

North Carolina General Assembly members are picking up the pace of their committee work in their fourth full week in session. Several budget subcommittees scheduled their first meetings of the year Tuesday morning to examine the current-year budget and potential challenges for the next two-year spending plans. Other committees considered contentious legislation, including legislation that would withhold certain funds from local governments if they are found to be limiting or restricting the enforcement of federal immigration laws.

Two Republican and two Democratic House members have teamed up on a new proposal to repeal House Bill 2 that also would prohibit cities and counties from regulating bathroom access in private facilities. Rep. Chuck McGrady (R-Henderson), the primary sponsor of House Bill 186, said during a news conference that the legislature must act before HB2 causes more economic damage. The NCAA is reviewing bids for championship events in North Carolina and the state could miss out on opportunities over the law. House Bill 186 was the subject of closed-door negotiations between Republicans and Democrats on Wednesday. Its initial sponsors are McGrady, Rep. Marvin Lucas (D-Cumberland), Rep. Ken Goodman (D-Rockingham), and Rep. Ted Davis (R-New Hanover). Whether there will be enough support among Republicans in the House and Senate to pass legislation is still up in the air. Governor Roy Cooper -- who floated his own compromise last week -- has voiced concerns about the proposal.

The House Elections Committee voted Tuesday to make elections for state District Court and Superior Court judges partisan. The vote in committee was largely along party lines, with Democrats opposing the change. House Bill 100 was approved by the full House on Wednesday and sent to the Senate for consideration. If the bill becomes law, District and Superior Court judicial candidates would need to go through a party primary, and general election ballots would include the candidates' party affiliation. Candidates who are not registered with a political party would need to go through a petition process to get their names on the ballot. Superior Court elections were switched from partisan to nonpartisan in 1996, and the legislature made the same change for District Court in 2001.

The House voted 45-71 Tuesday against a proposal to put a time limit on veto override votes -- which relates to a practice known as the "veto garage." Speakers of the House have occasionally delayed votes to override a Governor's veto if they are concerned they might not have enough votes for the required three-fifths majority. Sometimes, a veto override appears on the chamber's agenda for weeks before a vote, which may happen when several legislators from the minority party are absent. When the provision was debated by the full House, an amendment was offered to require the veto override vote to occur within 5 days of the veto -- the amendment was defeated.

The House and Senate adjourned on Thursday and will reconvene next Monday.

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For more information about legislation described in the legislative reports, feel free to contact me at [dferrell@vanblk.com](mailto:dferrell@vanblk.com) or (919) 754-1171. Information is also available on the General Assembly's website: [www.ncga.state.nc.us](http://www.ncga.state.nc.us).

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