



INTRODUCTION

The legislature continued its slow start with no committee hearings, only a few bills being introduced, and no action taken yet on any legislation. Despite the lack of legislative progress, the Senate did announce its confirmation process for Gov. Cooper's cabinet appointees.

Cabinet Confirmation Process

As a result of legislation passed during one of last year's special legislative sessions, the Senate has developed a confirmation process for the Governor's cabinet appointments. The process has three rounds. The appointees will first go to the policy committee for their content area (i.e. the Secretary of Health and Human Services will have a hearing with the Senate Health Care Committee). Then, the appointee will get a hearing in the Senate Nominations Committee, and finally a vote by the entire Senate.

The chairs of the Senate Nominations Committee, Senators Rabon and Tucker, have stated that the purpose of the hearings are to ensure there are no conflicts of interest, that the appointee is qualified, and that the he or she will follow the law.

Despite the new confirmation process, all of the Governor's cabinet members have already taken their oaths of office and begun working, and the Governor has filed a lawsuit to block the confirmation process claiming that it is unconstitutional.

If the confirmation process moves forward as planned, this will be the schedule:

- 2/8: Secretary Larry Hall, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs - Military and Veterans Affairs Committee;
- 2/14: Secretary Mabelle Sanders, Department of Administration - State and Local Government Committee;
- 2/16: Secretary Susi Hamilton, Department Natural and Cultural Resources - Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Committee;
- 2/21: Secretary Erik Hooks; Department of Public Safety - Senate Judiciary Committee;
- 2/23: Secretary Tony Copeland, Department of Commerce - Commerce and Insurance Committee;
- 3/1: Secretary Jim Trogdon, Department of Transportation - Transportation Committee;
- 3/8: Secretary Michael Regan, Department of Environmental Quality - Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Committee; and
- 3/16: Secretary Mandy Cohen, Department of Health and Human Services - Health Care Committee.



NORTH CAROLINA COLLEGE OF EMERGENCY PHYSICIANS



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BILLS OF INTEREST

HOUSE BILL 29, Record of Excusals From Jury Duty, would require the name and address of each person who requests to be excused from jury duty on the basis that he or she is not qualified to serve as a juror, along with the reason for that request, to be retained by the clerk of superior court for not less than two years from the date of excusal. The records retained by the clerk would not be a public record. If a person is excused from jury duty for any reason relating to qualifications under G.S. 163-55, the record of his or her name, address, reason for excusal, and the date of excusal would be a public record and provided by the clerk of superior court to the State Board of Elections. **Introduced by Representative Cleveland and referred to the House Judiciary III Committee.**

HOUSE BILL 35, Protect North Carolina Workers Act, would amend the definition of the term “employee” for purposes of the Verification of Work Authorization(E-Verify) statutes to: (1) remove the provision that excluded an individual whose term of employment is less than nine months in a calendar year; and (2) exclude a farm worker, an independent contractor, or an individual who provides domestic service in a private home that is sporadic, irregular, or intermittent. The bill also would increase the number of employers who are required to participate in the federal E-Verify program by decreasing from 25 to 5 the number of employees that a person, business entity, or other organization that transacts business in this State must employ for participation. **Introduced by Representatives Cleveland, Millis, Conrad, and Destin Hall and referred to the House Commerce and Job Development Committee.**

HOUSE BILL 36, Enact Enhanced Access to Eye Care Act, would amend the law governing the practice of optometry in North Carolina by removing the sections that exclude surgery from the practice of optometry. The bill also adds a new subsection which lists 18 procedures that do not constitute the practice of optometry. These procedures include retina laser procedures, LASIK, PRIK, certain types of nonlaser surgery, keratoplasty, certain types of injections, the administration of general anesthesia, and procedures performed under general anesthesia. **Introduced by Representatives Burr, Collins, Dobson, and Howard and referred to the House Health Committee.**

SENATE BILL 25, Repeal HB2, would:

- repeal Session Law 2016-3, Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act, otherwise referred to as House Bill 2 (also referred to as the Bathroom Bill); and
- provide that any local ordinance, resolution, regulation or policy enacted prior to March 23 2016 is not impacted and remains valid.

Introduced by Senators J. Jackson, Bryant and McKissick and referred to the Senate Committee on Rules and Operations.

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