups have raised concerns that the bill could lead to increased utility rates and some environmental groups believe it should be changed to increase adoption of renewable energy sources. Gov. Cooper has indicated in a statement that he does not support the current version of the bill.

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

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