



ABC & NEWS

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

President Davis Meets with Speaker's ABC Staff



NC Association of ABC Boards President Miles Davis met with Dan Gurley, House Deputy Chief of Staff for Speaker Tim Moore on Friday to discuss ABC policy. Also in the meeting, held in the Speaker's office, was Beth Friedrich, the Speaker's Economic Development Policy Advisor and Deputy General Counsel, Richard Blackwelder, Legislative Assistant to Rep. Ed Goodwin (R-Bertie/Camden/Chowan/Perquimans/Tyrrell/Washington), and NCAACB lobbyist Brian Lewis.

The meeting was an opportunity for Davis to talk about the Association, its priorities in the 2021 legislative session, and to answer fundamental questions about the ABC System.

"We had a very productive conversation and I believe it is the first of many we will have throughout the legislative session," said Davis. "The staff indicated that privatization is off the table in the short-term, but we will be facing bills like home delivery that we must engage."

House Forwards ABC Permit Bill to Senate

One week after House ABC Committee Chairman Tim Moffitt (R-Henderson) filed House Bill 4 (Extend ABC Permit Renewal Fee Deferral), the House Alcoholic Beverage Control Committee (photo right) and House Rules Committee unanimously approved the bill and sent it to the House floor where it passed 116-1 on Thursday. Rep. Mark Pless (R-Haywood/Madison/Yancey), a freshman legislator, was the only NO vote.



"We applaud the House for their fast action in providing relief to North Carolina bars and look forward to quick action in the Senate," said NCAACB President Miles Davis. "Our ABC stores are aware of the economic hurting happening in our communities because of the pandemic and we support efforts to provide any relief. This bill helps."

HB4, primary sponsored by Rep. Jamie Boles (R-Moore), House Majority Leader John Bell (R-Greene/Wayne/Johnston), and Rep. Erin Pare (R-Wake), is headed to the Senate where it is likely to get fast action, maybe even in the next week.

The legislation helps North Carolina bar owners continue deferring permit fees while under executive orders limiting bars operations. The bill was filed days after Chairman Moffitt received assurances from ABC Chairman A.D. "Zander" Guy that the Commission will reactivate liquor licenses for shuttered private bars when re-opened and that future cancellations will be suspended and permittees who have their licenses reactivated will not be subject to any additional fees or paperwork.

If HB4 is enacted by the Senate, it will give clarity to Session Law 2020-94, Senate Bill 226, which was enacted last year and allows ABC permittees to defer their permit fees for 90 days after an executive order is issued. HB4 delays permit fees until an executive order is rescinded.

The cancellation of dozens of ABC permits in early January appears to be tied to the October 2, 2020 executive order issued by Governor Roy Cooper that allows bars to operate at 30% capacity outside. Ninety days later was January 4, the day of the permit cancellations.

The House ABC Committee was scheduled to hear HB11 (Regulate Alcohol Consumables), a bill that regulates ice cream and other candy products that contains alcohol, but Chairman Moffitt informed NCAACB lobbyists prior to the meeting that ALE agents had a few concerns and the bill "requires tweaking". The bill is likely in committee in the next week.