

North Carolina Legislative Update, April 12, 2019

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Legislators in both chambers considered many bills this week as House budget writers negotiated behind closed doors.

Budget Bill

After recently concluding Appropriations subcommittee meetings, House members are working behind closed doors to begin crafting their version of the budget bill. House leadership has announced a goal of passing the bill by early May before sending it to the Senate.

House Health Care Proposal ([H655](#))

House Republicans this week introduced a plan to provide health insurance coverage to more uninsured North Carolinians. The bill would emphasize preventive and wellness care and includes a work requirement for those able to work instead of expanding Medicaid coverage as proposed by Governor Roy Cooper and Democratic legislators. Eligibility would be restricted to people making no more than 133 percent of the federal poverty level. Ninety percent of the plan's funding would come from federal dollars with the remainder coming from provider fees, insurer taxes, premiums, and co-pays. The bill also includes a grant fund to improve rural health care. Senate leaders have not indicated support for the new House bill.

Wind Ban ([S377](#))

A bill to prohibit additional wind infrastructure development in large parts of eastern North Carolina was discussed in the Senate Commerce committee on Wednesday. The bill would ban this type of development in areas noted on a map recently produced as a result of a State-commissioned study. Proponents of the bill argued that a ban is necessary to support the State's military bases by protecting airspace for training. Opponents argued, in part, that the federal Department of Defense's Clearing House process for siting such infrastructure considers these issues and is sufficient.

Cannabis Treatment ([S168](#))

The Senate approved a proposal Wednesday that would allow broader access to "cannabis extract"—often in the form of

CBD oil. The bill would expand the current allowable use of treating epilepsy to include treating autism, multiple sclerosis, Crohn's disease, Mitochondrial disease, or any medical condition diagnosed by a neurologist for which cannabis treatment options have been effective.

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