



# ABC E-NEWS

A weekly newsletter on North Carolina policy and political news relevant to the North Carolina's ABC Boards

## **COVID-19 Restrictions (Likely) to be Lifted**

Governor Roy Cooper and NC Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy K. Cohen, M.D. laid out a timeline this week for lifting current pandemic restrictions.

Governor Cooper predicted that he will lift mandatory social distancing, capacity, and mass gathering restrictions by June 1.

The Governor plans to issue an executive order next week outlining safety restrictions for the month of May.

## **House Moves on Bill to Lift COVID-19 Restrictions**

On the heels of Governor Roy Cooper's announcement this week to lift nearly all pandemic-related capacity restrictions on restaurants and other businesses by June 1, the House ABC Committee and House Rules Committee passed House Bill 211 (Reopen Bars and Restaurants).

The legislation sponsored by Rep. Tim Moffitt (R-Henderson) lifts capacity limits (75% occupancy for restaurants and breweries, 50% for bars), but maintains some employee temperature checks.

The bill is scheduled for a House floor vote next week and will likely attract objections from Democratic lawmakers.

## **HB278 Passes ABC Committee, Pensions Committee Up Next**

The House ABC Committee unanimously passed HB 278 (Sunset ABC Board Participation in LGERS) on Wednesday. Rep. Allen McNeill (R-Moore/Randolph) gave a brief description of the bill and with no questions or comments from the committee, Rep. Jamie Boles (R-Moore) made a motion for a favorable report.



The legislation sunsets ABC Boards' eligibility for participation in the Local Governmental Employees Retirement System on July 1. As the bill is currently written, an ABC Board that is not in the state retirement system on June 30, 2021 would be ineligible to join at a later date.

The bill is now in the House Pensions and Retirement Committee, where Rep. McNeill presides.



NCAABC lobbyists met with Rep. McNeill (photo) prior to the ABC Committee meeting on Wednesday and the Randolph County Republican requested that the Association stand down this week in exchange for working on concerns of the bill prior to the meeting in House Pensions and Retirement.

Those concerns include the need for clarifying language that an ABC system that affiliates with another ABC system in the state retirement system would be able to have those employees sign up for the state retirement plan in the future. The Association also requested that Rep. McNeill extend the enactment period by six months so existing ABC Boards could join the retirement system if they are not already in it.

NCAABC lobbyists were in the House ABC Committee on Wednesday and did not speak. After the bill passed, Rep. McNeil expressed appreciation for the Association's lobbyists not objecting and recommitted to working on the bill this coming week. An email has been sent to Rep. McNeill outlining NCAABC's proposed fixes to HB278.

Follow this developing story on the NCAABC Twitter page for updates.