

North Carolina Legislative Update, April 5, 2019

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Dozens of bills were filed this week as the Senate faced its bill introduction deadline. The House announced that it will publish a budget plan within the next two weeks.

Budget bill

The House will pass the budget bill first this year and it appears that it is moving toward enacting it by the end of April. House appropriations subcommittees have held their final meetings and are submitting their work to the full Appropriations Chairs. Once the House passes its version of the budget, it will go to the Senate where leaders have announced a goal of passing the bill by the end of May. The State's fiscal year ends June 30.

State Health Plan Study ([H184](#))

A bill creating a study committee to examine changes to the State Health Plan passed the House this week. The bill addresses issues raised by State Treasurer Dale Folwell and others related to the plan's operation and payment mechanisms. The Plan covers over 720,000 state employees, retirees and their family members.

Reducing education testing ([H377](#))

A proposal to reduce testing in K-12 schools passed the House this week by an overwhelming margin. Among other things, it would replace certain end-of-grade tests with shorter exams given throughout the year and prohibit school districts from requiring students to do a high school graduation project. Leaders in both chambers seem to support reducing the number of tests although the Senate may have different proposals on how to do it.

School supplies ([S580](#))

A bill that would earmark funding for school supplies in K-12 classrooms was introduced. Legislative leaders and Superintendent of Public Instruction Mark Johnson promoted the bill at a press conference. It earmarks \$400 per teacher for supplies instead of allowing the funds to be spent by local school systems for things other than supplies.

ICE Bill ([H370](#))

A proposal to require law enforcement agencies to cooperate with immigration authorities passed the House this week despite concerns voiced by the North Carolina Sheriffs' Association. The vote was 63 to 51 with all supporters being Republicans and all opponents being Democrats.

For more information, contact a member of the Brooks Pierce Government Affairs Team, linked below.