

NC BAR ASSOCIATION

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

UPDATE

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LEGISLATIVE AGENDA ADVANCES

The crossover deadline for which a bill must pass one chamber to remain eligible in the 2009 Session has passed and overall, the NCBA Legislative Agenda is progressing well. For a complete look at the agenda and the status of NCBA proposals, please [click here](#).

HOUSE CONTINUES WORK ON BUDGET

With the state's revenue outlook worsening, House budget writers are now faced with an almost \$3 billion hole. The subcommittees are continuing to meet as lawmakers look for additional ways to cut spending. Among potential cuts being discussed that would affect the Judicial Department are:

- Freezing step increases for magistrates/clerks
- Reducing IT funding
- Eliminating telephone system line items
- Eliminating pass-through funding to NC State Bar
- Eliminating Superior Court judge travel allowance
- Removing increases to continuation budget
- Eliminating Drug Treatment and Family Courts
- Eliminating Dispute Mediation
- Eliminating staff for Conference of DA's
- Eliminating staff for Clerk's Conference
- Eliminating 269 deputy clerk positions
- Eliminating 155 VWLA positions
- Eliminating various other positions

The House is expected to finalize their budget proposal in the next few weeks. Watch for a budget update in the next edition of the *Governmental Affairs Update*.

INSIDE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Please [click here](#) for a link to the House and Senate calendars, which are updated daily with committee meeting notices and agendas.

DEVELOPING ISSUES IN THE NCGA

Judicial Selection Proposal Gains Interest

At their April meeting, the NCBA Board of Governors endorsed a proposed system for merit screening and election of appellate judges in NC. The proposed system consists of a 15 member Judicial Nomination Commission, which would select two qualified candidates that would face each other in a nonpartisan general election. If a vacancy occurs before the term expires, the Commission would submit two candidates to the Governor, who would then appoint one of them to fill the unexpired term.

An elected incumbent who wishes to serve another term would be subject to a nonpartisan retention election, in which the voters are asked whether or not the incumbent should receive another term. Prior to the retention election, the Commission would issue a report evaluating the incumbent's performance. To view the entire proposal, please [click here](#).

The NCBA is currently working with lawmakers to draft legislation to incorporate this proposal. Look for updates in future editions of the *Governmental Affairs Update*.

ABA

The ABA *Washington Letter*, provided by the ABA Office of Governmental Affairs, provides up-to-date information to the legal profession on federal legislative issues. Please click the link below to access the latest edition.

[May 2009 Washington Letter](#)