



Legislative Update #19-33 10-26-19

Halloween is next week and the General Assembly is still at work. This week the Senate moved H 231 UNC & Comm. Coll. Pay/ Retiree Bonus, a mini budget bill, that includes pay raises for UNC System and Community College employees and the .5% bonus for state retirees. The retiree bonus is the same bonus in the budget vetoed by the Governor. On Thursday, H 231 reached the Senate floor. Senate Democrats argued that a .5% bonus was not enough for retirees due to the lack of COLAs over the past ten years that has eroded retiree pension value. The Senate republican members argued that they were passing this bonus because it was the agreed upon amount in the budget and that they may come back later in this session to provide an additional funds for retirees. The bill passed along party lines with all the Democrats voting against the bill and all Republicans voting in favor. H 231 has passed its 3rd reading in the Senate and will be sent to the House for concurrence.

On Friday Senator Berger announced that the vetoed budget, H 966 2019 Appropriations Act, will be on Monday's Senate calendar. The calendaring of H 966 provides notice to Senate members to be in session on Monday at 7:00 pm, if they want to cast their vote on the override of the Governor's veto of H 966. Senator Berger may pull the bill from the calendar if there are not enough votes for an override. Should the Senate override the Governor's veto state retirees will get a .5% bonus.

This week the media, with a push from NCRGEA, finally started talking about the needs of retirees. Spectrum News Capital Tonight ran a segment on the need for retiree COLAs on Tuesday and WRAL covered H 231 on Thursday on its evening news and TheWrap@NCCapital. The media coverage focused on the fact that retirees' pension values have been greatly eroded because of the lack of COLAs. This exposure will certainly have a positive impact on our efforts to increase funding for state retirees.

Stay Tuned!!