



ABC &-NEWS

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

Farewell, Senator Marc Basnight (1947-2020)

Senator Marc Basnight, arguably the most powerful figure in North Carolina politics spanning decades, died December 28 at age 73.



Basnight began his political career in the 1970s with his appointments to various state boards and was elected to the state Senate 1984. He elevated to Senate President Pro Tem a decade later.

The Outer Banks restaurant owner served in that top post until 2011 when Democrats lost the chamber and ALS (Lou Gherig's Disease) was taking its toll on his ability to walk, stand, and talk.

"Senator Basnight was a true friend to this Association and to the ABC system in our state," said NCAACB President Miles Davis. "As someone who began his political career at the local level, Senator Basnight understood firsthand how important the ABC system is to local government and public safety."

NCAACB sends its sincerest condolences to the Basnight family, his friends, and constituents.

Newly Elected General Assembly Gavels New Session

The 2021-2022 General Assembly gavels in a new legislative biennium on Wednesday, January 13, a day that is largely ceremonial.



The swearing-in ceremony also includes the election of constitutional leadership positions of Speaker of the House (Tim Moore), Speaker Pro Tem of the House (Sarah Stevens), Senate President Pro Tem (Phil Berger), House Clerk, and Senate Clerk.

NCACB lobbyists also expect committee chairs to be announced on Wednesday. The General Assembly will then take 13 days off and return on January 26 to begin work on crafting a new state budget and enacting legislation.

For the sixth biennium since 2011-2012, the General Assembly will be controlled by Republicans. House Republicans grew their ranks this past election by four seats and will hold a 69-51 majority, while Senate Republicans lost a seat and will control that chamber by a 28-22 margin.

Neither chamber has a veto proof supermajority so legislation must pass muster with Governor Roy Cooper, a Democrat, who was re-elected to another four-year term this past November.

NCACB is bracing for an active session in alcohol policy as interest groups for restaurants and retail merchants are most certain to bring a legislative agenda to the General Assembly that ranges from complete privatization of the North Carolina ABC system to less seismic policy changes such as curbside cocktail sales.

"We look forward to the legislative session and we feel we are in a good position to protect the ABC system and our communities' health and safety," said NCAACB President Miles Davis. "We will work within the General Assembly with traditional lobbying and a strategic communications package, including this e-newsletter."

Davis said the NC Association of ABC Boards lobbying team is comprised of Jon Carr, Skye David, Jason Joyner, and Brian Lewis, with Lewis leading the communications work. This e-newsletter will be published every Friday while the General Assembly is in session.