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Focusing on Legislative Representation

LEGISLATIVE REPORT May 26, 2017

INTRODUCTION

The past two weeks have seen a reversal as the Senate, having finished their budget, turned to moving legislation through committees as the House budget process took over much of the energy in that chamber. On Thursday, the House budget subcommittees released their reports; however, the full House budget will not be released until Tuesday of next week. Once the House votes their budget out (on Thursday and Friday of next week) the Appropriations Chairs from each chamber will start work on crafting a compromise version. While the chambers agreed on a total budget number, a 2.5% increase from the current fiscal year, there are a number of differences that will need to be resolved. Each chamber also included policy priorities in their respective budgets, and sorting out which of those will make the final cut will likely be among the more contentious debates. What the chambers do agree on is a desire to have the budget process completed by the middle of June, as a possible gubernatorial veto (and veto override vote) needs to be factored in if the final spending plan is to be passed before the end of the fiscal year on June 30.

Once the budget is passed all that will be left to do is pass any remaining legislation that each chamber deems crucial (including bills currently being held “hostage” to budget negotiations) before we adjourn for the interim. The “short” session will not convene until April of 2018, which likely leaves a matter of weeks for members, organizations and their advocates to get any remaining policy priorities through the legislative process and to the Governor’s desk this year. The relatively limited number of committee meetings and bills being passed in the past few weeks belie an increasing sense of urgency, particularly among those who have issues pending in each chamber and are clamoring to ensure their bills are among those that make it through and their budget priorities are included in the final spending plan. Whether the early adjournment predictions made by leaders in both chambers are eventually confirmed or not, expect that urgency to only increase in the weeks to come.



NORTH CAROLINA COLLEGE OF EMERGENCY PHYSICIANS



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BILL UPDATES

HOUSE BILL 57, Enact Physical Therapy Licensure Compact, was amended in the Senate Health Care Committee to add a new section to amend the requirements for occupational licensing boards to issue licenses, certifications, or registrations to military trained applicants and military spouses to:

- further require that the applicant have no pending complaints;
- remove the requirement that the applicant pay required fees to the occupational licensing board;
- direct occupational licensing boards to issue temporary practice permits to military trained applicants or military spouses licensed, certified, or registered in another jurisdiction (currently, authorizes, but does not direct, occupational licensing boards to issue the temporary practice permits);
- make the temporary permit valid for the later of one year or the required renewal date for the occupation the temporary practice permit was issued for or until a license, certification, or registration is granted;
- prohibit occupational licensing boards from charging military trained applicants or military spouses an initial application fee for a license, certification, registration, or temporary practice permit issued under this statute;
- allow occupational licensing boards to charge the ordinary fee for a renewal application, or a third party to charge actual costs for services such as a background check.

The bill as amended was approved by the Senate Health Care and Rules Committees and the full Senate. The bill will next be considered by the full House to consider the changes made by the Senate.

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