



## INTRODUCTION

House Bill 2 dominated the headlines once again this week, as the 1-year anniversary of the law came and went without any action on a repeal or modification to the controversial measure. News that a 1000-job expansion was at stake broke as the deadline for action set by the NCAA loomed, with the state facing a 8-year drought of hosting collegiate games unless HB2 is repealed. A proposal to fully repeal the bill but enact a 30-day referendum on local nondiscrimination policies appeared to have some momentum, with Speaker Moore floating the idea of a long legislative week ahead, but the week ended with no action once again. A separate proposal that would repeal HB2 but prohibit local nondiscrimination ordinances that cover LGBT citizens was floated, but would likely only garner Republican support and may not alleviate the concerns of business and sports leaders who oppose HB2. There was some excitement this week as the House and Senate each overrode Gov. Cooper's first veto, meaning a bill to restore partisan labels to judicial races became law. Bills dealing with guns, gangs, Israel, boycotts and first responders all saw action, and the Senate unveiled an ambitious tax reform package that would continue the trend of cutting rates on individuals and businesses (and leaving less revenue for government spending as a result). In all, it was a week that saw relatively little action, but served as a reminder that there are plenty of issues, and plenty of conflict, left to resolve this session.



## NORTH CAROLINA COLLEGE OF EMERGENCY PHYSICIANS



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## BILLS OF INTEREST

HOUSE BILL 412, UNC Public Records/Athletic Conferences, would provide that communications and other documentary material possessed by the University of North Carolina or any of its constituent institutions regarding membership in the NCAA, ACC or other NCAA conferences, or in any other collegiate sports association or organization are public records. **Introduced by Representatives B. Jones, Blust, Collins, and Jordan and referred to the House Judiciary I Committee.**

HOUSE BILL 413, Limit Legislative Service to 16 Years, would amend the State Constitution, if approved by a majority of voters at the general election in November 2018, to limit service in the General Assembly to a total of 16 years. This would not apply to those with terms of office beginning before January 1, 2019. **Introduced by Representatives B. Jones, Stevens, Riddell, and Faircloth and referred to the House Rules Committee.**

HOUSE BILL 432, Increase Teacher Supplement/Electronic Notice, would:

- modernize publication of legal advertisements and notices;
- require internet website publication of legal notices;
- allow the governing boards of counties and cities to opt to provide for public notices to be given electronically; and
- allow counties to opt to post legal advertisements and notices on the county website for a fee with monies collected to be used for local supplements for teacher salary and other county needs.

**Introduced by Representatives McGrady, Brawley, and Blust and referred to the House State and Local Government II Committee.**

HOUSE BILL 435, Raise Minimum Age to Access Tobacco Products, would gradually raise the minimum age for persons not serving on active duty in the United States Armed Forces from 18 to 21 for the purchase or receipt of tobacco products, tobacco-derived products, vapor products, and cigarette wrapping papers as follows:

### Section 1

- Revises current law (that makes it a Class 2 misdemeanor for distributing or purchasing tobacco products or wrapping papers to or for any person under the age of 18) to an individual born on or after January 1, 2000, except for those serving on active duty born on or after January 1, 2000;
- Makes changes to the posting retail distributors of tobacco products are required to display near the point of sale, and conforming changes to demands for proof of age or active duty, and misdemeanor offenses for failure to demand such proof;
- Sets these changes to expire December 31, 2020.

### Section 2

- Effective January 1, 2021, again amends GS 14-313 as in Section 1.
- Prohibits the sale or distribution of tobacco products or cigarette wrapping papers to persons under the age of 21, thereby increasing the minimum age from the change set out in Section 1.

**Introduced by Representatives Murphy, Bert Jones, Lambeth, and Grange and referred to the House Rules Committee.**

HOUSE BILL 437, Expand Local Option Sales Tax for Education, is identical to Senate Bill 166, summarized in the March 6, 2017, Legislative Report. **Introduced by Representative Rogers and referred to the House Finance Committee.**

HOUSE BILL 438, Concealed Handgun Standardization Act, would seek to standardize and ensure uniformity of concealed handgun permit applications by:

- amending the conditions required for the sheriff to issue a concealed handgun permit to include that the applicant does not suffer from a currently diagnosed and ongoing mental disorder, as defined by the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), that would reasonably prevent the safe handling of a handgun. Previous treatment for transient disorders would not be disqualifying. Currently, the applicant must not suffer from a physical or mental infirmity that prevents the safe handling of a handgun;
- allowing a sheriff to schedule appointments for concealed handgun applications provided the appointments are scheduled for 10 business days or less from the date on which the applicant informs the sheriff that the applicant possesses all documentation necessary for the application;
- requiring the sheriff to issue or deny the permit within 90 calendar days from the date on which the application was submitted regardless of the receipt of required records concerning the mental health or capacity of the applicant;
- allowing an applicant to appeal the denial, revocation, or nonrenewal of a permit by petitioning a superior (currently: district) court judge of the district in which the application was filed; and
- removing the provision that provides that the determination by the court is final.

**Introduced by Representatives Adams, Brody, Cleveland, and Williams and referred to the House Judiciary I Committee.**

HOUSE BILL 441, Caregiver Advise, Record, & Enable (CARE) Act, is identical to Senate Bill 322, summarized below in this Legislative Report. **Introduced by Representatives Cunningham, Lambeth, White, and Holley and referred to the House Aging Committee.**

HOUSE BILL 453, "We the People" Act/Referendum, would amend the State Constitution, if approved by a majority of voters at a statewide election to be held November 6, 2018, to urge the United States Congress to amend the US Constitution to declare that constitutional rights belong only to individuals and not to corporations or other artificial entities and that constitutionally protected free speech excludes the unlimited spending of money on political campaign contributions. **Introduced by Representatives Insko, Gill, W. Richardson, and Quick and has not yet been assigned to a House committee.**

HOUSE BILL 461, MH/SA Central Assessment & Navigation Pilot, is identical to Senate Bill 334, summarized below in this Legislative Report. **Introduced by Representatives Grange, Murphy, and Hardister and has not yet been assigned to a House committee.**

HOUSE BILL 462, Banking Law Amendments, would make technical, clarifying, and other amendments to provisions applicable to commercial banks and provisions applicable to bank holding companies. One of the changes would require a mortgage loan servicer to comply as to every home loan, regardless of whether the loan is considered in default or the borrower is in bankruptcy or the borrower has been in bankruptcy, and provide that any fee that is incurred by a servicer must satisfy both of the following requirements:

- the fee must be assessed within 45 days of the date on which the fee was incurred; and

- the fee must be explained clearly and conspicuously in a statement mailed to the borrower at the borrower's last known address within 30 days after assessing the fee, provided the servicer shall not be required to take any action in violation of the provisions of the federal bankruptcy code. The servicer may not be required to send the statement for a fee that meets any of the following requirements:
  - the fee is included in a periodic statement sent to the borrower that meets the specified requirements; and
  - the fee meets all of the following requirements: (1) the fee results from a service that is affirmatively requested by the borrower; (2) the fee is paid for by the borrower at the time the service is provided; and (3) the fee is not charged to the borrower's loan account.

**Introduced by Representatives Howard, Setzer, Destin Hall, and Conrad and has not yet been assigned to a House committee.**

HOUSE BILL 469, Regulation of Fully Autonomous Vehicles, is identical to Senate Bill 337 summarized below in this Legislative Report. **Introduced by Representatives Shepard and Torbett and has not yet been assigned to a House committee.**

HOUSE BILL 471, Fail to Obtain DL/Increase Punishment, would:

- make failure to obtain a license before driving a motor vehicle a Class 3 misdemeanor, with a fine of \$400 for a second or subsequent offense, and vehicle forfeiture for a third or subsequent offense. These provisions would not apply to a person driving a motor vehicle with a revoked or suspended license;
- expand the definition of an innocent owner to include a motor vehicle owner who, if the offense resulting in seizure was a failure to obtain a license before driving a motor vehicle: (1) did not know and had no reason to know that the defendant did not have a drivers license; or (2) knew that the defendant did not have a drivers license, but the defendant drove the vehicle without the person's expressed or implied permission, and the owner files a police report for unauthorized operation of the motor vehicle and agrees to prosecute the unauthorized operator of the motor vehicle;
- define a “No Drivers License Acknowledgment” as a written document acknowledging that:
  - the motor vehicle was operated by a person charged with an offense of failure to obtain a license before driving a motor vehicle and that person has at least two prior convictions for the same offense;
  - if the motor vehicle is again operated by this particular person and the person is charged with an offense of failure to obtain a license before driving a motor vehicle, then the vehicle is subject to impoundment and forfeiture; and
  - a lack of knowledge or consent to the operation will not be a defense in the future, unless the motor vehicle owner has taken all reasonable precautions to prevent the use of the motor vehicle by this particular person and immediately reports, upon discovery, any unauthorized use to the appropriate law enforcement agency; and
- allow a defendant motor vehicle owner, if the seizure was for an offense of failure to obtain a license before operating a motor vehicle, to file a petition with the clerk of court seeking a pretrial determination that the defendant does not have at least two prior convictions of failure to obtain a license before operating a motor vehicle, and include provisions regarding the hearing.

**Introduced by Representatives Millis, Destin Hall, Cleveland, and Burr and has not yet been assigned to a House committee.**

HOUSE BILL 474, Up Minimum Wage/Set Rates/COLA, would increase the State minimum wage and provide for automatic adjustments to reflect increases in the cost of living as follows:

- require every large employer (an enterprise whose annual gross volume of sales made or business done is not less than \$500,000, exclusive of excise taxes at the retail level that are separately stated) to pay each employee wages at a rate of at least \$10.75 per hour, effective January 1, 2018;
- require every small employer (an enterprise whose annual gross volume of sales made or business done is less than \$500,000, exclusive of excise taxes at the retail level that are separately stated) to pay each employee at a rate of at least \$7.75 per hour, effective January 1, 2018; and
- require the minimum wage required to be increased on January 1, 2019, and on January 1 of successive years by the increase in the cost of living. The increase in the cost of living would be measured by the percentage increase of the Consumer Price Index (all urban consumers, U.S. city average for all items), CPI-U, or its successor index, as calculated by the U.S. Department of Labor for the 12 months preceding the previous September 1.

**Introduced by Representative Cunningham and has not yet been assigned to a House committee.**

HOUSE BILL 478, Required Experience for MH/DD/SA QPs, would:

- direct DHHS to amend the qualifications for Qualified Professionals within the mental health, developmental disability, and substance abuse system of care to allow for all years of full-time MH/DD/SA service experience to qualify as years of service, rather than limiting qualifying full-time MH/DD/SA service to that which is obtained post-graduate degree only;
- require all State Plan changes any necessary State Plan Medicare amendments to effect these changes to be submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid by October 1, 2017; and
- provide that any changes to clinical coverage policies and any changes to rules adopted by the DHHS relating to the qualifications for Qualified Professionals required by the provisions above would not become effective until CMS approval of the State Plan amendments submitted by DHHS to effect those changes is received.

**Introduced by Representatives Dobson, S. Martin, K. Hall, and Brisson and has not yet been assigned to a House committee.**

HOUSE BILL 479, Appropriate Funds for Future Health Care Jobs, would provide \$20 million this year and \$27 million next year to the Community Colleges System Office to be used to increase the number of students entering into and graduating from health care certificate and health care degree programs throughout the State. **Introduced by Representatives Farmer-Butterfield, Cunningham, Howard, and Adcock and has not yet been assigned to a House committee.**

SENATE BILL 323, UNC Public Records/Athletic Conferences, is identical to House Bill 412, summarized above in this Legislative Report. **Introduced by Senators Lee, Hise, and Daniel and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 324, Repeal Certificate of Need Laws, would constitute a comprehensive repeal North Carolina's certificate of need laws. This bill is opposed by many health providers including the North Carolina College of Emergency Physicians. **Introduced by Senators Hise and Wade and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 325, Billion Dollar Middle Class Tax Cut, would make a variety of tax-related changes to:

- reduce the personal income tax rate from 5.499% to 5.35%;
- increase the standard income tax deduction as follows:
  - married, filing jointly/surviving spouse – from \$17,500 to \$20,000;
  - head of household – from \$14,000 to \$15,000;
  - single – from \$8,750 to \$10,000; and
  - married, filing separately – from \$8,750 to \$10,000;
- eliminate the tax penalty in the mortgage interest tax deduction;
- expand and increase the child tax deduction;
- reduce the corporate income tax rate from 3% to 2.75%, and then from 2.75% to 2.5%; and
- amend the provisions regarding franchise or privilege tax on domestic and foreign corporations by:
  - providing that a corporation's tax base is the greater of the following:
    - the proportion of its net worth as set out in the statute;
    - 55% of the corporation's appraised value as determined for ad valorem taxation of all the real and tangible personal property in this State; or
    - the corporation's total actual investment in tangible property in this State; and
  - providing that, for a C Corporation, the tax rate is \$1.50 per \$1,000 of the corporation's tax base; for an S Corporation, the tax rate is \$200 for the first \$1 million of the corporation's tax base, and one \$1.50 per \$1,000 of its tax base that exceeds \$1 million.

**Introduced by Senators Tillman, Brock, and Tucker and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 328, Lower Cost of Cataracts for Seniors Act, would exempt ophthalmologists who perform office-based cataract surgery from certificate of need laws, provided that the facility has been accredited by one of several specified organizations, and the license application includes a commitment to and plan for serving indigent and medically underserved populations.

**Introduced by Senators Sanderson and Pate and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 330, Exempt Hospice Inpatient Facilities from CON, would exempt hospice inpatient facilities from certificate of need review. **Introduced by Senator Brown and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 332, Repeal HB2, would:

- repeal the Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act (better known as House Bill 2);
- prohibit local governments from enacting or amending ordinances regulating public accommodations or access to restrooms, showers, or changing facilities; and
- provide that the provision above would expire 30 days following the adjournment in 2017 of the 2017 General Assembly for more than 30 days jointly.

**Introduced by Senator Ford and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 333, Require Use of Directional Signals, would require the driver of a vehicle on a highway or public vehicular area to always give a directional signal before starting, stopping, or turning the vehicle from a direct line. Currently, a driver is only required to do so when the

operation of any other vehicle may be affected by such movement. **Introduced by Senators Lee and J. Jackson and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 334, MH/SA Central Assessment and Navigation Pilot, would:

- establish a 2-year central assessment and navigation system pilot program in New Hanover County to reduce the number of individuals utilizing hospital emergency departments for mental health and substance use disorder services;
- create a three-person centralized team to operate the program;
- direct the LME/MCO for New Hanover to report on the effectiveness of the program; and
- appropriate \$250,000 each for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.

**Introduced by Senators Lee and Rabon and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 337, Regulation of Fully Autonomous Vehicles, would allow person to operate a fully autonomous vehicle with the automated driving system engaged without a human driver present in the vehicle if the vehicle meets specified requirements, including that the vehicle can achieve a minimal risk condition, is covered by a motor vehicle liability policy, and is registered as a fully autonomous vehicle. The bill also would include provisions to:

- exempt fully autonomous vehicles with the automatic driving system engaged and their operators from the Uniform Driver's License Act;
- provide that fully autonomous vehicles with an engaged automated driving system satisfy the requirement to exhibit a registration card if the card is in the vehicle, or available online, and readily available to be inspected by an officer or inspector;
- require a registration card for a fully autonomous vehicle to contain specified information;
- exempt fully autonomous vehicles with an automated driving system engaged from seat belt requirements;
- make the parent or guardian of a child responsible for compliance with the prohibition on transporting children under the age of 16 in the bed or cargo area of a fully autonomous vehicle with an automatic driving system engaged, and the requirement that a passenger less than 16 years old be properly secured with a child restraint system or seat belt;
- exempt the parents or legal guardians of passengers who do not comply with the seat belt requirement from the penalty of two drivers license points;
- exempt fully autonomous vehicles with an automatic driving system engaged from the prohibition on unattended motor vehicles with an engine running;
- provide that fully autonomous vehicles with an automatic driving system engaged are considered compliant with the requirements to stop in the event of a crash if the vehicle remains on the scene of the crash, and the vehicle or the person responsible for the vehicle promptly contacts a law enforcement agency and communicates the required information; and
- prohibit a local government from enacting any local law or ordinance with regards to the regulation of fully autonomous vehicles and their operation.

**Introduced by Senators Meredith, J. Davis, and McInnis and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 342, Enact Enhanced Access to Eye Care Act, would:

- amend the definition of the practice of optometry to include surgery, except for a list of eighteen procedures including retina laser procedures and the administration of general anesthesia; and

- direct the NC State Board of Examiners in Optometry to identify any procedure, technique, or treatment which the Board determines to require additional education, training, or experience.

**Introduced by Senators Hise, Tucker, and Brock and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 343, Increase Teacher Supplement/Electronic Notice, is identical to House Bill 432, summarized above in this Legislative Report. **Introduced by Senators Wade, Meredith, and Bishop and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 349, Exempt Certain Ocular Surgeries from CON Laws, would exempt ophthalmologists who perform certain ocular surgical procedures in nonlicensed settings from certificate of need laws so long as:

- the license application is postmarked by December 31, 2017;
- the applicant verifies within 60 days of the effective date of this act that the facility is in operation as of the effective date of this act or that the completed application for the building permit was submitted by the effective date of this act;
- the facility has been accredited by specified organizations by the time the license application is postmarked; and
- the license application includes a commitment and plan for serving indigent and medically underserved populations.

The bill would require all other persons proposing to obtain a license to establish an ambulatory surgical facility for ocular surgical procedures to obtain a certificate of need. **Introduced by Senator Tucker and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 350, Amend Drug Laws/Ellison v. Treadway, would create a new felony offense of "trafficking in pharmaceuticals" punishable as follows:

- 100 or more pills, tablets, or capsules, but less than 400 pills, tablets, or capsules, the person as a Class G felon with and a fine of not less than \$25,000;
- 400 or more pills, tablets, or capsules, but less than 600 pills, tablets, or capsules, the person as a Class F felon with a minimum term of 70 months and a maximum term of 84 months in the State's prison and a fine of not less than \$50,000; or
- 600 or more pills, tablets, or capsules, the person as a Class D felon with a minimum term of 175 months and a maximum term of 219 months in the State's prison and a fine of not less than \$200,000.

**Introduced by Senators Britt, Tucker, and J. Jackson and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 354, "We the People" Act/Referendum, is identical to House Bill 453, summarized above in this Legislative Report. **Introduced by Senators Van Duyn, McKissick, and Foushee and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 359, Community Health Centers Grant Program/Funds, is identical to House Bill 367, summarized in the March 21, 2017, Legislative Report. **Introduced by Senators Ballard and Hise and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 362, Establish New Nurse Licensure Compact, is identical to House Bill 367, summarized in the March 21, 2017, Legislative Report. **Introduced by Senators Pate, Hise, and Krawiec and referred to the Senate Rules Committee.**

SENATE BILL 364, Brian Garlock Act, would prohibit a person from operating a motor vehicle while using a mobile telephone or electronic communication device unless the use is accomplished by hands-free equipment. A violation would be an infraction with a fine of \$200 and no court costs. Exceptions would be provided as follows:

- pressing a single button to activate or deactivate hands-free equipment or a function of hands-free equipment;
- the use of a GPS, navigation system, or portable music player affixed, mounted, or installed in a motor vehicle. However, a person could not manually type or enter text, numbers, or symbols into a global positioning system, navigation system, or portable music player while the person is operating a motor vehicle;
- the use of a smartwatch for the purpose of determining the time of day;
- the use of a mobile telephone or electronic communication device for the purpose of communicating an emergency situation to any of the following:
  - an emergency response operator;
  - a publicly or privately owned ambulance company or service;
  - a hospital;
  - a fire department; or
  - a law enforcement agency; and
- the use of a mobile telephone or electronic communication device by any of the following while in the performance of, and for a purpose related to, their official duties:
  - a law enforcement officer;
  - a member of a fire department;
  - a first responder;
  - the operator of a public or private ambulance.

Prohibitions would also apply to the following:

- persons under the age of 18 – a violation would be an infraction with a fine of \$50 and no court costs;
- school bus drivers – a violation would be a Class 2 misdemeanor, with a fine of not less than \$200 and the costs of court; and
- commercial motor vehicle operators – a violation would be an infraction, with a fine of \$200 and no court costs

A person who holds a mobile telephone or electronic communication device in his or her hand while operating a motor vehicle would be presumed to be using a mobile telephone or electronic communication device. This presumption could be rebutted by presenting evidence that the person was not using a mobile telephone or electronic communication device within the meaning of this section or was subject to a listed exception. The bill also would prohibit a local government from passing an ordinance regulating the use of mobile telephones or electronic communication devices while operating a motor vehicle, commercial motor vehicle, or school bus. **Introduced by Senators Tarte, Lee, and Ballard and has not yet been assigned to a Senate committee.**

SENATE BILL 368, Notice of Medicaid SPA Submissions, would require DHHS, upon submitting an amendment to the Medicaid State Plan to the federal government, or upon determining that an amendment posted to its website will not be submitted to the federal government, to notify the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Medicaid and NC Health Choice and the Fiscal Research Division that the amendment has been submitted or that it has determined the amendment on the website will not be submitted. **Introduced by Senators Hise, Pate, and Krawiec and has not yet been assigned to a Senate committee.**

SENATE BILL 376, *Limit Revolving Door Employment*, would prohibit the State from contracting with contractors who use former state employees in the administration of State contracts within six months after the state employee terminated employment with the State. **Introduced by Senator Hise and has not yet been assigned to a Senate committee.**

SENATE BILL 383, *Behav. Health Crisis EMS Transports/Medicaid*, is identical to House Bill 477, summarized above in this Legislative Report. **Introduced by Senators Krawiec, Pate, and Hise and has not yet been assigned to a Senate committee.**

SENATE BILL 384, *The Pharmacy Patient Fair Practices Act*, is identical to House Bill 466, summarized above in this Legislative Report. **Introduced by Senators Britt, Rabon, and Meredith and has not yet been assigned to a Senate committee.**

SENATE BILL 385, *Restoration of Firearms Rights*, would allow a person who was convicted of a nonviolent felony but whose civil rights have been restored pursuant to the laws of this state or another jurisdiction for a period of at least 10 years (currently, 20 years) to petition the district court in the district where the person resides to restore the person's firearms rights. **Introduced by Senators Britt and Tarte and has not yet been assigned to a Senate committee.**

SENATE BILL 387, *Limit Session Length*, would limit the length of legislative sessions as follows:

- in odd-numbered years, to no more than 135 calendar days, except that this period could be extended by joint resolution once per regular session for not more than 10 calendar days; and
- in even-numbered years, to no more than 60 calendar days, except that this period may be extended by joint resolution once per regular session for not more than 10 calendar days.

Any reconvened session called under Section 5 of Article III of the North Carolina Constitution would be excluded from these calculations. The bill would prohibit any valid action, other than a resolution of adjournment, to be taken by the General Assembly after these time limits have expired. **Introduced by Senators Chaudhuri and Tillman and has not yet been assigned to a Senate committee.**

## BILL UPDATES

HOUSE BILL 181, *First Responders Act of 2017*, would make various changes to the laws applying to first responders. The bill was amended in the House Judiciary III Committee as follows:

- current GS 20-7(a)(3) provides that a Class C license authorizes the holder to drive a or a combination thereof when the operator. Adds to the proposed language on Class C driver's license (for Class A or B firefighting, rescue, and/or EMS motor vehicle) the term "official business," to include training and the performance of maintenance when the vehicle operator is a volunteer member of a fire department, rescue squad, or emergency medical service in the performance of duty;
- amends proposed subdivision (10) of GS 14-269(b), excluding emergency medical services personnel who are deployed providing tactical medical assistance to law enforcement in an emergency from the prohibition on carrying concealed weapons, to:
  - clarify that the exemption only applies while the emergency medical services personnel are on duty and are deployed as part of their official duties; and
  - amend the proposed criteria for an approved tactical medical assistance course, which must be completed to qualify for this new exemption.

**The bill as amended was approved by the House Judiciary III Committee and will next be considered by the House Transportation Committee.**

SENATE BILL 131, Regulatory Reform Act of 2016. A variety of changes were made to this bill to amend various environmental, natural resources, and other regulatory laws in the House Regulatory Reform Committee, including:

- removing the provision that would have allowed a public agency to satisfy the requirement to provide access to public records and computer databases by making those public records or computer databases available online in a format that allows a person to download the public record or computer database to obtain a copy; and
- requiring databases purchased, leased, created, or otherwise acquired by every public agency containing public records to be designed and maintained in a manner that does not impair or impede the public agency's ability to permit the public inspection and examination of public records and provides a means of obtaining copies of such records. A public agency could satisfy the requirement to provide access to public records in computer databases by making public records in computer databases individually available online in a format that allows a person to view the public record and print or save the public record to obtain a copy. A public agency that provides access to public records would not be required to provide access to the public records in the computer database in any other way; provided, however, that a public agency that provides access to public records in computer databases would also allow inspection of any of such public records that the public agency also maintains in a nondigital medium.

**The bill as amended was approved by the House Regulator Reform Committee and will next be considered by the House Finance Committee.**

## LEGISLATION ENACTED

HOUSE BILL 100, Restore Partisan Elections/Sup. & Dist. Court. This bill to restore partisan judicial elections for North Carolina Superior and District courts and to change the time for submission of petitions for unaffiliated candidates passed the House and the Senate. The legislation was vetoed by the Governor on March 16<sup>th</sup>; however, his veto was overridden on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, and the legislation became law. **Effective: For primaries and elections held on or after January 1, 2018.**

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