

North Carolina Sheriffs' Association

Proudly Serving the Sheriffs and Citizens of North Carolina since 1922



Weekly Legislative Report

November 19, 2021

Some might call it an early Christmas miracle, some might call it the product of hard work and some might even say it is simply government working the way it should, but action this week at the General Assembly caused many to breathe a great sigh of relief. After almost a year of work, the budget bill received the final vote it needed on Thursday before being sent to Governor Roy Cooper.

That's right, the months-long budget battle has limped to an end this week without any late-night sessions that sometimes accompany budget bills. To make things even more interesting, Governor Cooper signed the budget bill the same day it was sent for his consideration, settling once and for all the question of whether or not the Governor would give North Carolina a new budget for the first time in nearly three years. Some of the highlights of the budget bill which might be of interest to law enforcement are:

- The creation of a competitive grant program for local law enforcement agencies to help advance investigation of internet crimes against children;
- Directed grants for certain sheriffs' offices for expenses related to enforcing the law;
- Competitive grants for sheriffs' offices to expand, maintain, or establish medication assisted treatment (MAT) programs to treat alcohol and drug abuse for persons in jails;
- New instructor positions for the North Carolina Justice Academy; and
- New funding and new positions for the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission, as well as the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission.

These budget provisions and numerous others will be summarized thoroughly in next week's Weekly Legislative Report. Aside from the items listed above, this budget bill provides much more funding and support for the law enforcement profession, as well as the judicial system, education, transportation, agriculture, and health and human services.

With the budget bill having been sent to Governor Roy Cooper on Thursday and signed into law the same day, it seems almost certain the end of the session is likely around the corner. Currently, the Governor has 3 bills on his desk for consideration, including a North Carolina DOT bill, an athletics bill and finally a bill containing various building code amendments.

After such a long session it feels appropriate to quote native Tarheel Roy Williams and say it feels "dadgum" good to see the end in sight.

The House and Senate adjourned on Thursday. There is no business scheduled or expected to be scheduled next week in anticipation of the Thanksgiving holiday.

BILL STATUS

[HOUSE BILL 404](#), Ltd. Immunity for PSAP/TC for S.L. 2021-171, which is summarized in the November 5, 2021 Weekly Legislative Report, has been signed into law by Governor Roy Cooper with an effective date of November 18, 2021 for those provisions related to PSAPs.

The bill provides that the immunity from damages in a civil lawsuit granted to public safety answering points (PSAPs), regional PSAPs, their employees, directors, officers, vendors, and agents, and employees of a law enforcement agency that are certified by the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission (such as telecommunicators) will be lost if any of these entities engage in wanton or willful misconduct or gross negligence.

[SENATE BILL 105](#), 2021 Appropriations Act, has been amended to include the House and Senate joint version of the budget bill. The bill has been approved by the General Assembly and has been signed into law by Governor Roy Cooper on November 18, 2021. Those provisions of interest to the criminal justice community will be summarized in next week's Weekly Legislative Report.

[SENATE BILL 183](#), Ignition Interlock/Various Changes, which is summarized in the November 5, 2021 Weekly Legislative Report, has been signed into law by Governor Roy Cooper with an effective date of December 1, 2021 and June 1, 2022 for most provisions.

Among other things, the bill substitutes the correct term "office" in various statutes where the Office of Sheriff is incorrectly described as a "department." The Office of Sheriff is not and has never been a department of local government. This provision of the bill is effective November 18, 2021.

The **Weekly Legislative Report** is provided at no charge as a service to the sheriffs, criminal justice community and citizens of North Carolina.

North Carolina Sheriffs' Association, Inc.

Proudly Serving the Sheriffs and Citizens of North Carolina Since 1922

www.ncsheriffs.org
