

The Daily Bulletin: 2025-07-31

PUBLIC/HOUSE BILLS

H 958 (2025-2026) **ELECTION LAW CHANGES**. Filed Apr 10 2025, *AN ACT TO MAKE VARIOUS CHANGES REGARDING ELECTION LAWS*.

House committee substitute to the 2nd edition makes the following changes. Makes technical and organizational changes throughout. Removes provisions broadening the type of statements that a member of the State Board of Elections is prevented from making under GS 163-19 as well as those that applied to county board of elections (county BOE) under GS 163-30.

Section 1.1.

Now requires, in GS 163-182.2, that a county BOE adopt a resolution setting a meeting to count provisional ballots at least two weeks before such meeting occurs if it wants to review provisional ballots for approval (was, no resolution for meeting required). Removes language referring to a county BOE finding an affidavit in support of a provisional ballot valid as part of its process in determining whether to count such ballots. Now requires that when an individual has voted a provisional official ballot offer completing an affidavit, and the county BOE has determined that these are grounds to believe the affidavit is false within five days after the election, the decision on whether to count the ballot must be made by the date of the county canvass. Makes organizational changes.

Section 1.4.

Removes provisions from GS 162-234 requiring a county BOE to meet after the day of the election and prior to the day of canvass to count the described absentee ballots, including those with cured deficiencies, as specified. Changes the time that a county BOE must meet to count all absentee ballots on election day from 5:00 PM to 9:00 AM. Makes corresponding change to the time those absentee ballots can be challenged by on election day.

Section 1.5.

Extends the effective date to its changes to GS 163-275 from December 1, 2025, to January 1, 2026.

Section 2.5.

Removes inclusion of referendums in new GS 163-165.6A (prohibiting rank choice voting) and makes conforming change.

Section 2.6.

Under GS 163-82.7, if a county BOE tentatively determines that a voter applicant is qualified to vote at the address given on the application, then it must send a notice to the applicant stating that the county board will register the applicant to vote if the notice is not returned as undeliverable ("the first notice"). If this notice is returned as undeliverable, the county BOE is required to send a second notice to the applicant at the same address. No timeframe is currently provided for when these notices must be mailed. Requires a county BOE to send the first notice within five business days of receipt of the registration application. Directs county BOE's to send a second notice within five business days of receiving notice that the first notice was undeliverable.

Applies to notices sent on or after January 1, 2026.

Section 2.7.

Amends the information that must be included in a confirmation of address mailing under GS 163-82.14 to include a pre-printed space (was, a location) which can be marked to indicate that the registrant does not reside at the address given by the registrant and that the mailing should be returned to the appropriate sender.

Applies to notices sent on or after January 1, 2026.

Section 2.8.

Requires, in GS 163-166.40, that all materials and voting equipment containing tallies of ballots or individual counts of ballots cast during the early voting period, including any digital recordations be kept in a secure, locked location by the county BOE.

Section 2.9.

Specifies in GS 163-82.14 (voter list maintenance) that voter registration data received from other states pursuant to a data sharing agreement is not a public record. Effective January 1, 2026.

Section 2.10.

Expands the activities considered a Class 2 misdemeanor under GS 163-221 (pertaining to specified electoral petitions) to include compensating a person based on the number of signatures collected for a petition. Applies to offenses committed on or after December 1, 2025.

Section 2.11.

Enacts GS 163-904 (concerning audit and challenge of ineligible votes cast) directing the State Board of Elections (Board) to conduct a uniform statewide audit after each primary or election to identify any early voting ballots and absentee ballots that are ineligible to be counted in that primary or election for one of the reasons identified in GS 163-87 (challenges allowed during early voting and on the day of a primary or election), as evidenced by official government database records. Instructs the Board to distribute the audit results to county BOE's by 5:00 PM on or before the fourth business day before canvass. By no later than 5:00 PM on the third business day before canvass, requires county BOE's to review the results of the Board's audit. If a county BOE determines that any vote cast was ineligible to be counted, then the chair (deemed to be a registered voter of the same county as the challenged voter) must serve a challenge on the voter casting that ballot and conduct challenge proceedings as described. Specifies that a county BOE bears the burden of proof in any such challenge.

Expands the scope of the challenge procedures under GS 163-89 to also include early voting ballots and ballots cast under the Uniform Military and Overseas Voters Act (currently, just absentee ballots). Makes technical, organizational, and conforming changes. Changes the location for in-person deliveries of challenges to the chief judge at the precinct where the challenged voter is registered (was, where the challenger resides as well). Removes requirement that the chief election judge's delivery of hand-delivered challenges to the county BOE occur on the day of the county canvass. Requires all challenge hearings be audio and video recorded. Requires that ballots for which a challenge is sustained to be counted as provisional ballots for any ballot items for which the challenged voter is eligible to vote (currently, voter's votes are not counted). Expands standing to appeal challenge decisions by a county BOE under GS 163-90.2 to a county BOE that initiated such a challenge. Makes organizational change. Applies to challenges filed on or after January 1, 2026.

Section 2.12.

Directs that for the time period that a Class C drivers license expiration date is extended in accordance with Section 18 of SL 2025-47 (imposing temporary moratorium on the expiration of certain Class C drivers licenses), that Class C drivers license are deemed valid and unexpired for the purposes of GS 163-166.16 (photo ID requirements for voting in person). Effective when it becomes law and expires on December 31, 2027.

Section 2.13.

Requires a person registering to vote to provide their full social security number under GS 163-82.4 (currently, only need to provide the last four digits of that number when they do not have a drivers license). Makes technical and conforming changes. Directs the Board to update voter registration forms by no later than July 1, 2026, to reflect the changes required by Section 2.13. Instructs the Board and county BOE's to continue to accept a voter registration application form that lacks a full social security number until December 31, 2026. As of January 1, 2027, the Board and county BOE's can only accept voter registration application forms containing a voter's full social security number.

Section 2.14.

Instructs the Department of Transportation (DOT) to cooperate with the Board to provide it with the full social security numbers of any registered voter in the State for which the DMV has such information.

Section 2.15.

Increases the compensation for members of county BOE's under GS 163-32 from \$25 to \$100 per meeting for the time they're actually engaged in discharging their duties. Makes technical changes. Effective July 1, 2027.

Section 3.1 (was, Section 3.2).

Changes the effective date of the changes to GS 163-25 (Authority of Board to assist in litigation), so that it applies to counsel employed on, retained on, or hired or retained after the act becomes law (was, litigation existing on or after the effective date).

Section 3.2 (was, Section 3.3).

Reduces the cap of Board employees that the Board's executive director may exempt from the State Human Resources Act from 25 employees to 5 employees under GS 126-5.

Section 4.1

Narrows the types of identification that must be submitted with a military-overseas ballot under GS 163-258.10 to the following: (1) an unexpired military ID card issued by the US government; (2) an unexpired US passport card or photo page of an unexpired US passport; or (3) an unexpired NC drivers license (was, any of the described ID's under GS 163-166.16(a), including military ID cards issued by the US government, regardless of the expiration date). Removes option for the servicemember to submit an affidavit in lieu of identification as described in GS 163-166.16(d) (allowing for affidavits upon religious objections, natural disaster, or reasonable impediment). Makes organizational changes.

Section 4.2.

Removes an overseas voter born outside of the US whose parent or guardian would have been eligible to vote in the State before leaving the US from the definition of a *covered voter* under GS 163-258.2 (definitions of the Uniform Military and Overseas Voting Act). Makes conforming changes to GS 163-258.5 (overseas voter registration address). Applies to elections held on or after January 1, 2026.

Section 4.3.

Enacts GS 163-258.21, concerning curable deficiencies under the Uniform Military and Overseas Voting Act (Article 21A of GS Chapter 163), as follows. Directs a county BOE to promptly notify the voter if a cast ballot contains a curable deficiency, including the manner in which the deficiency may be cured. Defines *curable deficiency* to mean when a voter failed to include a photocopy of the specified identification. Considers such ballots timely cured if the cure documentation is received by the day of the county canvass. Provides for three means of delivering cure documentation to the county BOE. Effective January 1, 2026, and applies to elections held on or after that date.

Section 5.1.

Amends GS 163-278.10A by increasing the threshold for exempting certain candidates from financial reporting from contribution of \$1,000 or less to \$3,000 or less. Makes conforming changes.

Increases the dollar threshold triggering the special reporting requirements of contributions and independent expenditures under GS 163-278.12 from \$100 to \$1,000. Requires the Board, by not later than October 1, 2025, to adjust the thresholds enacted by this section, effective for the election cycle beginning January 1, 2027.

Section 5.2 (was, Sections 5.1).

Makes technical changes to depiction of unamended provision of GS 163-278.9A in the act.

Section 5.3 (was, Section 5.2).

Removes references to "business entity" and replaces them with "person" in the term *foreign national* in GS 163-278.6. Exempts persons organized and operating in the United States that is wholly or majority owned by a foreign national or combination of foreign nationals from the term *foreign national* so long as (1) any contribution or expenditure the person lawfully makes derives entirely from funds generated by operations in the United States and (2) all decisions concerning the contribution or expenditure are made by individuals who are United States citizens or lawful permanent residents, except for setting overall budget amounts.

Requires, in GS 163-278.9A, as amended by Section 5.2 of this act, for the treasurer of an organization subject to GS 163-278.9A to file a signed statement with the Board no later than the tenth day following the organization of a referendum committee affirming that no preliminary activity (defined) was funded by one or more foreign nationals. Requires that reports submitted under the statute include an affirmation by the treasurer that the contributor associated with each contribution is not a foreign national.

Expands the conducted prohibited under GS 163-278.15 to including soliciting contributions from any of the listed individuals. Now includes foreign nationals in that list. Makes technical changes.

Expands the person prohibited from (1) making election contributions, (2) using any of its money or property for any contribution to a candidate or political committee or (3) compensating, reimbursing, or indemnifying any person or individual for money or property so used or for any contribution or expenditure so made (including aiding or abetting such things as described in the statute) to include foreign nationals under GS 163-278.19. Also makes it illegal for a foreign national to aid, abet, advise, or consent to any such contributions. Makes technical, clarifying, and conforming changes.

Expressly prohibits a foreign national from making any contribution or donation to a political party or affiliated party committee under GS 163-278.19B.

Rewrites new GS 163-278.19C so that it prevents foreign nationals from being able to: (1) direct, dictate, control, or participate in the decision-making process of any individual's, person's, or referendum committee's activities to influence a referendum, including the making of contributions or independent expenditures, as described or (2) solicit, directly or indirectly, the making of a contribution or an expenditure by another individual or person to influence a referendum. Prevents a referendum committee from or indirectly, solicit or accept any contribution from a foreign national. Provides for confidentiality of investigative and enforcement proceedings as described. Makes conforming changes to GS 163-278.19A (allowable contributions) and GS 163-278.27 (making it a Class 2 misdemeanor for certain election law violations) to include GS 163-278.19C.

Removes language making the section applicable to contributions made or accepted on or after January 1, 2026, so that it is just effective on that date.

Intro. by Blackwell, Stevens.

STUDY, GS 14, GS 126, GS 163

[View summary](#)

Government, Elections, State Agencies, State Board of Elections, State Government, State Personnel, Military and Veteran's Affairs

LOCAL/HOUSE BILLS

H 305 (2025-2026) **GUILFORD COUNTY SALES TAX DISTRIBUTION MODS.** Filed Mar 5 2025, *AN ACT APPLICABLE TO GUILFORD COUNTY ONLY THAT (1) PROMOTES FAIRNESS IN SALES TAX DISTRIBUTIONS BY ALLOWING MUNICIPALITIES THAT DO NOT LEVY AD VALOREM TAXES TO RECEIVE A PERCENTAGE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SALES AND USE TAX DISTRIBUTIONS; (2) MODIFIES THE BALLOT QUESTION FOR A REFERENDUM REGARDING THE LEVY OF THE ARTICLE 46 QUARTER-CENT SALES AND USE TAX; (3) SPECIFIES THE USES OF THE ARTICLE 46 TAX PROCEEDS; AND (4) DISTRIBUTES A PORTION OF THE ARTICLE 46 TAX PROCEEDS TO CERTAIN MUNICIPALITIES IN GUILFORD COUNTY.*

AN ACT APPLICABLE TO GUILFORD COUNTY ONLY THAT (1) PROMOTES FAIRNESS IN SALES TAX DISTRIBUTIONS BY ALLOWING MUNICIPALITIES THAT DO NOT LEVY AD VALOREM TAXES TO RECEIVE A PERCENTAGE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SALES AND USE TAX DISTRIBUTIONS; (2) MODIFIES THE BALLOT QUESTION FOR A REFERENDUM REGARDING THE LEVY OF THE ARTICLE 46 QUARTER-CENT SALES AND USE TAX; (3) SPECIFIES THE USES OF THE ARTICLE 46 TAX PROCEEDS; AND (4) DISTRIBUTES A PORTION OF THE ARTICLE 46 TAX PROCEEDS TO CERTAIN MUNICIPALITIES IN GUILFORD COUNTY. SL 2025-87. Enacted July 31, 2025. Effective July 31, 2025, except as otherwise provided.

ACTIONS ON BILLS

PUBLIC BILLS

H 8: NC MANAGING ENVIRONMENTAL WASTE ACT OF 2025.

Senate: Regular Message Received From House

Senate: Passed 1st Reading

Senate: Ref To Com On Rules and Operations of the Senate

H 87: EDUCATIONAL CHOICE FOR CHILDREN ACT (ECCA). (NEW)

House: Ratified

H 125: CONTINUING BUDGET OPERATIONS. (NEW)

House: Ratified

H 958: ELECTION LAW CHANGES.

House: Reptd Fav Com Sub 2

House: Re-ref Com On Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

S 55: EXPEDITED REMOVAL OF UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS. (NEW)

Senate: Pres. To Gov. 7/31/2025

S 245: EXPAND REMOTE DRIVERS LICENSE SERVICES. (NEW)

House: Regular Message Sent To Senate

Senate: Regular Message Received For Concurrence in H Com Sub

Senate: Ref To Com On Rules and Operations of the Senate

LOCAL BILLS

H 305: GUILFORD COUNTY SALES TAX DISTRIBUTION MODS.

House: Ratified

House: Ch. SL 2025-87

S 214: VARIOUS LOCAL BOUNDARIES.(NEW)

House: Regular Message Sent To Senate

Senate: Regular Message Received For Concurrence in H Com Sub

Senate: Ref To Com On Rules and Operations of the Senate

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