

North Carolina Sheriffs' Association

Serving the Sheriffs and Citizens of North Carolina since 1922

Weekly Legislative Report



June 13, 2008

It appears that the Senate version of the budget bill will be released on Monday. The Senate Appropriations Subcommittees have scheduled meetings for late Monday afternoon to review their section of the budget. If all goes as planned, the full Senate Appropriations Committee could approve the legislation on Tuesday and it could be voted on by the full Senate on both Wednesday and Thursday.

If this schedule is followed, the House and Senate would be in a position as of Friday to begin negotiations to resolve the differences between the House version of the budget bill and the Senate version of the budget bill. It appears that various House budget leaders have been in consultation with the Senate budget leaders as the Senate version of the budget has been prepared. This has fueled speculation that the Senate version of the budget bill may be close to being acceptable to the House. If that occurs, the House and Senate could meet their goal of having a budget enacted no later than June 30th, so it would be available for the start of the State's fiscal year on July 1st.

Committee activity has picked up considerably in the last week or so and some committee chairmen have announced that it will not be long before their committees are closed down for this Session. If this trend continues, it will be a sure sign that the General Assembly does not intend to spend the whole summer in Raleigh this year.

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

BILL STATUS

HOUSE BILL 933, Jessica Lunsford Act for North Carolina, was approved by the Senate and returned to the House for consideration of the Senate changes. As amended, this bill would require that when a juvenile [less than 16 years of age] registers with a Sheriff's office as a sex offender, the Sheriff's office must notify the local Board of Education of the registration of the juvenile sex offender. Preliminary estimates indicate that there are currently less than 100 juvenile sex offenders registered in North Carolina at this time.

HOUSE BILL 946, Vandalism Damages More Than \$5,000/Felony, was approved by the Senate and returned to the House for consideration of the Senate changes.

HOUSE BILL 2189, Domestic Violence Victim Assistance, has been approved by the House and Senate and will be sent to Governor Easley for his signature.

HOUSE BILL 2292, Local Sheriffs/Access DHHS Drug Data Base, originally only applied to the Moore County Sheriff's Office but was amended in committee this week to also include the Henderson County Sheriff's Office. This bill will allow the Sheriffs and deputy Sheriffs in those counties who are investigating the diversion and illegal use of prescription drugs, often referred to as "doctor shopping", to access information in the prescription drug database maintained by the Department of Health and Human Services.

SENATE BILL 1358, Street Gang Prevention Act, has been re-referred to the House Judiciary II Committee and is currently scheduled to be considered by that Committee on Tuesday, June 17th.

SENATE BILL 1480, Medical Release for Ill and Disabled Inmates, was signed into law by Governor Mike Easley on June 10, 2008.

SENATE BILL 1955, Limited Release from Prison for Deportation, was approved by the Senate Judiciary I Committee this week and is currently scheduled to be considered by the full Senate on Tuesday, June 17, 2008.

SENATE BILL 2081, NICS Reporting/Restoration, was approved on Thursday by the House Judiciary I Committee. This bill provides that when a person is involuntarily committed for mental illness, that information will be transmitted by the Clerk of Court to the Federal NICS database so that those persons can be prohibited from receiving approval for a pistol purchase permit or a concealed carry handgun permit. This legislation also includes a provision allowing a person to have their name removed from the NICS database if a judge determines that the individual no longer suffers from the condition that resulted in the involuntary commitment and the person is no longer a danger to himself or to others. **This bill is supported by the North Carolina Sheriffs' Association.**

SENATE BILL 2107, Set Fees for 2008 Budget, contains legislation related to various fees charged by government agencies. One provision increases the cost of court in criminal and civil cases by \$5.00. The legislation directs that \$1.00 of this fee must be credited to the Court Information Technology Fund to upgrade, maintain and operate the judicial and county courthouse telephone systems. It specifies that the remainder of the fee will be credited to a new Judicial Department Facilities Fund.

If you would like a copy of any of the legislation introduced or considered by this year's General Assembly, copies are available on the General Assembly's World Wide Web site: www.ncleg.net.

You may also receive one copy of as many bills as you are interested in, free of charge, by calling the General Assembly's Printed Bills office at 919/733-5648. They will need to know if it is a House bill or Senate bill and the bill number. (For example, Senate Bill 8).

Eddie Caldwell
Executive Vice President and General Counsel
North Carolina Sheriffs' Association

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