

## Brooks Pierce Capital Dispatch: Updates from the NC General Assembly and Governor's Office, June 3, 2022

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This week, the Senate passed some notable bills while both chambers continued work on the budget bill behind closed doors.

### **Senate Health Care Bill**

The Senate this week passed a health care bill (H 149) that would expand Medicaid insurance coverage, which is a long-time priority of Gov. Roy Cooper, and change a number of other health care laws and regulations.

The bill would:

- Expand Medicaid coverage for adults age 18 to 64 with incomes up to 138% of the federal poverty level who comply with certain work requirements. The proposal would expand coverage to an estimated 500,000 to 600,000 people in addition to the 2.7 million North Carolinians currently covered by Medicaid. The federal government pays 90% of Medicaid and North Carolina's 10% share would be paid through an assessment on hospitals and other funds;
- Reduce the number of facilities and equipment purchases by hospitals and other medical providers that are subject to certificate of need laws;
- Broaden the scope of practice to allow certain nurses to work without a physician's formal supervision;
- Require health insurers to cover more telehealth services; and
- Require certain in-network health care facilities to alert customers when out-of-network providers are scheduled to provide certain types of care.

The bill goes to the House next. It is uncertain whether that chamber will consider it during this summer's session.

### **Medical Marijuana**

The Senate this week passed on second reading a bill (S 711) by a 35 to 10 margin that would authorize the use of marijuana for certain medical conditions. Approval on third and final reading is expected early next week. It would then go to the House for consideration.

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Among other things, the bill would allow use by people with a certain listed “debilitating medical condition” for which a physician provides a written certification. The Department of Health and Human Services would approve use by patients and a newly created Medical Cannabis Production Commission would license suppliers upon recommendation of the Department.

### **State Budget Bill**

Legislators continue to work on a budget bill for FY 23, which begins July 1. It would alter the two-year budget (S.L. 2021-180) enacted in November 2021, which covered both FYs 22 and 23. It appears the bill will surface as a conference committee report that has been agreed to in advance by the two chambers and cannot be amended. Some legislative leaders have indicated that the bill could surface as early as the week of June 12.

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

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