Insights: Perspectives

North Carolina General Assembly Update | October 22, 2021

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Kilpatrick Townsend's Government Relations Team represents a variety of clients across many industries and in all levels of government, with a focus on the North Carolina General Assembly. Below is an update on the activity at the NC General Assembly this week. Please feel free to contact a member of the team with any questions or visit our website to learn more about our Government Relations practice.

Budget Negotiations

On Tuesday, House and Senate leadership sent a budget counteroffer to Governor Cooper. Specific details and provisions remain confidential, but major items that have been discussed include raises for teachers and state employees and Medicaid expansion. House Speaker Moore (R-Cleveland) and Senior House Appropriations Chair Jason Saine (R-Lincoln) reported that Medicaid expansion was not included in the counteroffer sent to the Governor and that raises are closer to the House proposal than the Senate. While the negotiation process has been slow, all parties seem to remain hopeful that a compromise can be reached. We expect some type of action to be taken in the next couple of weeks, even if there is no final agreement between the legislature and the Governor. This would mean the House and Senate would move forward with voting on their budget proposal with the potential for a veto from Governor Cooper.

Emergency Powers

This week, the House voted to concur with the Senate's changes to H264, Emergency Powers Accountability Act. The bill would require a concurrence vote from the Council of State to approve a governor's emergency declaration lasting more than seven days. If approved, the emergency declaration could continue for forty-five days. After forty-five days, the legislature would have to authorize extension of the declaration with a majority vote from each chamber. The bill passed largely along party lines (65-45) with only one Democrat voting in favor and has been sent to the Governor.

Redistricting Timeline

The legislature is moving forward with the next steps in the redistricting process. Public comment hearings will be held next Monday for proposed Congressional maps and next Tuesday for proposed state House and Senate maps. There will be three options for the public to attend the hearings. In-person hearings will be held at 3:00 p.m. on each day at the legislative building and remote sites at UNC Wilmington and Caldwell Community College. A separate virtual hearing will be held each day at 5:30 p.m. via Webex.

The Senate posted maps that have been produced by their members on Tuesday. Maps from House members should be available on their website soon. The House Redistricting Committee room where legislators can draw maps is expected to remain open through 5:00 p.m. on Friday. After the public hearings, map proposals could be presented to

the House and Senate Redistricting Committees as early as Thursday of next week for consideration. House Speaker Moore said he expects maps to be finalized in the next two to three weeks.