



Legislative Bulletin

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The Weekly Recap

WHAT HAPPENED: It's now official: budget negotiations will stretch into the new fiscal year. With Independence Day this coming Tuesday, Legislators will not return to Raleigh until the week of July 11.

WHAT IT MEANS: There is still some non-budgetary business ongoing (though we expect that to conclude soon). Below you'll find write-ups on two pieces of legislation that moved this week, each of interest to cities and towns: [HB 579 Sedimentation Act & Other Environmental Change](#) and [HB 600 Regulatory Reform Act of 2023](#).

ON TAP: [SB 299 Reimburse Late Audit Costs with Sales Tax Rev.](#) is now law. Following a veto from Gov. Roy Cooper, the General Assembly overrode that veto with a vote this week. As covered in last week's Bulletin, this law will subject local governments to a sales tax withholding penalty if they submitted their annual audits late.

THE SKINNY: Also noted last week was the passage of [HB 140 Civilian Traffic Investigators](#). Below you'll find details on what that law means for cities and towns.

Civilian Traffic Investigators Passage and Implementation

What it means for NC cities and towns.

Earlier this week, NCLM sent out [this overview](#) related to the implementation of [HB 140 Civilian Traffic Investigators](#) to key municipal staff members. The new law will allow cities and towns to employ civilian investigators to respond to traffic accidents involving property damage only. The document link above provides details regarding

the requirements of cities and towns as they hire civilian traffic investigators and create these programs, as well as information regarding the development of a statewide training program. The training program will be developed by the N.C. Justice Academy, and it must be in place before a city can employ these investigators. Then requirements must be met to clearly delineate the civilian investigators' duties, identification and employment standards from those of sworn law enforcement officers.

Passage of this legislation represents a substantial achievement for municipalities as they navigate a difficult law enforcement hiring environment and the need to have sworn officers focus on crucial public safety needs. Should you have any further questions regarding this new law or [the earlier overview](#), please contact Sa'Metria Jones at sjones@nclm.org.

House Passes Stormwater and Sedimentation Changes

A bill that will limit local erosion and sedimentation control programs passed the House after the bill sponsors removed constitutionally questionable provisions that would have granted the legislature veto power over certain NC Department of Environmental Quality rules. [HB 579 Sedimentation Act & Other Environmental Changes](#) would prohibit approved local program requirements from exceeding the state requirements for stormwater discharges from construction activities. Additionally, it would require approved local programs to issue a NCG01 permit, in lieu of a land disturbance permit or other permit or certification. A local program would be authorized to charge a fee for the issuance of a NCG01 permit. The bill provides a fee option to the applicant either calculated based on the number of acres disturbed or no more than \$100.00 per single family lot that is less than one acre, including such a lot that is part of a larger common plan of development.

The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration after the July 4th break. Please review the bill and send feedback to NCLM Senior Government Affairs Associate John McDonald at jmcdonald@nclm.org.

Regulatory Reform Bill Passes Senate

After several weeks of negotiations and committee consideration the Senate passed their version of [HB 600 Regulatory Reform Act of 2023](#). A key stumbling block was overcome when the Senate removed a provision that would have placed additional restrictions on the NC Department of Environmental Quality's ability to regulate emerging contaminants that are impactful, even as no formal limits yet have been established. With this provision removed, HB 600 will move to the House for its concurrence. It is expected that the House will not concur, and the two chambers will enter a conference committee to iron out the differences between the two bills.

City officials have engaged with House and Senate leaders to raise concerns about various provisions that have been included at different times but have been amended or removed. These included policy changes to vegetative buffers, stormwater programs, among others.

It is important that municipal leaders stay engaged with their respective legislative delegations as the bill returns to the House for further consideration.

Metro Mayors Meet with State Leaders, Discuss Priorities at Summer Meeting



The North Carolina Metro Mayors Coalition convened for their annual summer meeting Wednesday in Raleigh. Discussions centered around challenges such as affordable housing, transportation, and effective ways of growing the working relationship with state and federal government partners for the benefit of North Carolina metro cities. Additionally, the meeting included lunch at the Executive Mansion with Governor Roy Cooper, a visit from House Majority Leader John Bell, and a discussion with House Minority Leader Robert Reives.

The mayors also received updates from NCLM staff regarding public comment practices and transportation. They were joined at the summer meeting by many city managers and legislative staff from the member cities.

The Metro Mayors Coalition is a bipartisan group established by the mayors of the state's larger cities. The Coalition is chaired by Chapel Hill Mayor Pam Hemminger, and Wilmington Mayor Bill Saffo serves as Vice Chair.



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