

Brooks Pierce Capital Dispatch: Updates from the NC General Assembly and Governor's Office, October 1, 2021

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This week at the General Assembly, conferees worked on the budget bill and sent it to the Governor, members considered other bills and completed redistricting hearings across the state.

Budget Bill

Legislative leaders indicated this week that they have completed work on the proposed biennial budget bill (S 105) and sent it to Gov. Roy Cooper for his review and feedback before the chambers vote on the measure. Among the issues expected to be resolved through the review and feedback process are: the amounts for educator salaries, tax reductions and infrastructure spending. In addition, Gov. Cooper is advocating for an expansion of Medicaid coverage. The length of the budget negotiations is uncertain, although both the Governor and Legislative leaders have been quoted in press reports indicating that a budget agreement could be reached by mid-October. 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.

New Cabinet Secretary

Gov. Cooper this week named Eddie Buffaloe as Secretary of the Department of Public Safety and submitted his name to the Senate for confirmation. Buffaloe is President of the North Carolina Association of Chiefs of Police and most recently served as the Director of Public Safety for the Elizabeth City Department of Public Safety and Interim City Manager. He is a former National Guard member and has worked in two sheriff's departments and the North Carolina Department of Correction.

Redistricting

Public hearings on legislative and congressional redistricting, a process that occurs every 10 years after the Census, ended this week. Legislators are expected to draw new maps after completing work on the state budget bill.

Some Notable Pending Bills

In addition to the significant funding and policy issues that will likely be addressed in the budget bill (S 105), a number of other notable bills are awaiting action. Among those are:

- H 951, which would alter electric rate making—House has passed; pending in Senate Agriculture, Energy, and Environment Committee
- H 954, which would authorize and regulate video lottery terminals—House Commerce Committee has passed; pending in House Finance Committee
- S 688, which would authorize sports wagering—Senate has passed; pending in House Commerce Committee
- S 711, which would authorize the use of marijuana for certain medical purposes—Three Senate committees have passed it; pending in Senate Rules Committee

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

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