

# The General Assembly

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After several reconvened sessions that took place following the long session, the 2012 short session convened on May 16 and adjourned on July 3, 2012. The session totaled 29 legislative days. This document provides a brief statistical analysis of the session.

## Overview of the 2012 Regular Session

Article II, Section 11, of the North Carolina Constitution provides for a biennial session of the General Assembly that convenes in every odd-numbered year. Until 1973 the General Assembly held a single regular session, convening in each odd-numbered year, meeting several months, and then adjourning sine die. Prior to 1974, legislative sessions in even-numbered years of the biennium were extra sessions and they were rare and of short duration.

Beginning with the 1973-74 biennium, the General Assembly began holding annual sessions. The General Assembly convenes in January of odd-numbered years. In these “long sessions,” which generally run through midsummer, a biennial budget is adopted and any legislative business may be considered. In even-numbered years the General Assembly convenes for a “short session,” which generally runs from May through July or August. In the short session the General Assembly considers budget adjustments for the second year of the biennium and generally deals with bills that have passed one house and a limited number of additional noncontroversial matters. Legally the short session is a continuation of the long session.

The adjournment resolution, Res. 2011-12 (S 793), provided that only the following could be considered during the 2012 short session:

- Bills introduced by May 29, 2012, directly affecting the budget.
- Bills amending the North Carolina Constitution.
- Bills introduced in 2011 that passed third reading by the crossover deadline, in the house in which the bill was introduced, and that were not unfavorably disposed of by the other house.
- Bills and resolutions introduced by May 23, 2012, implementing the recommendations of various commissions and committees.
- Non-controversial local bills that are introduced by May 30, 2012, and are accompanied by a certification that no public hearing will be required and that the bill is approved for introduction by each member of the relevant house whose district is affected by the bill.
- Bills making a selection, an appointment, or a confirmation of members of state boards and commissions.
- Bills concerning matters authorized by joint resolution passed by a two-thirds majority in each house, and joint resolutions authorizing consideration of these bills.
- Bills introduced by May 30, 2012, affecting state or local pension or retirement systems.
- Resolutions authorized under Senate Rule 40(b) or House Rule 31, primarily relating to deceased persons.
- Bills concerning redistricting.
- Veto overrides.
- Election law bills.
- Bills disapproving administrative rules.
- Adjournment resolution.

The adjournment resolution also authorized the Speaker of the House or the President Pro Tempore of the Senate to allow committees or subcommittees to meet when the General Assembly was not in session to review matters related to the 2011-12 budget, prepare reports, and consider other matters as appropriate.

### Statistical Comparison

A total of 459 bills were introduced during the 2012 legislative session, more than 300 fewer filings than during the 2010 short session<sup>1</sup>. The number reflects the low number of bills filed during the long session and is the lowest number of bills introduced during a short session since 1982. At the time of this writing, 192 bills were enacted. The session also saw three vetoes and the override of each of those vetoes.

Table 1-1 compares the 2012 session with other odd-year sessions of the past ten years.

**Table 1-1. Statistical Comparisons of Recent Even-Year Sessions**

	<b>2002</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Date convened</b>	May 28	May 10	May 9	May 13	May 12	May 16
<b>Date adjourned</b>	Oct. 4	July 18	July 28	July 18	July 10	July 3
<b>Senate legislative days</b>	69	44	48	40	35	29
<b>House legislative days</b>	77	44	47	40	36	29
<b>Senate bills introduced</b>	368	415	881	597	354	165
<b>House bills introduced</b>	336	466	1,093	733	426	294
<b>Total bills introduced</b>	706	881	1,974	1,330	780	459
<b>Session Laws Enacted</b>	190	203	264	229	227	203
<b>Vetoes</b>	1	1	1	1	0	3

## The Legislative Institution

### Membership Changes

Following the 2012 legislative session, the House lost one of its most senior members when Representative Brubaker resigned; Allen McNeill has been named as his replacement. Representative Guice resigned in January and Trudi Walend was appointed to his seat. Representative LaRoque resigned in August following a federal indictment on charges of improperly using federal funds and money laundering. Karen Kozel has been named as his replacement.

Post session also saw the deaths of several legislators. Representative Wainwright, who had served 11 terms, passed away in July and Barbara Lee has been named as his replacement. Representative Larry Brown, who had served 4 terms, passed away in August and a replacement has not been named at this time.

In the Senate, Deputy President Pro Tempore, Senator Forrester, passed away, having served for 11 terms. Chris Carney was appointed to fill his seat and Senator Harris Blake was named the new Deputy President Pro Tempore.

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<sup>1</sup> According to analysis of statistics compiled by the General Assembly library, available at <http://www.ncleg.net/library/Documents/LegStats1965-2010.pdf>.