



NCRGEA *Government Relations* Update

NCRGEA Government Relations Update #21-27 August 17, 2021

After hours of deliberation into the night on Wednesday and to the chagrin of some House Democrats, the budget passed Thursday morning with a healthy 72-41 vote. As such, North Carolina is one long step further toward finalizing its 2021-2022 biennium budget.

Now that the House version is approved within its chamber, this week leadership from both chambers will appoint bipartisan “conferees” for the next round of budget discussions, which are anticipated to continue well into September. Last details and negotiations will occur over the next few weeks with the budget reshaping itself into its final version.

The Senate’s budget released in late June, SB 105, offered generous reductions in tax thresholds for both individuals and corporations. Yet for many in the public policy space, the Senate’s budget was viewed as tone deaf to the wobbly return to normalcy for our state, our school children, business owners, retirees and so many others since the arrival of COVID-19.

The budget also provides a 2 percent, two-year pension bonus for retirees. Both the pension plan and the State Health Plan remain fully funded. Included among other items of interest to retirees, the House budget has nearly \$1 billion appropriated for various broadband projects including mapping, more than \$750,000,000 in federal and state rural and underserved broadband grants.

All House Republicans and nine Democrats voted for the budget. If such a vote is to remain unchanged, the House budget will have enough votes to override a potential veto by Governor Roy Cooper. And despite continued anxiety regarding our public health and as the subsequent public policy consequences of such concerns continue to permeate our state narrative, state revenues continue to steamroll. At the end of June, the state had collected \$29.7 billion in revenue for

the fiscal 2020-2021 year.

As always, we will keep you updated. Thank you for being a part of our retiree family. You can find lots of additional advocacy, benefits, and even our Trivia game on our website www.ncrgea.com.

Stay Tuned!!!

Richard Rogers
NCRGEA Executive Director