

# North Carolina Sheriffs' Association

Proudly Serving the Sheriffs and Citizens of North Carolina since 1922



Weekly Legislative Report

September 22, 2023

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This week began with intrigue when a copy of what was believed to be this year's budget bill was leaked to the news media on Monday. This came as a surprise to many people in the General Assembly's orbit who believed there was still no agreement between the House and Senate on the details of a budget. Surprises continued into late Tuesday evening when President Pro Tempore of the Senate Phil Berger and House Speaker Tim Moore held a news conference announcing that a deal had in fact been reached on the long-awaited state budget.

It was not until Wednesday after 4:00 PM that the actual budget bill, [House Bill 259, 2023 Appropriations Act](#), was published on the General Assembly's website. The bill looked substantially similar to the document leaked on Monday evening. Absent from the state budget were provisions authorizing casinos and video lottery gaming. These issues are rumored to be what stalled budget negotiations between the House and Senate chambers for the last several weeks.

The House and Senate debated and voted on the budget on Thursday and Friday before heading out of Raleigh and back home. While everyone will have to wait to see if the Governor signs the bill or vetoes it, many legislators will likely share its details with constituents who may benefit from budget provisions ranging from state employee and teacher pay raises to Medicaid expansion and municipal and county projects.

The Association's thorough summary of the provisions of the budget bill which affect sheriffs and the wider criminal justice community will be forthcoming.

The House and Senate adjourned on Friday and will reconvene on Tuesday, September 26, 2023.

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## BILL STATUS

[HOUSE BILL 142, Protect Our Students Act.-AB](#), which would make various changes to the definitions and penalties for certain sex offenses against students, has passed the Senate with amendment and has been sent back to the House for consideration of the Senate amendment.

[SENATE BILL 189, Fentanyl Drug Offenses and Related Changes](#), which would make various changes to the laws regarding fentanyl and death by distribution and which would expand the list of offenses for which limited immunity from prosecution is provided by the Good Samaritan Law,

has been approved by the General Assembly and has been sent to Governor Roy Cooper for his signature.

[SENATE BILL 409](#), Increase Punishment for Cargo Theft, has passed the House with amendment and has been renamed Crim Law & Proc Changes/Civ Youth Grps/Signs. The bill has been sent back to the Senate for consideration of the House amendment.

The bill, as amended, would allow the aggregation for sentencing of “financial crime offenses,” defined in the bill as acts of embezzlement, obtaining property by false pretenses, or exploitation of an older adult, based on the aggregate (total) amount of money or things of value at issue if: (1) the person committed the financial crime offenses against more than one victim or in more than one county; and (2) the financial crime offenses were based on the same act or transaction or on a series of acts or transactions connected together or constituting parts of a common scheme or plan.

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

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