

The Daily Bulletin: 2026-07-29

PUBLIC/HOUSE BILLS

H 377 (2025-2026) **2026 COURT CHANGES. (NEW)** Filed Mar 11 2025, *AN ACT TO ENACT CERTAIN MODIFICATIONS TO THE LAWS RELATED TO THE NORTH CAROLINA COURT SYSTEM AND TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO ESTATE PLANNING STATUTES.*

Conference report to the 4th edition makes the following changes.

Removes the following provision: (1) Section 4, concerning the deadline to appeal in certain property cases, (2) Section 22, concerning local supplements for magistrate pay, and (3) Section 25, concerning distinctions between costs and expenses awarded in civil actions.

Section 9

Amends proposed changes to GS 7A-452 to require that when an indigent person has entered notice of appeal and appellate counsel has been appointed, that the complete trial division file in the case and documentary exhibits and digital storage media containing exhibits be made available to any attorney of record (was, to the appointed attorney).

Section 15

Amends the proposed changes to GS 7B-2901(a) by adding to the conditions under which a judge may issue an order disclosing information in a juvenile court record to a person who is not authorized to examine the record without a court order to include when the order is necessary for the protection of the public.

Section 21

Amends proposed GS 7A-47.3(a1) to require the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, when assigning superior court judges for a district consisting of at least one county with a population over 1 million, to include judges from (1) other districts in that same judicial division and (2) districts from any judicial division adjacent to the division with the district (was, adjacent to the district) consisting of at least one county with a population over 1 million. Prohibits assigning a judge from a district in an adjacent judicial division to more than one six-month term every five years (previous, allowed an exception when the judge consents). Adds that (a1) does not limit the authority of the chief justice to assign superior court judges to sessions or cases as necessary to balance the number of judges assigned in each division and to administer the courts and effectuate the principle of rotation among the various districts of a judicial division. Changes the effective date of new (a1) from when the act became law to January 1, 2027, applicable to rotation on or after that date.

Adds the following new content.

Section 28

Amends GS 7A-374, containing definitions that apply to Article 30, Judicial Standards Commission, as follows. Amends the definitions of censure, public reprimand, and remove or removal, to no longer require that those actions be based on a written recommendation by the North Carolina Judicial Standards Commission (Commission); also now refers to those actions as rulings instead of findings. Adds and defines the term trial judge. Makes additional technical changes.

Amends GS 7A-377 by amending what actions can be taken when a respondent takes their case to the Supreme Court to allow the Court to approve the recommendation, remand for further proceedings or modify the Commission's recommendation (was, reject the recommendation) and also now allows imposing discipline at the Court's discretion. Adds that if the Commission, while an investigation or proceedings is pending, finds that an immediate and irreparable injury, loss, or damage will result to the public or administration of justice if a trial judge subject to an investigation or proceeding remains in office until it is resolved, the chief justice, upon recommendation of the Commission, may suspend the judge without pay under rules promulgated by the Supreme Court. Requires that the rules ensure due process rights are afforded to the trial judges before

being suspended. Restores compensation and ends the suspension immediately upon resolution of the proceeding unless the Supreme Court has ordered the judge removed or suspended. Makes conforming changes to the definition of suspend or suspension.

Section 29

Amends GS 14-16.10 by amending the definition of court officers as it applies to Article 5A, Endangering Executive, Legislative, Court, and Local Elected Officers, to also include trial court administrator or judicial support staff. Applies to offense committed on or after December 1, 2026.

Intro. by Stevens.

[GS 1, GS 7A, GS 7B, GS 8B, GS 9, GS 14, GS 20, GS 28, GS 30, GS 31, GS 36C, GS 42, GS 48, GS 50, GS 143B, GS 163](#)

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[Courts/Judiciary, Civil, Civil Law, Civil Procedure, Family Law, Juvenile Law, Abuse, Neglect and Dependency, Motor Vehicle, Court System, Administrative Office of the Courts, Criminal Justice, Criminal Law and Procedure, Government, State Agencies, Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, Military and Veteran's Affairs, Transportation](#)

PUBLIC/SENATE BILLS

S 445 (2025-2026) [REGULATORY REFORM ACT OF 2026. \(NEW\)](#) Filed Mar 24 2025, *AN ACT TO PROVIDE FURTHER REGULATORY RELIEF TO THE CITIZENS OF NORTH CAROLINA.*

Conference report to the 5th edition makes the following changes.

This conference report is identical to the conference report reported in by the House on 7/27/2026, with the following changes.

Section 17.6

Adds the following.

Enacts Article 53, the “Voluntary Portable Benefits Plan Act,” to GS Chapter 66 authorizing any person or entity, including an internet or application-based company, to contribute funds to a portable benefit account for an independent contractor. Defines portable benefit plan as one that is administered by a third-party benefit plan provider, is chosen by the independent contractor and assigned to a beneficiary rather than to a hiring party, and it funds benefits allowable under new GS 66-531. Defines additional terms, including portable benefit account provider and portable benefit plan provider. Requires that the independent contractor affirmatively opt in, with the agreement indicating that the making of contributions by the hiring party and the receipt of contributions by an independent contractor are voluntary and the independent contractor must be allowed to opt out at any time; prohibits the hiring party from requiring the independent contractor from making an account with a specific portable benefit account provider as a condition of receiving contributions; and requires the hiring party to treat contributions as compensation. Makes the portable benefit account the sole property of the independent contractor and specifies that funds in the account are not subject to claims of a contributor or the account’s creditors arising from the hiring relationship and they do not revert to the hiring party. Sets out actions the account holder may take without penalty. Limits the use of portable benefit account funds to purchasing portable benefit plans for the 13 types of benefits listed, to pay reasonable and disclosed portable benefit account fees, or for distribution to the portable benefit account owner. Specifies that contributions by a hiring party to any portable benefit account cannot be treated as evidence that a worker is an employee of the hiring party under State unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, taxation, or labor laws. Provides that an independent contractor who opts in to receiving contributions from a hiring party shall select a portable benefit account provider to administer the funds. Prohibits a hiring party from serving as an account provider except as a pass-through contributor. Prohibits conditioning fund distribution on continued work for hiring party. Specifies requirements for segregation of funds, fee disclosure, financial responsibility, recordkeeping, standard of care, and approval from the Commissioner of the North Carolina Department of Labor.

Amends GS 105-153.5 to allows deductions from their adjusted gross income for the amount of a contribution made to a portable benefit account during the taxable year. Also requires a taxpayer to add to their adjusted gross income the amount withdrawn from a portable benefit account to the extent it was withdrawn and not used to pay for a portable benefit plan.

Amends GS 105-163.3 by excluding from the income tax withholding requirements compensation deposited into a portable benefit account on behalf of a payee.

Adds new subsection GS 105-251.2(c1) to require portable benefit account providers to give information to the Secretary of Revenue upon request subject to specified parameters.

Applies to taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2027.

Section 39

Removes the previous content of Section 39 which required the Environmental Management Commission (EMC) to implement the New Stormwater MDC Rule, (15A NCAC 02H .1050, MDC for All Stormwater Control Measures) so that when an applicant requests approval of a new stormwater control technology and associated Minimum Design Criteria, the Division is required to act on that request within 90 days of receipt, including the standards for siting, site preparation, design, construction, maintenance, and research studies; if it fails to approve or deny the request within that time, the request is deemed approved and the standards submitted by the applicant are adopted as the Minimum Design Criteria.

Adds a new provision requiring the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to approve for use as a new stormwater technology any prefabricated permeable block panel system approved for use in the State. Requires that DEQ, in developing Minimum Design Criteria for this technology, to ensure that the MDC follows the manufacturer's installation and service requirements as closely as possible while complying with federal requirements. Provides that when the system is used in traffic-rated areas, a professional engineer may use the approved system upon showing that the system meets H-20 structural loading requirements. Defines traffic related areas.

Section 43

Amends proposed GS 160D-703.1, residential right of use in commercial districts, so that the statute now applies to cities with a population of 80,000 or greater located in counties with a population of 1 million or greater (was, cities with a population of 50,000 or greater that are located in counties not in the coastal area, with a population of 275,000 or greater).

Intro. by Jarvis.

[STUDY, Brunswick, Forsyth, GS 14, GS 15A, GS 20, GS 24, GS 25, GS 41, GS 47, GS 47C, GS 47F, GS 47H, GS 55, GS 57D, GS 58, GS 59, GS 62, GS 66, GS 74, GS 75, GS 86B, GS 87, GS 88B, GS 90, GS 95, GS 99E, GS 103, GS 113, GS 115C, GS 119, GS 130A, GS 132, GS 136, GS 143, GS 143B, GS 150B, GS 160D](#)

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Business and Commerce, Consumer Protection, Corporation and Partnerships, Occupational Licensing, Courts/Judiciary, Motor Vehicle, Criminal Justice, Criminal Law and Procedure, Development, Land Use and Housing, Building and Construction, Land Use, Planning and Zoning, Property and Housing, Education, Elementary and Secondary Education, Employment and Retirement, Environment, Aquaculture and Fisheries, Environment/Natural Resources, Government, APA/Rule Making, Cultural Resources and Museums, State Agencies, UNC System, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Department of Environmental Quality (formerly DENR), Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Transportation, State Board of Education, Local Government, Military and Veteran's Affairs, Public Enterprises and Utilities, Transportation

ACTIONS ON BILLS

PUBLIC BILLS

H 268: 2026 BUDGET TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS - II. (NEW)

Senate: Conf Report Adopted 3rd

H 377: 2026 COURT CHANGES. (NEW)

Senate: Conf Com #1 Reported

Senate: Placed on Today's Calendar

Senate: Conf Report Adopted

H 562: BUDGET TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS MODIFICATIONS (NEW)

Senate: Conf Report Adopted

H 834: SBOE ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES. (NEW)

Senate: Regular Message Sent To House

House: Regular Message Received For Concurrence in S Com Sub

S 177: CONTINUING BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS. (NEW)

Senate: Withdrawn From Com

Senate: Withdrawn From Com

Senate: Placed on Today's Calendar

Senate: Placed on Today's Calendar

Senate: Failed Concur In H Com Sub

S 403: ADDITIONAL MEDICAID FUNDS AND REQUIREMENTS. (NEW)

Senate: Withdrawn From Com

Senate: Withdrawn From Com

Senate: Placed on Today's Calendar

Senate: Failed Concur In H Com Sub

S 445: REGULATORY REFORM ACT OF 2026. (NEW)

Senate: Conf Com Reported
Senate: Placed on Today's Calendar
Senate: Conf Report Adopted

S 1091: ADJOURNMENT RESOLUTION.

Senate: Regular Message Sent To House
House: Regular Message Received From Senate

S 1092: 2026 SENATE & HOUSE APPOINTMENTS.

Senate: Regular Message Sent To House
House: Regular Message Received From Senate

LOCAL BILLS

H 147: VARIOUS LOCAL PROVISIONS XI. (NEW)

Senate: Passed 3rd Reading
Senate: Engrossed

H 1067: ROCKY MOUNT ETJ. (NEW)

Senate: Regular Message Sent To House
House: Regular Message Received For Concurrence in S Com Sub

S 69: VARIOUS LOCAL PROVISIONS V. (NEW)

Senate: Withdrawn From Com
Senate: Placed on Today's Calendar
Senate: Failed Concur In H Com Sub

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