

Brooks Pierce Capital Dispatch: Updates from the NC General Assembly and Governor's Office, April 1, 2021

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This week, Legislators considered a number of bills and Cabinet nominees from Gov. Roy Cooper. The General Assembly will not take votes during the week of April 5 and will return for business on April 12.

Summer School and Reading

Legislators this week passed two notable K-12 education bills and sent them to the Governor.

The Excellent Public Schools Act of 2021 (S 387) would modify North Carolina's Read to Achieve Program, which seeks to attain statewide student reading proficiency by the third grade, and requires Pre-K and elementary school teachers to be trained in the "science of reading," a method of reading instruction that stresses phonics.

A Summer Learning Choices bill (H 82) would require each local school administrative unit to offer a school extension learning recovery and enrichment program during the summer of 2021.

Broadband Maps

The House this week passed a bill [H 289](#) that would spend \$1 million to develop broadband internet maps for the state. It directs the Department of Information Technology to develop the maps and serve as the sole provider of broadband mapping for state agencies. The bill now goes to the Senate.

Cabinet Secretary Confirmations

This week, Senate committees considered two Cabinet Secretaries nominated by Gov. Cooper.

The Senate approved the nomination of retired Marine Lt. General Walter Gaskin as Secretary of Military and Veteran Affairs. Gaskin formerly served as Deputy Chairman of the NATO Military Committee and as Commanding General of the 2nd Marine Division at Camp Lejeune, NC.

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The nomination of Machel Sanders for Secretary of Commerce was considered in the Senate Commerce and Insurance committee. Sanders formerly served as secretary of the Department of Administration and as an executive at Biogen and Diosynth-Akzo Nobel. Her nomination will next go before the Senate Committee on Nominations.

Three other Cabinet Secretary nominees await Senate confirmation; they are Jim Weaver as secretary of Information Technology, Dionne Delli-Gatti as secretary of Environmental Quality, and Pam Cashwell as secretary of Administration.

Water and Sewer

Each chamber has passed bills that would allow private water and sewer utilities to secure multi-year rate hike approvals from the N.C. Utilities Commission. The House has passed [H 219](#) and the bill is in the Senate Rules Committee. The Senate has passed [S 211](#) and the bill is now in the House Rules Committee. Bill sponsors will now decide which bill to move forward toward enactment.

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