



NORTH CAROLINA BURGLAR AND FIRE ALARM ASSOCIATION

Weekly Legislative Report
April 21, 2005

INTRODUCTION

The Senate last week approved a bill that would more closely regulate money spent by lobbyists on legislators. Currently there is a “good will” exception to reporting requirements for lobbyists that allows lobbyists to spend money on legislators as long as they do not discuss “specific legislation”. This means that lobbyists can pay for dinners and golf trips without disclosing their spending as long as a particular bill is not discussed. The Senate bill would require disclosure of any spending and would limit spending to \$100. An exception was provided in the bill that would allow non-profit or trade groups to hold functions without violating these limits. Although many Senators wanted changes in the bill, including a “cooling-off period” between the time legislators serve and when they can lobby their former colleagues and a provision for full disclosure of all spending, the Senate voted to approve the bill unanimously. No Senator wanted to be on the record as opposing lobbying reform. The bill has now gone to the House where it will be debated further.

Wednesday, April 20th was the bill filing deadline for public bills in the House. After Wednesday the only bills filed will include spending or taxing provisions. There are, of course, many blank bills that were filed during the session that can be “transformed” into other bills as the session moves along. The next deadline facing legislators is May 19th which is the “crossover deadline”. This is a deadline which requires that bills must either be approved by the House or be approved by the Senate for them to be eligible for further consideration. Since there have been over 2,500 bills filed it will be difficult for many of the bills to reach this deadline. If a bill is either passed in the House or Senate it is eligible for consideration not only for the remainder of this session, but also during the short session next year.

This week the Senate Appropriation Chairs are meeting behind closed doors to make final determinations on the Senate budget plan. There has been a lot of criticism over proposed cuts to Education and Health and Human Services and a great deal of discussion over income producing possibilities like taxes on cigarettes, alcohol and funds from a state lottery. There is a possibility that the Senate could roll the lottery bill into the budget plan to include funding from the lottery into the budget. It seems that right now, everything is on the table.

If you would like a copy of any of the legislation introduced or considered by this year's General Assembly, you may receive one copy of as many bills as you are interested in, free of charge, by calling the General Assembly's Printed Bills office at 919/733-5648. They will need to know if it is a House bill or Senate bill and the bill number. (For example, Senate Bill 8). Copies are also available on the General Assembly's World Wide Web site: <http://www.ncleg.net>.

BILLS OF INTEREST

HOUSE BILL 1160, Deduction for S Corporation Income, would provide a \$20,000 exemption for S corporations that make less than \$100,00 and a \$12,000 exemption would be provided for corporations that make between \$100,000 and \$200,000. **Introduced by Representative Holloway and referred to the House Finance Committee.**

HOUSE BILL 1175, North Carolina Disabled Persons Protection Act, would establish the North Carolina Disabled Persons Protection Act which would create a presumption that every person legally incapable of making health care decisions has directed their health care provider to provide them with nutrition and hydration sufficient to sustain life. No person, court, or agency could decide to withhold nutrition and hydration from the person except as specified in the Act. **Introduced by Representative Vinson and referred to the House Judiciary I Committee.**

HOUSE BILL 1217, Notary Fee Increase, would increase the fee that may be collected by notaries from \$3.00 to \$6.00. **Introduced by Representative Earle and referred to the House Finance Committee.**

Colleen Kochanek
NCBFAA Legislative Counsel
Holt York McDarris & High, LLP
ckochanek@hymh.com
www.hymh.com