

- Today's Insider (PDF)



YOU DON'T SAY...

"This is about the lowest paid people in the state who are working their butts off for the state."

Sen. Don Davis, D-Pitt, on teacher pay.

THE INSIDER, 1/14/20

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News Summary

Veto Upheld

It's a new year, but the state budget stalemate is the same as in 2019. In Raleigh for a one-day session of the legislature Tuesday, the state Senate failed to override Gov. Roy Cooper's veto of a teacher pay raise bill, with Cooper's fellow Democrats saying it wasn't enough money. Republicans were offering higher raises if Democrats also voted to override the governor's budget veto. Still, an override of the teacher raise bill would have given teachers an average raise of 3.9%. "This is on the table now, that you can give the teachers, or not. It's just that simple," Senate Majority Leader Harry Brown, R-Onslow, told Democrats.

Three measures that Cooper vetoed were on the Senate schedule Tuesday:

- The vote on the teacher raises bill was 28 to 21, which failed to reach the supermajority required for an override.
- There was no vote on the state budget covering the fiscal year that is now more than half over, including teacher raises and many other spending and tax

policies. The Senate adjourned without ever calling up the budget, instead sending it back to committee.

- The Senate also upheld Cooper's veto on a bill dealing with regulations.

Cooper called the proposed teacher raises "paltry," saying that educators deserved higher raises. Both chambers of the General Assembly have Republican majorities, but a supermajority is needed to override a veto. The state has been operating on the last budget, which rolled over, along with several mini budget bills that became law over the past several months, including raises for most state employees.

During debate on the Senate floor Tuesday, Brown and Senate Minority Leader Dan Blue, D-Wake, talked about a negotiation between parties that would have given teachers a 4.9% raise plus a \$1,000 bonus. But that negotiation failed, and Republicans offered the 3.9% raises.

"You don't have to override the budget. Just take this money," Republican Sen. Rick Horner, R-Nash, said. Teachers and other school employees including bus drivers and cafeteria workers deserve respect and "a decent pay increase," said Sen. Gladys Robinson, D-Guilford. She said that Senate Democrats fully support them. Sen. Don Davis, D-Pitt, who voted for an earlier version of the budget, said Tuesday was "a sad day for the state of North Carolina if this is the best that we can do."

The Senate votes Tuesday included the newly sworn-in Sen. H.M. "Mickey" Michaux, a Durham Democrat and former House member who was appointed to the seat vacated by former Sen. Floyd McKissick Jr., who left to serve on the N.C. Utilities Commission. Michaux will serve until North Carolina's primary on March 3, then resign so the primary winner can be appointed to the rest of the term. (Dawn Baumgartner Vaughan, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 1/14/20)

Quick Adjournment

North Carolina lawmakers adjourned Tuesday after a one-day session where little got done. They agreed to return to Raleigh at noon on April 28 to begin their short session. But not everyone was happy about it. "We have a job to do," said Sen. Wiley Nickel, D-Wake. "We're here right now. To adjourn for months when we have work to do is absolutely against everything I stand for and we need to keep working to pass a budget." Nickel asked his colleagues to vote against adjourning, but it passed 34-15.

Sen. Bill Rabon, R-Brunswick, told senators Tuesday that the bills eligible to be brought forward during the short session will mirror that of other years. Those include bills affecting the budget, committee recommendations, local bills, constitutional amendments, redistricting bills and bills responding to litigation, among other things.

House Speaker Tim Moore said the legislature could take up some mini-budgets in the short session to fix some lingering issues by not yet passing a budget. In the meantime, lawmakers plan to meet in interim committees to take up several issues including healthcare, broadband and criminal justice reform. Moore said a particular focus of interim work will be the rural-urban divide in the state. (Danielle Battaglia, THE INSIDER, 1/15/20)

Budget Prediction

The state budget standoff that has delayed teacher raises, building projects around the state and a tax cut for businesses will likely continue into the next fiscal year, the Senate's top Republican predicted Tuesday. Spin that expectation forward past the July 1 start to a new budget year, Senate leader Phil Berger said Tuesday. Normal even-year negotiations on the second half of the state's two-year budget will

likely be thrown off by the same arguments dividing state leaders now, he said. "I do not see us doing a second-year budget in the short session," Berger, R-Rockingham, said during a news conference. House Speaker Tim Moore offered a similar assessment. "You may have more of what we've had with the mini-budgets, where you try to find the areas where it would be very difficult for the governor to draw a controversy," he told the Insider on Tuesday. Cooper spokesman Ford Porter responded in a press release: "This shows the outrageous lengths legislative leaders will go to avoid negotiating with the governor, and it's time for them to end their partisan obstruction."

Senate Minority Leader Dan Blue, D-Wake, followed Berger's press conference Tuesday with one of his own, appearing with leadership from the North Carolina Association of Educators. A number of educators, decked out in red, were at the statehouse calling for higher raises and more education funding in general. "Please, we are not asking for anything that we do not deserve, or that we cannot afford," said Erica Johnson, a teaching assistant from Alamance County. Blue focused on education funding, balanced against the tax cut and discussed Medicaid expansion only after reporters brought it up. Berger has accused Cooper of derailing budget talks by insisting on expansion, and he re-upped that line of attack Tuesday.

Both sides continued to point at the other. Blue described the Republican negotiating tactics, when the two sides last traded budget proposals in the fall, as "you give me everything I want, plus I give you none of what you want." The last GOP offer on teacher pay dangled slightly higher raises, but only if Democrats would override Cooper's veto and enact the rest of their budget. Republicans pointed to a multi-year series of teacher raises that the GOP majority enacted in many cases without Democratic support, moving the state to 29th in average teacher pay in the country and second in the Southeast. Average teacher pay is about \$54,000. (Travis Fain, WRAL NEWS, and THE INSIDER, 1/14/20)

Medicaid Compromise

Only one bill got filed during Tuesday's one-day session: An attempt at a Medicaid expansion compromise from Rep. Billy Richardson, D-Cumberland. House Bill 1032 calls for a scaled-back expansion of the Medicaid program using no federal funding. Richardson said Tuesday that the idea stemmed from Senate leader Phil Berger's concerns that Medicaid expansion would be a risky proposition because the federal government could stop paying its share of the program. Richardson said he concedes that Berger's argument is "somewhat valid."

Richardson's proposal would use the same amount of money that North Carolina would pay under the standard Medicaid expansion model -- about \$500 million along with taxes on pharmaceuticals, hospitals and prepaid health plan premiums. That would be enough to expand Medicaid to people making 100 percent of the poverty level (other Medicaid expansion proposals would cover people making up to 130 percent of the poverty level). "I'm inviting (Berger) to compromise and let's insure 250,000 people," Richardson said. "Both sides have got to start offering compromise, and we need to think outside the box." He's hopeful the idea could help solve the budget impasse. "There's too much good in that budget not to compromise," he said. "It's shameful on both sides." (Colin Campbell, THE INSIDER, 1/15/20)

Tax Bill

The N.C. House tried Tuesday to allow for bigger medical expense income tax deductions, but the Senate adjourned without taking action. Senate Bill 622, introduced in the House Finance Committee, would match North Carolina's tax code with a recent federal tax code change. The update would allow taxpayers to deduct medical and dental expenses that exceed 7.5% of their income; the current law sets

the threshold at 10%. Congress made the change in a wide-ranging tax bill enacted in December, but state lawmakers have to act to apply the same policies to state tax filings.

Rep. Julia Howard, R-Davie and sponsor of the bill, said it's just one provision of the annual internal revenue code update, but it's an urgent one. "It's the right thing to do to give taxpayers this knowledge, since most taxpayers start filing their returns as early as February," she said, adding that 218,000 people use the deduction in the state. "The world's not going to stop if we don't pass this bill today, but we are here." The bill passed the House unanimously, but it likely won't become law until the short session begins in April because the Senate declined to take up the measure. A spokesman for Senate leader Phil Berger said the tax code changes typically wait. "These types of issues have always waited until the short session, whether it's this single issue or the larger IRC update," Pat Ryan said in an email.

But House Republicans blasted their colleagues across the building. "This is not something that should be put off until May or June," said Rep. Keith Kidwell, R-Beaufort. Howard said she was aware of the Senate's position before the House moved the bill. "We will send it to them, and they can own it," she said.

Another tax-related bill didn't get any House action Tuesday and will wait for the short session: The income tax refund bill. House Speaker Tim Moore said "that one will probably be put with another bill" in the spring because House leaders "need to leave ourselves room" for negotiations with the Senate. He also said he wants to ensure the state's revenues are still in good shape before the refund is approved. (Colin Campbell, THE INSIDER, 1/15/20)

POLICY COVERAGE IN NORTH CAROLINA SUPPORTED BY



Value-based care is where healthcare in North Carolina is going.

The concept is built on healthcare purchasers holding providers accountable for both quality and costs of care. The idea is for primary care providers to work closely and actively with patients to improve their health and wellbeing, keeping people out of the hospital and reducing emergency room visits. The State Health Plan should use similar principles to develop a benefit design that improves members' health and decreases total costs of care for individuals and for the state. To learn more, visit

www.ncha.org/valuebasedcare

Regulatory Reform

Gov. Roy Cooper's veto of the annual "regulatory reform" bill could not be overturned Tuesday. Senate Bill 553 dealt with apartment trash removal, temporary events in industrial districts, and piers and docks, among other things. Sen. Norman Sanderson, R-Pamlico, urged the senators to override the veto.

"Six of my friends from the other side voted for this regulatory reform bill because they felt like there was enough good in it to overcome whatever they saw that was negative about this bill," Sanderson said. "I would ask that whatever you thought was important enough to vote for this bill, that you would stand with us today, that you would put this very, very important piece of work to stand for the citizens of North Carolina today."

Sen. Mike Woodard, D-Durham, asked the Senate to consider upholding the override of Senate Bill 553 but taking the parts of the bill that they agreed on in April. House Speaker Tim Moore echoed Woodard's desire after the veto override failed. Moore said Gov. Roy Cooper did not like two or three issues in the bill and now lawmakers

have to deal with it. "It's time the governor gets on board and actually work with us on something," Moore said. "If he wants to go out and take credit for things maybe it's time he goes out and starts pulling the wagon on things." Cooper said in his veto message that he was concerned that allowing trash cans in apartment hallways would pose a safety risk and looser septic regulations would "threaten clean water." (Danielle Battaglia, THE INSIDER, 1/15/20)

Military Scholarships

Many children of military veterans receive college scholarships in North Carolina. But late last year, some of them found themselves suddenly hit with an unexpected bill from their schools, after the scholarship funding ran out. The state addressed that problem for last semester by taking money from this semester's scholarship fund. But since that was only a temporary fix, state lawmakers approved more than \$2 million in new funding for the scholarships on Tuesday. "I urge you to concur with this bill," said Republican Sen. Danny Britt, R-Robeson, himself an Army National Guard member, just before the state Senate voted unanimously to approve the extra money.

Students at community colleges and universities are eligible for the scholarship -- which helps cover tuition as well as room and board -- if one or both of their parents qualify as "deceased, disabled, combat or POW/MIA veterans." The state government's Department of Military and Veterans Affairs has been funding the scholarships with about \$9.2 million annually, The News & Observer reported last year, after the funding issues came to light. But as the number of eligible children has grown, state lawmakers said they would increase the funding by about \$2.4 million per year. State officials told colleges about the increased funding, and schools responded by raising the amount they planned to charge the state per student, the N&O reported. But the legislature has yet to pass the new budget. Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper vetoed it, and Democrats and Republicans in the legislature haven't been able to reach a compromise.

Sen. Kirk DeViere, D-Cumberland, who represents Fayetteville and other areas near Fort Bragg, asked the legislature to join him in a prayer, after the votes were done, "not only for the men and women who deployed but their families." The scholarship bill sped along quickly, passing unanimously in both the House and Senate before being sent to Cooper, who is expected to sign it into law. The scholarships had already been funded for this semester, after Cooper authorized the veterans department to take money from the spring semester's funds to retroactively pay the shortfalls that caused the controversy in the fall. But that meant the legislature had to act to provide funding to fill in the gap that would otherwise be waiting when this semester's bills come due. (Will Doran, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 1/14/20)

Statue Appeal

A national civil rights organization filed an appeal Tuesday on behalf of University of North Carolina students who want to intervene in a settlement that gives \$2.5 million and a Civil War commemorative statue to a Confederate heritage group. The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law filed the appeal on behalf of five students and a faculty member who want to intervene in the deal between the UNC Board of Governors and the North Carolina Division of Sons of Confederate Veterans regarding the statue of the Confederate soldier known as "Silent Sam." They also want to halt any further proceedings in the trial court and prevent disbursement of the \$2.5 million pending a review by the state Court of Appeals.

In December, Judge Allen Baddour of Orange County ruled that the students lacked standing to become involved in the legal case. He signed that order Friday, the news release says. Baddour did agree to hold a hearing Feb. 12 about whether the SCV

had standing to bring the lawsuit regarding Silent Sam. (Martha Waggoner, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 1/14/20)

Trump Admiration

In a rare comment on national politics, Senate leader Phil Berger weighed in Tuesday on his support for President Donald Trump. "I think the president has done a good job," Berger said. Berger is one of the co-chairs for Trump's campaign in North Carolina. During a news conference Tuesday he was asked how his loyalty to Trump was any different than that of the Senate Democrats he was faulting for supporting various bills vetoed by Gov. Roy Cooper. "Does he do everything the way I wish he had done?" Berger said of Trump. "No. Do I do everything I wish I would? No." Berger ended his remarks saying he should have stopped while he was ahead, rather than taking the additional question. (Danielle Battaglia, THE INSIDER, 1/15/20)

Istation Contract

Day two of a hearing about which company should have been awarded a contract to test North Carolina public schools' youngest students began with testimony from a state education staffer who helped review the vendors competing for the multi-million dollar contract. Susan Laney, a consultant for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, testified that State Superintendent Mark Johnson attended one of the review committee's meetings on Jan. 8, 2019, and "[gave] us some insight into his vision and his ideas for the agency." She found his participation in the meeting odd but said it wasn't necessarily wrong because he had a supervisory role over the committee.

When asked if she thought Johnson was trying to influence the committee to vote for a certain vendor, Laney said she had "a clear understanding of his priorities." Pressed again about whether she felt Johnson was trying to influence the vote, she agreed.

Johnson is blaming the state Department of Information Technology's "inaction" for creating the situation that caused him to approve a \$928,570 "emergency purchase" of a controversial reading program last week. DIT had questioned the after-hours purchase and given Johnson until Tuesday to provide "sufficient justification" or risk having the contract with Istation suspended or canceled. In his response, Johnson said he had to act last week because schools needed to have a program in place the following morning to test students under the Read To Achieve law. "So that there is no lack of clarity, if NCDPI cannot contract with the vendor now, after nearly six months of review by NCDIT, the continuation of this vital program for State of North Carolina's teachers, students, and families will cease," Johnson wrote.

Johnson told State Board of Education members last week that he had to act to give clarity to school districts who are conducting Read To Achieve assessments right now. In a memo Friday, Patti Bowers, chief procurement officer at DIT, said DPI "has not provided adequate justification for an emergency purchase."

"If every contract signed after business hours constituted an emergency, the term would be rendered meaningless," Bowers wrote.

In his response, Johnson pointed to how Read To Achieve requires students to be tested in the middle of the school year. Johnson said he had to act after-hours last Tuesday because schools, which were testing Wednesday morning, couldn't wait. "Local superintendents, literacy directors, principals, and teachers across the state were immediately concerned and needed guidance from NCDPI on next steps before the next morning," Johnson wrote.

Throughout his response, Johnson criticizes DIT for not having resolved the issue sooner. He says DIT "sat on this review for six months" and that the agency's "inaction" meant "there was no reading diagnostic in place and educators were justifiably demanding a solution." DIT is hearing Amplify's appeal this week. Istation cited Bowers' memo Monday in an unsuccessful request for DIT to turn the case over to a state administrative law judge.

In the motion, Istation calls Bowers' memo "hostile" toward Johnson and showing "bias" against the superintendent. Istation noted how DIT reports to Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper, a "political rival" of both the Republican superintendent and Senate leader Phil Berger, the main supporter of the Read To Achieve legislation. (Kelly Hinchcliffe, WRAL NEWS and T. Keung Hui, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 1/14/20)

Blood Shortage

Hours are being extended at the Cape Fear Valley Blood Donor Center to try to boost supply. Cape Fear Valley Health has less than a two-day supply of most types of blood and is asking people to make donations. "The community is critical for types A-, B-, AB-, O- and O+ blood types," according to a news release Monday. "The Blood Donor Center is especially critical for type O-negative blood with less than a one-day supply. Trauma patients and premature infants must receive O-negative blood, and one patient can deplete that inventory." The hospital system, which serves Cumberland, Hoke, Bladen and Harnett counties, is extending the hours at its Blood Donor Center in Fayetteville in an effort to collect more donations.

January typically brings a drop in donations, said Lindsey Graham, marketing director for the Cape Fear Valley Blood Donor Center, because of the holidays and seasonal illnesses among donors. But this year is worse than usual, she said, and blood has been in short supply in general since June. When local supplies run short, the hospital system can purchase blood from the National Blood Exchange, Graham said, but "even they're short, and they don't have any to sell." Patients scheduled to have elective surgery may see their procedures postponed because of the blood shortage, Graham said. (Paul Woolverton, THE FAYETTEVILLE OBSERVER, 1/13/20)

Broadband Access

The Federal Communications Commission says it will use more accurate coverage maps as it gets ready to disburse more than \$20 billion worth of funds to increase broadband coverage in rural areas -- potentially helping thousands of households and businesses in North Carolina. However, a majority of the money, which comes from the FCC's new Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, would be distributed using existing maps that overstate how many households in the country truly have access to high-speed, reliable broadband, according to rules proposed by FCC Chairman Ajit Pai.

Historically, the FCC has overstated how many households and businesses are able to access broadband because of how it defined access. The FCC has relied on internet service providers (ISPs) to self report which census blocks are served by broadband. However, if just one home in a census block is served, then the entire census block is counted as served. Census blocks, which have hundreds or thousands of people in them, can vary drastically from each other. In size, they can range from a single square block in a city to hundreds of square miles in rural areas. Advocates have complained about that methodology, and the FCC said last year it would create more detailed maps. With more accurate maps, more areas could become eligible for federal and state dollars.

But the first phase -- and largest chunk -- of the \$20 billion Rural Digital Opportunity Fund won't use those new maps. The first \$16 billion of the fund will go to competing broadband providers who promise to extend service to the parts of the

country that have no current access to high-speed broadband. The FCC estimates that there are 6 million homes and businesses across the country that meet that definition. In North Carolina, that translates to an estimated 169,000 homes and businesses. The funds will be paid out over the next 10 years. The FCC will vote on Pai's proposal on Jan. 30. (Zachery Eanes, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 1/14/20)

MLS Negotiations

A public vote on Charlotte's \$110 million investment in Major League Soccer might take longer than previously expected, despite the city officially landing the 30th expansion team in mid-December. The crux of recent discussions between the City Council and David Tepper -- the billionaire Panthers owner who led the push for MLS -- revolves around keeping the Panthers in Charlotte for the long-term future, said council member Matt Newton. "We're talking about more extensive and complex negotiations," Newton, who represents east Charlotte, said in an interview Tuesday morning. "There's a lot of details yet to be ironed out...We're all in this together, the City of Charlotte and Tepper."

It's unclear when a deal will be finalized, or even when the public will have the chance to provide feedback on MLS, Newton told the Observer. Initially, Newton said, he thought lingering questions about MLS and the city's overall funding package would be answered by early 2020. But the council is still operating under a tight timeline to determine how it will allocate its pledge of \$110 million in tourism dollars for upgrading Bank of America Stadium, where MLS is expected to begin play in 2021, as well as building the team's headquarters and practice facilities at the former Eastland Mall site. The money may also be used for building an entertainment district that links uptown and the Gateway District, according to a November letter that Mayor Vi Lyles sent to MLS Commissioner Don Garber. (Alison Kuznitz, THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER, 1/14/20)

LNG Shipments

The attorneys general of 15 states said this week that they oppose a Trump administration proposal to allow rail shipments of liquefied natural gas, arguing the trains will share tracks with passenger trains and travel through congested areas. The protesting states included Pennsylvania and New Jersey, where the Trump administration issued a special permit in December to ship LNG by rail.

In their 18 pages of comments submitted Monday, the states said the Trump administration's proposed rule would put residents, first responders and the environment at greater risk of catastrophic accidents. The administration failed to adequately analyze those risks and failed to consider the environmental and climate effects of allowing LNG to be shipped in rail tank cars, the states said. The flammable and odorless liquid would be transported "through densely populated areas, potentially in unit trains of up to 100 tank cars operated by just one person, on the same rail lines used by high speed passenger trains, with inadequate safety precautions," the states said. The other objecting states were California, Delaware, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington, as well as the District of Columbia.

The pipeline agency's administrator, Skip Elliott, said when the proposed rules were issued in October that safety is the agency's "number one priority" and pledged to evaluate all public comments and concerns raised during the rulemaking process. (Marc Levy, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 1/14/20)

Mecklenburg Detention Center

A new juvenile detention center in Mecklenburg County will begin operations on Wednesday, established to accommodate the increased number of minors who will be tried in juvenile court. Under the state's "Raise the Age" law, which went into

effect in December, most 16- and 17-year-olds charged with crimes will not automatically be sent to adult court. North Carolina was the last state in the country to adopt such a change and has been preparing to adjust to the law for two years. "The implementation of it hasn't been easy," said Mecklenburg County District Attorney Spencer Merriweather. "The big question for all of us in the criminal justice system was how we would appropriately house our juvenile population that unfortunately will see the inside of the criminal justice system." The law is meant to give young defendants better access to counseling, medical and rehabilitative help and keep their names and crimes confidential.

In preparation, the Mecklenburg County's North Detention Center, also known as Jail North, was chosen to become the Mecklenburg County Juvenile Detention Center to help house juvenile defendants from across the state, said N.C. Deputy Secretary of Juvenile Justice William Lassiter. The Mecklenburg facility was an obvious choice for a new juvenile detention center, he said, since it already had a "youthful offender" housing unit, a high school and a variety of vocational and mental health programs. (Amanda Zhou, THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER, 1/14/20)

McDougald Evacuations

Durham leaders came together Tuesday to speak to McDougald Terrace residents evacuated over carbon monoxide concerns, even as the city's mayor held out a possibility that more residents could be displaced. Asked about a WRAL report that found elevated carbon monoxide levels at the Durham Housing Authority's Hoover Road complex, Mayor Steve Schewel said it is too early to say what the authority might do next. The Hoover Road complex, built in 1968, has 54 townhome apartments. "No one can be living in unsafe conditions, no matter where they live," Schewel said.

McDougald Terrace is the city's oldest and largest public housing site with 360 apartments. The housing authority has spent \$485,000 moving about 270 families to area hotels so far. "For 40 years our community has failed these people," Schewel said. "We are here to tell them they are not alone and we will do everything in our power to make this right." Wendy Jacobs, the chair of the Durham County Board of Commissioners, called the situation at McDougald Terrace a "terrible crisis in our community" and said the response will be a defining moment.

Kimberly Graves, vice president of the McDougald Terrace resident council, said she is skeptical that officials will be able to address all the issues considering the years of deteriorating conditions at the aging housing complex. "I don't see it," Graves said. If action had been taken sooner, the money now being used to pay for hotels, stipends and transportation could have been used to fix up McDougald Terrace or help families transition to a voucher program that would give people more choices of where to live, she said. (Virginia Bridges and Mark Schultz, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 1/14/20)

Missed Revenue

The N.C. State Auditor's Office found during an investigative audit that James Sprunt Community College missed out on nearly \$100,000 in revenue over a three-year period due to poor oversight of its incubator kitchen program's operations. An allegation regarding potential misuse of the Eastern Carolina Food Ventures incubator kitchen -- a collaborative effort of James Sprunt, Duplin County and Pender County located in the WestPark Business Technology Center in Warsaw -- prompted the audit, the results of which were released on Tuesday. The kitchen is designed to help develop food entrepreneurs, create new food businesses, grow existing food businesses and provide workforce development.

According to the State Auditor's Office report, from January 2016 to December

2018, the Small Business Center Director at James Sprunt "did not require kitchen clients to complete required production sheets, prepared inaccurate invoices and failed to ensure monthly billing for the kitchen rental" at the incubator kitchen. "The Director did not bill clients at least \$34,193 as a result of clients not completing the production sheets and the Director preparing inaccurate invoices," the report reads. "In addition, the College did not collect at least \$63,037 in revenue as a result of the Director's failure to bill clients monthly." In a letter to the auditor's office, James Sprunt Community College President Dr. Jay Carraway said the college accepted the findings of the report and agreed the oversight over the kitchen incubator was "grossly inadequate." (Brandon Wissbaum, WECT NEWS, 1/14/20)

Opioid Hearing

A congressional hearing Tuesday highlighted what North Carolina is doing to combat the opioid crisis. Deputy Secretary for Behavioral Health & Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Kody Kinsley from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services was one of several scheduled speakers. The hearing for the U.S. House Committee on Energy and Commerce's Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations focused on how states are using federal funds to promote opioid treatment and recovery efforts. In 2017, North Carolina enacted an Opioid Action Plan and updated the project last year. Since then, opioid dispensing is down by 24 percent, and prescriptions for drugs used to treat opioid use disorders have risen. The plan focuses on prevention, reducing harm, and connecting individuals to care. North Carolina was one of five states presenting testimony, along with officials from Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and West Virginia. (Bethany Chafin, WFDD RADIO, 1/13/20)

Virginia Casino

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is hoping to expand gaming operations outside North Carolina. Eastern Band Principal Chief Richard Sneed says the tribe is looking to build a casino in Virginia. The Bristol-based facility would be part of a new development already in the works on the property. "The Cherokees -- specifically in Washington County, where Bristol is located -- it is historic Cherokee aboriginal land. So we felt like all of the boxes were checked for us to at least put our name out there and express our interest," says Sneed, who says they are always looking for new markets.

The plan is pending since the Virginia Senate has not yet finalized the bill allowing commercial gaming in the state. There is a difference between commercial gaming and tribal gaming. Right now, the Eastern Band officially operates its two casinos with tribal gaming. They can also participate in commercial gaming the same way any other business might. Additionally, commercial gaming is run by the state while tribal gaming is overseen by the federal government and local regulations.

Tennessee is also moving forward with commercial gaming in the form of mobile-only sports betting. While the Eastern Band does own land in Tennessee, Sneed says that they don't plan to get into sports betting in the state. "There's not a huge profit margin in sports betting - not like people think," Sneed said. (Lilly Knoepp, WFAE RADIO, 1/14/20)

Alamance BoE

At the annual meeting of the Alamance-Burlington Board of Education, county commissioners and state legislative delegation focused on big changes, better relationships, money management and the state budget. "A year and a half ago, when I first got here, there was a lot of uncertainty," School Superintendent Bruce Benson said at the joint meeting Monday, Jan. 13. Jeremy Teetor, ABSS finance director, said the district made some strides in the past few years like getting into the top ten districts in the state for supplementing teacher pay, even passing

Guilford County. "We're starting to compete with folks who have picked on us and used us as a training ground," Teetor said. Sen. Rick Gunn, R-Alamance, Rep. Steve Ross, R-Alamance, Rep. Dennis Riddell, R-Alamance, congratulated the commissioners and school board on their improved relationship and said the best thing that could happen for education funding was to get past the budget impasse in Raleigh. (Isaac Groves, BURLINGTON TIMES-NEWS, 1/14/20)

PTSD Treatment

A procedure historically used to treat pain could also be used to help people with post-traumatic stress disorder, according to a recent clinical study by Research Triangle Park-based RTI International. Researchers found that a treatment called stellate ganglion block (SGB) improved symptoms of PTSD in their study participants. The treatment involves an injection of local anesthetic to the stellate ganglion, located in the neck. The stellate ganglion is part of the sympathetic nervous system which controls the body's "fight or flight" response. SGB is a procedure used to treat nerve injuries or pain in the upper body. It's a 30-minute procedure with little to no recovery time.

Some experts were skeptical when the study was announced in 2015 because the only evidence of SGB working to treat PTSD was anecdotal. Some doctors had been using it on a limited basis to treat soldiers with PTSD. "Nobody knows how it works, we now just know that it does," said Kristine Rae Olmsted, behavioral epidemiologist at RTI and co-investigator on the study. RTI International received a \$2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Defense to conduct the three-year study with test subjects spread across three sites: Womack Army Medical Center in North Carolina; Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii; and Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. (Taylor Knopf, NC HEALTH NEWS, 1/14/20)

Online Education

As universities work to make college more accessible and affordable, students are turning to online education to complete their degrees. Last fall, more than a third of students took at least one online course and 16% were enrolled exclusively in distance education courses, federal education data shows. Several universities in North Carolina rank among the best online education programs in the nation, according to the 2020 U.S. News & World Report rankings released Tuesday. UNC-Chapel Hill, N.C. State and UNC-Wilmington topped the list in different areas. The rankings evaluate more than 1,600 distance education bachelor's and master's degree programs in areas including nursing, business and engineering.

UNC-Chapel Hill ranked as the No. 1 program for an online master of business administration degree, in a tie with Indiana University. The online MBA program at UNC's Kenan-Flagler Business School also landed in the top 5 for business analytics, marketing and finance specialties. UNC-CH's non-MBA business master's program ranked 5th in the country and 2nd for veterans. N.C. State's online graduate engineering program ranked among the best in the country at 7th overall, 6th for veterans and top 10 in several specialties. NCSU ranked 2nd for civil engineering, 5th for electrical, 6th for mechanical and 7th for industrial. N.C. State's online MBA program and Information Technology program both ranked 15th in the country. (Kate Murphy, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 1/14/20)

Greensboro Police Chief

The city of Greensboro has selected a new Chief of Police. Deputy Chief Brian L. James will assume his new role as police chief on February 1. The 49-year-old Greensboro native will succeed Wayne Scott, who is retiring at the end of this month. Greensboro City Manager David Parrish said in a news release that James was selected following a national search and extensive interview process. James joined the Greensboro force in 1996. He's worked in a number of department

branches including the Criminal Investigations Division and Police Neighborhood Resource Center. He currently serves as the Bureau Commander of the Patrol Division. (Neal Charnoff, WFDD RADIO, 1/14/20)

Body Found

The body of a fisherman who disappeared after his boat capsized on the North Carolina coast has been found, a sheriff's office said. The Hyde County Sheriff's Office says the body of Keyron Davis was recovered and identified around 11:30 a.m. Friday, news sources reported on Monday. Sgt. Charles Herina says crews used sonar to find the body at the bottom of the sound. Davis was one of four people on board a shrimp boat that sank in the Pamlico Sound on the night of Jan. 7. Authorities said boat captain Floyd Gibbs died at the hospital, while crew member Ben Poe was treated for hypothermia at the hospital and released. A fourth man, Sammy Douglas, is still missing. The U.S. Coast Guard suspended the search last Thursday after agencies searched 1,170 square miles for the boaters. The sheriff's office says they have crews that will continue to look for Douglas if the weather allows for it. (THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 1/14/20)

STD Rates

North Carolina is among the worst states when it comes to rates of sexually transmitted diseases, a study found. The study, done by Innerbody.com, used 2018 data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to rank states with the highest and lowest rates of STDs in the country. North Carolina ranked No. 6 among the 10 states with the highest rates, the study found. The state had a total of 91,376 reported cases of STDs, the study says. With a population of nearly 10.3 million, that's 889 cases per 100,000 people. South Carolina was also among the states with the highest rates and ranked at No. 4, the study found. The state had a rate of 957 reported cases per 100,000 people. Alaska had the highest rate in the country, the study found, with 1,144 cases reported per 100,000 people.

Of the 10 states with the highest rates of STDs, seven were in the South. This could be due to the region's lack of access to affordable health care, the study says. "The South has more people living in poverty and in rural areas, which may make it harder for them to get tested and treated for STDs," Ronald Gray, professor of epidemiology at John Hopkins University, said in the study. Data from the North Carolina health department shows that STD rates were higher among some "racial and ethnic groups," which the department says may be driven by poverty and wealth distribution gaps. (Bailey Aldridge, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 1/14/20)

Bear Petition

In two weeks, a petition by local advocacy group Help Asheville Bears that urges Amazon to stop selling "cruel" animal traps has garnered over 32,000 signatures on Change.org. The petition appeals directly to Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, asking him to "immediately cease the sales of steel-jaw leg hold/foothold traps, snare traps, and attractants on Amazon.com, as these are used in poaching and the maiming of bears and other wildlife," it says. Certain foothold traps, also called steel-jaw or leg-hold traps, are legal in North Carolina -- but it's illegal to use them to hunt black bears.

Trappers after other game, like raccoons or coyotes, can legally use foothold traps as long as they meet certain requirements. The traps can't have a spread larger than 7.5 inches, and the jaws must be smooth-edged and without teeth or spikes, according to the Wildlife Resource Commission's guide to legal trap types in North Carolina. "These traps are legal for foxes, coyotes, and other animals, but they also trap smaller bears -- which would be illegal," Jody Williams, a spokesman for Help Asheville Bears, told the Citizen-Times. "How do dogs and other animals like cats or bears know that it's not for them? Members believe this is why 100+ countries ban

them already. Amazon makes it easy for people to get these smaller jaw traps, bear traps, and bear and animal attractants." (Elizabeth Anne Brown, ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES, 1/14/20)

Bogue Banks Project

Bogue Banks' next beach nourishment project is ready to roll, with dredging and pumping of sand set to begin the first week of February, a little earlier than originally planned. Greg Rudolph, manager of the Carteret County Shore Protection Office, met Wednesday with town and county officials, representatives of county beach engineering firm Moffatt & Nichol and dredge contractor, Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Co., of Illinois, for a preconstruction session.

He said everything went well, and "kicked off" the \$28.2 million Phase 2 Hurricane Florence sand replacement project in western Atlantic Beach, all of Pine Knoll Shores, a small part of Salter Path and a part of western Emerald Isle. "The one caveat is that when you hear a date, you have to remember that it's kind of like building a house," he said. "You can know a lot of things, but you can't know, for example, exactly when the electrical contractor is going to show up and wire the master bedroom." (Brad Rich, CARTERET COUNTY NEWS-TIMES, 1/14/20)

Asheville Flights

Budget carrier Allegiant Air is growing again, announcing 44 new nonstop routes including its first Chicago, Boston and Houston flights. And you'll be able to fly to those cities, plus Austin, from Asheville starting this spring. The Las Vegas-based airline, known for its cheap tickets and lengthy lineup of fees, called it the largest expansion in company history. Allegiant added 15 Airbus jets to its fleet last year and plans to add more in 2020. Allegiant serves 14 destinations from the Asheville Regional Airport, so four new routes signals a significant jump, said Tina Kinsey, director of marketing for the Greater Asheville Regional Airport Authority. "It is extremely rare for an airline to announce four new routes at Asheville at once. And these four routes are significant because they are large cities that have travel ties with Western North Carolina." (Dawn Gilbertson and Mackensy Lunsford, ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES, 1/14/20)

Bottled Water

The Durham County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously Monday to ban the purchase of single-serve, plastic water bottles with county funds. "I think we're all aware of the problems that plastics have in our environment and our health when they are either not recycled or they end up in our environment because they are not disposed of properly," said Tobin Freid, sustainability manager. The policy goes into effect on July 1. There will be exceptions for public health emergencies. Board Chairwoman Wendy Jacobs said the county moved quickly to enact the ban.

In a telephone interview after the meeting, Freid said no other governments in North Carolina, or even the Southeast, have enacted such a ban. Around the nation, a handful of cities have, including Austin, Texas; Brookline, Mass.; Seattle; San Francisco, Palo Alto, Calif.; and Salt Lake City. Also, in Canada, Montreal has a similar ban. Freid also said that when she reached out to other governments about the ban, a lot expressed interest and wanted to see how it goes in Durham. She said the city of Durham is working on a similar ban. (Matt Goad, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 1/14/20)

Green Beret Theft

A former U.S. Army Green Beret pleaded guilty to his role in a conspiracy while deployed to Afghanistan to steal about \$200,000 from government funds meant for purposes ranging from humanitarian efforts to base construction, prosecutors said. The Raleigh-based U.S. attorney's office said in a news release that William Todd

Chamberlain, 46, pleaded guilty Monday to conspiracy and receiving stolen government property. When he's sentenced at a later date, he'll face as many as 15 years in prison, though others in the case received probation.

Prosecutors said Chamberlain and four other members of the 3rd Special Forces Group based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, stole about \$200,000 while deployed to Afghanistan in 2009 and 2010. The news release said the five soldiers had access to separate government funds meant to purchase operational items not available through normal supply systems, to pay for humanitarian purposes such as building roads or to fund counterterrorism efforts. "Our office stands committed to rooting out public corruption. Chamberlain and his teammates abused the unique trust bestowed upon them by the military as members of the Special Forces," U.S. Attorney Robert J. Higdon said in a statement. (THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 1/14/20)

Seafood Sentence

Phillip R. Carawan, owner of Capt. Neill's Seafood in Columbia was sentenced Jan. 9 to a year and a day in federal prison on charges his company repacked foreign crab meat into containers labeled "Product of USA" over several years. Carawan was also handed a \$250,000 fine and will be on three years of supervised release after the prison time ends. His company, Capt. Neill's Seafood Inc., located on North Road Street in Columbia, must pay a \$500,000 fine and serve five years' probation. U.S. District Judge Louise Flanagan presided over the proceedings in New Bern. (Ray McClees, THE WASHINGTON DAILY NEWS, 1/13/20)

House Bills Filed

Tuesday, January 14, 2020

- HB 1032 (Richardson) EXPAND MEDICAID TO 100% FPL

Senate Bills Filed

Tuesday, January 14, 2020

- SB 703 (Rabon) ADJOURN JANUARY SESSION

What Happened in the House

Tuesday, January 14, 2020

- Added to Calendar
 - SB 560 (Rabon) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS
 - SB 622 (Tillman) REDUCE THRESHOLD/MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION
 - SB 703 (Rabon) ADJOURN JANUARY SESSION
- Calendared pursuant to House Rule 36(b)
 - SB 560 (Rabon) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS
 - SB 622 (Tillman) REDUCE THRESHOLD/MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION
- Ordered Enrolled
 - SB 703 (Rabon) ADJOURN JANUARY SESSION
- Passed 1st Reading
 - HB 1032 (Richardson) EXPAND MEDICAID TO 100% FPL
 - SB 703 (Rabon) ADJOURN JANUARY SESSION
- Passed 2nd Reading
 - SB 560 (Rabon) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS
 - SB 622 (Tillman) REDUCE THRESHOLD/MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION
 - SB 703 (Rabon) ADJOURN JANUARY SESSION
- Passed 3rd Reading

- SB 560 (Rabon) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS
- SB 622 (Tillman) REDUCE THRESHOLD/MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION
- SB 703 (Rabon) ADJOURN JANUARY SESSION
- Re-referred To House Committee On Appropriations
 - SB 560 (Rabon) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS
- Re-referred To House Committee On Finance
 - SB 622 (Tillman) REDUCE THRESHOLD/MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION
- Referred To House Committee On Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House
 - HB 1032 (Richardson) EXPAND MEDICAID TO 100% FPL
- Rules Suspended
 - HB 1032 (Richardson) EXPAND MEDICAID TO 100% FPL
- Special Message Received From Senate
 - SB 703 (Rabon) ADJOURN JANUARY SESSION
- Special Message Sent To Senate
 - SB 560 (Rabon) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS
 - SB 622 (Tillman) REDUCE THRESHOLD/MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION
- Withdrawn From Com
 - SB 560 (Rabon) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS
 - SB 622 (Tillman) REDUCE THRESHOLD/MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION

What Happened in the Senate

Tuesday, January 14, 2020

- Concurred In H Com Sub
 - SB 560 (Rabon) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS
- Failed To Override Veto
 - SB 354 (Ballard) STRENGTHENING EDUCATORS' PAY ACT
 - SB 553 (Sanderson) REGULATORY REFORM ACT OF 2019
- Ordered Enrolled
 - SB 560 (Rabon) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS
- Passed 1st Reading
 - SB 703 (Rabon) ADJOURN JANUARY SESSION
- Passed 2nd Reading
 - SB 703 (Rabon) ADJOURN JANUARY SESSION
- Passed 3rd Reading
 - SB 703 (Rabon) ADJOURN JANUARY SESSION
- Placed On Calendar For 01/14/2020
 - SB 703 (Rabon) ADJOURN JANUARY SESSION
- Placed on Today's Calendar
 - HB 966 (Johnson, L.) 2019 APPROPRIATIONS ACT
 - SB 354 (Ballard) STRENGTHENING EDUCATORS' PAY ACT
 - SB 553 (Sanderson) REGULATORY REFORM ACT OF 2019
 - SB 560 (Rabon) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS
- Re-referred To Senate Committee On Rules and Operations of the Senate
 - HB 966 (Johnson, L.) 2019 APPROPRIATIONS ACT
- Referred To Senate Committee On Rules and Operations of the Senate
 - SB 622 (Tillman) REDUCE THRESHOLD/MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION
- Special Message Received For Concurrence in H Com Sub
 - SB 560 (Rabon) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS
 - SB 622 (Tillman) REDUCE THRESHOLD/MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION
- Special Message Sent To House
 - SB 703 (Rabon) ADJOURN JANUARY SESSION
- Withdrawn From Com
 - HB 966 (Johnson, L.) 2019 APPROPRIATIONS ACT
 - SB 354 (Ballard) STRENGTHENING EDUCATORS' PAY ACT

- SB 553 (Sanderson) REGULATORY REFORM ACT OF 2019
- Withdrawn from the Calendar
 - HB 966 (Johnson, L.) 2019 APPROPRIATIONS ACT

What Happened in House Committees

Tuesday, January 14, 2020

- All House Committees
 - Reported favorably by committee substitute
 - SB 560 (Rabon) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS
 - SB 622 (Tillman) REDUCE THRESHOLD/MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION

What Happened in Senate Committees

Tuesday, January 14, 2020

- All Senate Committees

House Calendar

Tuesday, April 28, 2020

House Convenes at 12:00 p.m.

Senate Calendar

Tuesday, April 28, 2020

Senate Convenes at 12:00 p.m.

House Committee Meetings

- **No House Committee meetings scheduled.**

Senate Committee Meetings

- **No Senate Committee meetings scheduled.**

Legislative Studies and Meetings

Items in **RED** are new listings.

LB: Legislative Building

LOB: Legislative Office Building.

More Information: <http://ncleg.net/LegislativeCalendar/>

Monday, Jan. 13

- 1 p.m. | Child Fatality Task Force - Intentional Death Prevention Committee, 1027/1128 LB.

Monday, Jan. 27

- 10 a.m. | Child Fatality Task Force - Unintentional Death Prevention Committee, 1027/1128 LB.

Monday, Feb. 10

- 1 p.m. | Child Fatality Task Force - Perinatal Health Committee, 1027/1128 LB.

Monday, Feb. 17

- Noon | NC Child Fatality Task Force, 1027/1128 LB.

N.C. Government Meetings and Hearings

Items in **RED** are new listings.

Wednesday, Jan. 15

- 8 a.m. | The Golden LEAF Board of Directors meet, Hyatt Place Raleigh-Durham Airport, 200 Airgate Dr., Morrisville.
- 9 a.m. | The Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors hold public hearing on proposed rule changes, 4601 Six Forks Rd., Suite 310, Raleigh.
- 6 p.m. | The N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries will hold a public hearing on a proposed shellfish lease in Dare County, Hatteras Community Center, 57689 N.C. Highway 12, Hatteras.

Thursday, Jan. 16

- 9 a.m. | The N.C. Rules Review Commission meets, 1711 New Hope Church Rd., Raleigh.
- 9 a.m. | The Executive Committee of The North Carolina Partnership for Children meets via conference call. The meeting will be held at 1100 Wake Forest Road, Raleigh. Contact: Yvonne Huntley: 919-821-9573.
- 11 a.m. | The Personnel Committee of the State Board of Community Colleges meets, AW North Carolina Conference Room, 200 W. Jones St., Raleigh.
- 6 p.m. | The N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries will hold a public hearing on proposed shellfish leases in Onslow County, Onslow County Government Center, Training room 111, 234 NW Corridor Blvd., Jacksonville.

Friday, Jan. 17

- 9 a.m. | The State Board of Community Colleges meets, NC Community College System Office, 200 W. Jones St., Raleigh.
- 1 p.m. | The Midwifery Joint Committee holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, NC Board of Nursing, 4516 Lake Boone Trl., Raleigh.

Monday, Jan. 20

- **6:45 p.m | The Board of Directors of The North Carolina Partnership for Children meets, Trophy Table + Tap, 225 S. Wilmington St., Raleigh.**

Tuesday, Jan. 21

- **Cancelled** | The Fund Development and Communications Committee of the North Carolina Partnership for Children via conference call. The meeting will be held at 1100 Wake Forest Rd., Raleigh. Contact: Yvonne Huntley, 919-821-9573.
- 10 a.m. | The Board of Directors of The North Carolina Partnership for Children meets, 1100 Wake Forest Rd., Raleigh. Contact: Yvonne Huntley, 919-821-9573.

Thursday, Jan. 23

- 9:30 a.m. | The N.C. State Treasurer Teachers 'and State Employees' and Local Government Employees' Retirement System Boards of Trustees host an association roundtable, Department of State Treasurer, Dogwood Conference Room, 1st Floor, 3200 Atlantic Ave., Raleigh.
- 10 a.m. | The Department of Insurance holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, 1st Floor Hearing Room, Room 131 (Albemarle Building), 325 N. Salisbury St., Raleigh.
- 1 p.m. | The State Board of Elections hold public hearing on proposed rule changes, Third Floor, Dobbs Building, 430 N. Salisbury St., Raleigh.

Tuesday, Jan. 28

- 9 a.m. | The N.C. Appraisal Board holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, NC Appraisal Board 5830 Six Forks Rd., Raleigh.

Wednesday, Jan. 29

- 9:30 a.m. | The N.C. State Treasurer Teachers 'and State Employees' and Local Government Employees' Retirement System Boards of Trustees meet, Department of State Treasurer, Dogwood Conference Room, 1st Floor, 3200 Atlantic Ave., Raleigh.

Thursday, Jan. 30

- 9 a.m. | The State Board of Education holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, Education Building, 301 N. Wilmington St., 7th Floor Board Room, Raleigh.

Tuesday, Feb. 4

- 9 a.m. | The N.C. Council of State meets, Second Floor of the Dobbs Building, 430 North Salisbury St., Raleigh.

Wednesday, Feb. 5

- 2 p.m. | The state Medical Care Commission holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, Dorothea Dix Park, Brown Building, Room 104, 801 Biggs Dr., Raleigh.

Thursday, Feb. 6

- 10 a.m. | The Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission hold public hearing on proposed rule changes, 1700 Tryon Park Dr., Raleigh.

Thursday, Feb. 13

- 9 a.m. | The State Board of Education holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, Education Building, 301 N. Wilmington St., 7th Floor Board Room, Raleigh.

Tuesday, Feb. 18

- 10 a.m. | The state Board of Pharmacy holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, North Carolina Board of Pharmacy, 6015 Farrington Rd., Suite 201, Chapel Hill.

Thursday, Feb. 20

- 1 p.m. | The Board of Massage and Bodywork Therapy holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, Wells Fargo Capitol Center, 13th Floor Conference Room, 150 Fayetteville St., Raleigh.
- 3 p.m. | The Department of Transportation holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, Transportation Mobility and Safety Conference Room, 161, 750 Greenfield Parkway, Garner.

Friday, April 17

- 9:30 a.m. | The N.C. State Treasurer Teachers 'and State Employees' and Local Government Employees' Retirement System Boards of Trustees host an association roundtable, Department of State Treasurer, Dogwood Conference Room, 1st Floor, 3200 Atlantic Ave., Raleigh.

Thursday, April 23

- 9:30 a.m. | The N.C. State Treasurer Teachers 'and State Employees' and Local Government Employees' Retirement System Boards of Trustees meet, Department of State Treasurer, Dogwood Conference Room, 1st Floor, 3200 Atlantic Ave., Raleigh.

Wednesday, May 13

- 10 a.m. | The Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, Wake Technical Community College Public Safety, Training Center 321 Chapanoke Rd., Raleigh.

Friday, July 24

- 9:30 a.m. | The N.C. State Treasurer Teachers 'and State Employees' and Local Government Employees' Retirement System Boards of Trustees host an association roundtable, Department of State Treasurer, Dogwood Conference Room, 1st Floor, 3200 Atlantic Ave., Raleigh.

Thursday, July 30

- 9:30 a.m. | The N.C. State Treasurer Teachers 'and State Employees' and Local Government Employees' Retirement System Boards of Trustees meet, Department of State Treasurer, Dogwood Conference Room, 1st Floor, 3200 Atlantic Ave., Raleigh.

Friday, Oct. 23

- 9:30 a.m. | The N.C. State Treasurer Teachers 'and State Employees' and Local Government Employees' Retirement System Boards of Trustees host an association roundtable, Department of State Treasurer, Dogwood Conference Room, 1st Floor, 3200 Atlantic Ave., Raleigh.

Thursday, Oct. 29

- 9:30 a.m. | The N.C. State Treasurer Teachers 'and State Employees' and Local Government Employees' Retirement System Boards of Trustees meet, Department of State Treasurer, Dogwood Conference Room, 1st Floor, 3200 Atlantic Ave., Raleigh.

UNC Board of Governors

More Information: <https://www.northcarolina.edu/bog/schedule.php>

Friday, Jan. 17

- TBA | The UNC Board of Governors, C.S.L.D. Building, Chapel Hill.

Friday, Feb. 21

- TBA | The UNC Board of Governors, C.S.L.D. Building, Chapel Hill.

Friday, March 20

- TBA | The UNC Board of Governors, C.S.L.D. Building, Chapel Hill.

Friday, April 17

- TBA | The UNC Board of Governors, UNC Pembroke.

Wednesday, May 20

- TBA | The UNC Board of Governors, C.S.L.D. Building, Chapel Hill.

N.C. Utilities Commission Hearing Schedule

Dobbs Building
430 North Salisbury Street
Raleigh, North Carolina
More Information: <http://www.ncuc.commerce.state.nc.us/activities/activit.htm>

Monday, Jan. 27

- Staff Conference

Monday, Feb. 3

- Staff Conference

N.C. Dept. of Environmental Quality

The N.C. Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources has a new name - the N.C. Dept. of Environmental Quality. More Information:
<http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/guest/home>

Tuesday, Jan. 14

- 10 a.m. | The Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership's Leadership Council meets, 2440 Lennoxville Road, Beaufort.
- 6 p.m. | The Environmental Management Commission holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, Green Square Building, Room 1210, 217 West Jones St., Raleigh.

Thursday, Jan. 16

- 2 p.m. | The Environmental Management Commission holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, Green Square Building, 217 West Jones St., Raleigh.

Tuesday, Jan. 21

- 6 p.m. | The N.C. Division of Water Resources (DWR) host a public hearing, UNC Asheville, HIG225 Beaucatcher Mountain Room Highsmith Student Union, One University Heights, Asheville.

Wednesday, Jan. 29

- 8:30 a.m. | Nature-Based Solutions for Coastal Hazards Workshop, 101 Pivers Island Rd, Beaufort.

Other Meetings and Events of Interest

Items in **RED** are new listings.

Tuesday, Jan. 14

- **3:20 p.m. | Gov. Roy Cooper to make announcement on the Finish Line Grants program, Overcash Building, Central Piedmont Community College, 1202 Elizabeth Ave., Charlotte.**

Saturday, Feb. 29

- 6 p.m. | North Carolina Democratic Party holds Blue NC Gala in Charlotte. Contact: NCDP.org.

Saturday, June 6

- 6 p.m. | North Carolina Democratic Party holds 2020 Unity Dinner, 2411 Dunn Ave., Raleigh. Contact: NCDP.org.

Insider State Government News Service

421 Fayetteville Street, Suite 104
Raleigh, NC 27601
Customer Service (919) 836-2807
www.ncinsider.com

Colin Campbell, Editor (ccampbell@ncinsider.com) - (919) 829-4698
Danielle Battaglia, Insider Reporter (dbattaglia@ncinsider.com) - (919) 836-2801
Matthew Betts, Customer Service Manager (mbetts@ncinsider.com) - (919) 836-2807
Graham Hoppe, Production Editor (ghoppe@ncinsider.com) - (919) 829-8951
Clifton Dowell, General Manager (cdowell@ncinsider.com) - (919) 836-2804

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