

**Legislative Update
for
Week of May 22, 2017**

Legislative Summary

This week at the General Assembly, House committees took up several pieces of legislation involving the National Guard and Adult Corrections, and all of which passed out of their respective committees. In addition, the House released portions of its budget this week and is expected to vote on the measure late next week. The General Assembly anticipates finalizing a budget to send to the Governor by the end of the fiscal year.

Bills of Interest

National Guard Can Purchase from Correction Enterprises ([HB120](#))

Description:

This bill would add National Guard members, employees, and retirees to the list of individuals eligible to purchase from Correction Enterprises.

Introduced by:

Representatives McNeill (R-Randolph), Warren (R-Iredell), Grange (R-New Hanover) and Goodman (D-Rockingham)

Amendments Proposed:

No amendments proposed at this time.

Actions Taken:

H120 passed out of the Senate Committee on State and Local Government on Tuesday, May 23. Rep. McNeill presented the bill. No members spoke in opposition to the bill, and it passed with a unanimous vote. The bill was then re-referred to the Senate Rules Committee.

National Guard Tuition Assistance Program ([HB486](#))

Description:

This bill would extend eligibility for North Carolina National Guard (NCNG) tuition assistance to eligible NCNG members who are enrolled in a professional certification program recommended by the Director of the NCNG Education and Employment Center and approved by the NCNG Education Services Officer.

Introduced by:

Representatives G. Martin (D-Wake) and Szoka (R-Cumberland)

Actions Taken:

This bill passed out of Senate Education-Higher Education with a re-referral to Senate Rules.

Workers' Compensation/Prison Inmates ([HB205](#))

Description:

This bill would provide that the average weekly wage for inmates employed under the Prison Industry Enhancement Program (PIE) be calculated in accordance with North Carolina's Workers' Compensation Act.

Introduced by:

Representatives McNeill (R-Randolph) and Rep. Zachary (R-Yadkin)

Amendments Proposed:

A Proposed Committee Substitute (PCS) was offered shortly before the bill's hearing in the Senate Commerce and Insurance Committee last week. It added language unrelated to DPS mandating that newsprint workers be treated as employees for purposes of labor regulations, employment security, workers' compensation and taxation, if certain conditions are met.

Actions Taken:

HB 205 received a second hearing in the Senate Commerce and Insurance Committee on Wednesday, May 24. The Press Association opposed the bill due to the language added. However, the bill passed out of committee and was sent to Senate Rules.

Unmanned Aircraft Systems Law Revision ([HB337](#))

Description:

The Proposed Committee Substitute (PCS) for House Bill 337 would (1) clarify that state laws applicable to unmanned aircraft systems include model aircraft; (2) repeal a state law limitation on the use of special imaging technology on unmanned aircraft systems; (3) *exempt unmanned aircraft systems used by emergency management agencies for emergency management purposes from state law restrictions on unmanned aircraft system uses*; (4) align state law permitting requirements for commercial operation of unmanned aircraft systems with federal law; and (5) exempt model aircraft used for hobby or recreational purposes from state law testing and permitting requirements.

Introduced by:

Representative Torbett (R-Gaston)

Amendments Proposed:

A Proposed Committee Substitute (PCS) was offered making only minor technical changes.

Actions Taken:

On Wednesday, May 24, the Senate Transportation Committee heard the bill and gave it a favorable report. H337 was re-referred to Senate Rules.

National Guard Reemployment Rights/Definitions ([HB487](#))

Description:

This bill would add several definitions to the National Guard Reemployment Rights Act, Article 16 of Chapter 127A of the General Statutes. The bill would also require employers to return employees who served on state duty to their previous positions within five days of the employees' release from state duty. It would increase the time period for employees who served more than thirty days to apply for reemployment from five days to 14 days. Further, the bill would afford employees injured in the line of duty up to two years to apply for reemployment during their recovery period.

Introduced by:

Representatives G. Martin (D-Wake) and Szoka (R-Cumberland)

Actions Taken:

H487 was heard in the Senate Judiciary Committee on Monday, May 22. The bill passed and was re-referred to Senate Rules.