

# Brooks Pierce Capital Dispatch: Updates from the NC General Assembly and Governor's Office, September 17, 2021

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This week at the General Assembly, conferees worked on the budget bill and members held redistricting hearings across the state.

## **Budget Bill**

Legislators from both chambers continued work in a Budget Conference Committee on the biennial budget bill (S 105). Among the differences between the bills passed by each house are the amount of educator salaries, tax reductions and infrastructure spending. Legislative leaders have been quoted in press reports indicating that a budget agreement could be reached by early 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.

## **Redistricting**

Public hearings were held this week on legislative and congressional redistricting, a process that occurs every 10 years after the Census. The hearings will continue through Sept. 30 and then legislators will draw new maps. A link to the public hearing schedule can be found [here](#).

## **ABC Law Changes**

This week, Gov. Roy Cooper signed a bill (H 890) into law that makes a number of changes in ABC laws. Among other things, the bill allows for online orders from ABC stores, ABC stores to sell refrigerated beverages and tax-exempt organizations to have alcohol at game nights if they acquire a special permit. It also includes provisions to create "social districts" to allow cities to permit alcohol sales and consumption in outdoor areas and makes permanent the allowance of alcohol service outside many restaurants that expanded their facilities to include sidewalks and alleyways during the pandemic.

## **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:

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- 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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