



NORTH CAROLINA BURGLAR AND FIRE ALARM ASSOCIATION

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

MAY 13, 2008

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2008 SHORT SESSION

Welcome back to the legislative session. This is the second year of the 2007 Biennium General Assembly also known as the 2008 Short Session. The session officially begins today, May 13th, at noon; however, there has been so much activity in the last several months that it feels like session already. There have been over a dozen study committees that have been meeting to discuss issues and make recommendations for legislation this year. The short session is limited to those matters recommended by the study committees, those matters that affect the budget, and legislation that made the crossover deadline, which is legislation that has passed one chamber or the other during the session last year. This report includes a short summary of bills of interest that are eligible for the 2008 short session because they made the crossover deadline as well as some other bills of interest.

It is widely believed based on discussions with legislators and other lobbyists that this will, in fact, be a very short session. The prevailing thought is that the session will end sometime in early July which would be unusually short. The reasons are the upcoming election in November that is going to be highly contested in North Carolina and because of the uncertainty regarding the Democratic nominee for President and how that nominee will affect the races down the ballot. Both parties want to get out of session to raise money and campaign for their elective seats. In addition, the scandal that has been ongoing at the General Assembly, especially on the House side, has affected members and they would like to get out of session as early as possible.

Please remember that this legislative report has a twofold purpose, not only to educate you about the legislation that is being filed, but also for you to review the report and let me know of issues that I need to watch more closely or work on during the short session. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions regarding any of the provisions in the report. We will attempt to keep you well-informed regarding the activities of the General Assembly during this 2008 short session and we are honored to represent the North Carolina Burglar and Fire Alarm Association.



PENDING LEGISLATION

HOUSE BILL 1709, Increase/Index State Minimum Wage. This bill would increase the state minimum wage to \$7.25 per hour beginning January 1, 2008 and would provide for subsequent cost-of-living increases on January 1st of each successive year based upon the consumer price index. **This bill is currently in the House Commerce, Small Business, and Entrepreneurship Committee.**

SENATE BILL 699, Labor/Mandatory Lunch Break. This bill would amend the labor laws of North Carolina to provide for mandatory lunch breaks for employees. Each employee could take at least one work break during the workday or shift for a meal. **This bill is currently in the Senate Commerce, Small Business, and Entrepreneurship Committee.**

SENATE BILL 1092, Provide Unpaid Sick Day. This bill would require that unpaid sick days be provided for all North Carolina employees at a rate of one hour of leave for each 30 hours worked. The sick days could be used to attend to medical needs of the employee or the employee's family members or to address the effects of domestic violence. If the unpaid sick leave lasts for more than 3 consecutive workdays, then an employer could require certification from a health care provider. The leave could not be accumulated from year to year and employers could not punish their employees for using the sick time. **This bill is currently in the Senate Commerce, Small Business, and Entrepreneurship Committee.**

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