

Forward Together



The Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry of North Carolina

Giving Life the Shape of Justice

Updated June 22, 2020

Here's the link to the North Carolina Council of Churches Raleigh Report legislative wrap up of the 2020 legislative session. Please note that Gov. Cooper has vetoed S 168 because of the provision limiting public access to law enforcement records provided to the state Medical Examiner regarding deaths in jails and prisons.

<https://www.ncchurches.org/2020/07/pandemic-sessions-tangled-tale/>

NC 2020 Legislative Summaries¹

House Bills

H 1037. Health Care. Includes public health provisions to address the COVID-19 emergency recommended by the Health Care Working Group of the House Select Committee on COVID-19. Create a state stockpile of personal protective equipment; provides support to health care providers to respond to COVID-19, increases the flexibility of the Department of Health and Human Services to respond to COVID-19, and increases access to health care through telehealth. ***Also requires NC DHHS to follow all federal laws and regulations necessary to receive the enhanced federal***

¹ *Note: This summary doesn't include all bills introduced or considered by the North Carolina General Assembly during the current legislative session (beginning April 28, 2020) and, instead, focuses only on bills that address significant justice issues that are within UU Forward Together's legislative priorities (like voting rights, Medicaid expansion, economic justice, environmental justice, gun violence, etc.). Please email revjohn@uuforwardtogether.org if you're aware of additional bills that we should be following.*

Please note that, with minor exceptions, this summary doesn't include [bills that were introduced, but not passed, in the prior 2019 - 2020 legislative sessions and are eligible for consideration during the current "short" session](#) unless or until they are actively considered during legislative committee hearings or on the House or Senate floor.

We'll be updating the summary at least weekly during the current legislative session.

More complete information about these (and other) bills as well as the House and Senate calendars for daily legislative sessions is posted on the North Carolina General Assembly's website: www.ncleg.gov.

Medicaid funding available under the federal Families First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA).

Filed 04/28/2020.

Referred to House Committee on Health 04/28/2020.

Committee Substitute adopted 04/29/2020.

Referred to House Rules Committee 04/29/2020.

H 1038. Appropriates \$1.6 billion in federal CARES Act funding to address the COVID-19 emergency in NC for purposes specified in bill (including public schools, community colleges, and universities).

Filed 04/28/2020.

Referred to House Appropriations Committee 04/28/2020.

Committee Substitute adopted 04/29/2020.

Referred to House Rules Committee 04/29/2020.

Referred to House Health Committee 05/14/2020.

H 1039. Economic Justice. Provides flexibility in administering state unemployment compensation program to address COVID-19 emergency.

Filed 04/28/2020.

Referred to House Finance Committee 04/28/2020.

Favorable report 04/29/2020.

Referred to House Rules Committee 04/29/2020.

H 1040. Health Care. Repeals prohibition on state's participation in **Medicaid expansion** under "Obama Care" and provides Medicaid to "essential" workers who make too much money to qualify for Medicaid under current law but don't make enough money to qualify for government subsidized health insurance under Obama Care.

Filed 04/28/2020.

Referred to House Rules Committee 04/28/2020.

H 1043. Pandemic Response Act. Includes provisions related to unemployment compensation, public schools, community colleges and universities, access to medical supplies and personal protective equipment for health care workers and others, loans for small businesses, etc. Appropriates \$1.7 billion of the total \$3.5 billion in federal funding for COVID-19 emergency. The House version of this bill authorized DHHS to provide Medicaid coverage for COVID-19 testing for the uninsured during the nationwide coronavirus public health emergency as allowed under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and authorized DHHS to provide temporary, targeted Medicaid coverage to individuals with incomes up to 200% of the federal poverty level.

The final versions of H 1043 and S 704 approved by the Senate and House, however, didn't include provisions regarding Medicaid expansion or increases in unemployment compensation and provided \$1.6 billion in funding.

Filed 04/28/2020.

Committee Substitute Adopted 04/29/2020

Committee Substitute Adopted 04/29/2020

Passed House (118-1) 04/30/2020.

Referred to Senate Appropriations/Budget Committee 04/30/2020.

Senate Committee Substitute Adopted 05/02/2020.

Passed Senate (48-0) 05/02/2020.

Passed House (120-0) 05/02/2020.

Ratified and Presented to Governor 05/02/2020.

Signed by Governor (SL 2020-4) 05/04/2020

[H 1044](#). Amends House rules during COVID-19 emergency.

Filed 04/28/2020.

Adopted 04/28/2020.

[H 1046](#). **COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave.**

Filed 04/28/2020.

Referred to House Finance Committee 04/28/2020.

[H 1056](#). **Health Care. Economic Justice.** Amends state workers compensation law to provide occupational disease coverage for first responders and health care workers who contract COVID-19.

Filed 05/01/2020.

Referred to House Committee on Health 05/01/2020.

[H 1057](#). **Health Care. Economic Justice.** Amends the workers compensation law to create a rebuttable presumption that first responders, health care workers, and essential service workers who are infected with COVID contracted the disease in the course of employment. Also requires local government employers to credit first responders and health care workers for leave taken while quarantined and appropriates funds to settle employee workers compensation claims related to the COVID pandemic.

Filed 05/01/2010.

Referred to House Committee on Health 05/02/2020.

[H 1059](#). This bill, sponsored by very conservative legislators, would place restrictions on the Governor's authority to declare a state of emergency and prohibit the Governor's declaration of emergency from prohibiting churches from meeting for worship services. Filed 05/02/2020.

Referred to House Judiciary Committee 05/02/2020.

[H 1061](#). **Economic Justice**. Increases maximum unemployment benefit to \$425 per week and makes other changes to state unemployment compensation law.

Filed 05/06/2020.

Referred to House Finance Committee.

[H 1073](#). **NC "Freedom to Work" Act**. Introduced by Republican legislators, this bill would reduce penalties for individuals who violate restrictions imposed under the Governor's COVID-19 executive orders.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to House Commerce Committee 05/14/2020.

[H 1075](#). **Economic Justice**. Increases maximum unemployment benefit to \$425 per week and makes other changes to state unemployment compensation law.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to House Finance Committee 05/14/2020.

[H 1076](#). Funds personal protective equipment for working inmates and requires a report on distribution of PPE in prisons and juvenile facilities.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to House Appropriations Committee 05/14/2020.

[H 1085](#). **Health Care/Economic Justice**. Provides hazard pay for essential state employees working during COVID-19 pandemic.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to House Appropriations Committee 05/14/2020.

[H 1100](#). Sponsored by conservative Republican lawmakers, this bill would allow businesses and religious organizations to operate despite restrictions imposed by Governor's COVID-19 emergency orders as long as social distancing guidelines are followed.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to House Judiciary Committee 05/14/2020.

[H 1104](#). Health Care. Provides access to affordable health insurance through the federal ObamaCare health insurance exchange for individuals in the ACA coverage gap via a state income tax credit.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to House Rules Committee.

[H 1108](#). Environmental Justice. Regulates production and disposal of PFAS chemicals.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to House Environment Committee 05/18/2020.

[H 1109](#). Environmental Justice. Regulates production and disposal of PFAS chemicals.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to House Environment Committee 05/18/2020.

[H 1110](#). Environmental Justice. Funds study of production and disposal of PFAS chemicals.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to House Regulatory Reform Committee 05/18/2020.

[H 1122](#). Economic Justice/Public Education. Provides affordable broadband access and internet access to students and teachers who don't have internet service or can't afford internet service.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to House Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

[H 1138](#). Environmental Justice/Health Care. Funds study of "cancer clusters" in NC.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to House Appropriations Committee.

[H 1140](#). Economic Justice. Domestic Workers Bill of Rights.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to House Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

[H 1148](#). Public Education. Restores additional pay for teachers with masters degrees.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to House Appropriations Committee 05/18/2020.

[H 1169](#). Electoral Justice. Bipartisan bill to make voting by mail easier in the 2020 elections. Also provides funding for public health, cyber security, and other elections-related initiatives. Chances of it passing both the House and Senate appear to be good but the legislation falls short of what some voting rights advocates (including Democracy NC and NC NAACP) want..

Filed 05/22/2020.

Referred to Committee on Elections 05/22/2020.

Committee Substitute adopted 05/27/2020.

Committee Substitute #2 adopted 05/27/2020.

Amended and passed House (116 - 3) 05/28/2020.

Referred to Senate Redistricting & Elections Committee 06/01/2020.

Senate Committee Substitute Adopted 06/02/2020.

Referred to Senate Appropriations Committee 06/02/2020.

Senate Committee Substitute Adopted 06/09/2020.

Passed Senate (37-12) 06/11/2020.

Passed House (105-14) 06/11/2020.

Signed by Governor SL 2020-17 06/12/2020.

[H 1184](#). Electoral Justice. This legislation, introduced by Rep. Marcia Morey and other Democratic lawmakers, includes provisions that go beyond the bipartisan H 1169, including making Election Day a state holiday, extending the voter registration deadline to 14 days before the election, providing postage for mailing absentee ballots, and more.

Filed 05/26/2020.

Referred to House Rules Committee 05/26/2020.

[H 1188](#). Economic Justice. Appropriates \$13 million in federal COVID-19 funding to provide additional cash assistance to families receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families.

Filed 05/26/2020.

Referred to House Rules Committee 05/26/2020.

[H 1197](#). Electoral Justice. Appropriates \$25 million in federal and state funding to mitigate impact of COVID-19 on 2020 election.

Filed 05/26/2020.

Referred to House Rules Committee 05/26/2020.

[H 1207](#). Appropriates funding to state court system and makes changes to existing statutes to address COVID-19 emergency.

Filed 05/26/2020.

Referred to House Judiciary Committee 05/27/2020.

H 1209. Gun Violence. Amends state law to require permit for purchase of assault weapons and long guns.

Filed 05/26/2020.

Referred to House Rules Committee 05/27/2020.

Senate Bills

S 562. Second Chance Act. Liberalizes state law regarding expunction of criminal convictions to give offenders a second chance at employment, etc. ***This bill passed the Senate during the “long” 2019 session.***

House Committee Substitute 06/09/2020.

Passed House (119-0) 06/10/2020.

Passed Senate (47-0) 06/16/2020.

S 704. Appropriates \$1.36 billion of the total \$3.5 billion in federal funding to address COVID-19 emergency as well as \$125 million in loans to small business through Golden LEAF Fund. Includes provisions regarding public schools, community colleges, and universities, state Open Meetings law, and unemployment compensation as well as provisions regarding regulatory flexibility and health care liability protection for health care providers with respect to emergency or disaster treatment and limited liability immunity for “essential” businesses. The original Senate bill provided Medicaid coverage for uninsured individuals for COVID-19 testing and treatment but did *not* expand Medicaid for low-income individuals under Obama Care Medicaid expansion. Also provided \$50 increase in weekly unemployment benefits. ***The final versions of H 1043 and S 704 approved by the Senate and House don’t include provisions regarding Medicaid expansion or increases in unemployment compensation and provide \$1.6 billion in funding.***

Filed 04/28/2020.

Committee Substituted adopted 04/29/2020.

Amendments adopted 04/29/2020.

Passed Senate (48-0) 04/29/2020.

Referred to House Rules Committee 04/29/2020.

House Committee Substitute Adopted 05/02/2020.

Passed House (119-1) 05/02/2020.

Passed Senate (46-0) 05/02/2020.
Ratified and Presented to Governor 05/02/2020.
Signed by Governor (SL 2020-3) 05/04/2020.

S 712. NC “Freedom to Work” Act. Introduced by conservative state lawmakers, this bill would reduce penalties for individuals who violate restrictions imposed under the Governor’s COVID-19 executive orders.
Filed 05/07/2020.
Referred to Senate Rules Committee.

S 715. Electoral Justice. Establishes a process for creating “county cluster” maps to use in state legislative redistricting following the 2020 Census.
Filed 05/13/2020.
Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/14/2020.

S 734. Economic Justice. Reinstates state earned income tax credit (EITC) for low-wage workers (previously repealed by Republican lawmakers).
Filed 05/14/2020.
Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

S 735. Environmental Justice/Health Care. Funds study of GenX and public health in southeastern NC.
Filed 05/14/2020.
Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

S 740. Health Care/Economic Justice. Provides hazard pay for essential state employees working during COVID-19 pandemic.
Filed 05/14/2020.
Referred to Senate Appropriations Committee 05/18/2020.

S 744. Environmental Justice. Requires companies responsible for pollution to pay for clean water for impacted residents and prohibits electric utilities from charging customers for coal ash removal or remediation.
Filed 05/14/2020.
Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

S 746. Environmental Justice/Health Care. Bipartisan bill funds study of “cancer clusters” in NC.
Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

S 747. Public Education/Economic Justice. \$15 minimum wage for non certified school employees.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

S 757. Health Care. Establishes position of NC Surgeon General.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

S 763. Health Care/Economic Justice. Pay Equity for Essential Employees. Provides income tax deduction for essential workers.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

S 771. Public Education/Economic Justice. Restores “sales tax holiday” for school supplies.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

S 774. Requires state Dept. of Corrections to develop a plan for release of inmates and protection of inmates during ongoing COVID-19 and use of Odom Correctional Facility to house ICE detainees from NC.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

S 775. Racial Justice. Establishes task force to study health and income disparities among black women and impact of criminal justice system on black women and girls.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020

Referred to Senate Appropriations Committee 05/20/2020.

S 779. Funds personal protective equipment for working inmates and requires a report on distribution of PPE in prisons and juvenile facilities.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

[S 781](#). Places restrictions on executive orders and local ordinances that prohibit or restrict press, protest, or religious institutions during a state of emergency.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

[S 786](#). **Economic Justice**. Increases minimum wage for tipped employees and includes provisions to protect workers for workplace harassment.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

[S 788](#). Save Our Restaurants Act. Allocates \$125 million in funding to assist restaurants impacted by COVID-19 state of emergency.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

Referred to Senate Appropriations Committee 05/20/2020.

[S 792](#). **Economic Justice**. In 2013 the Republican-controlled legislature drastically reduced the duration and amount of North Carolina's unemployment benefits. This bill, if enacted, would increase the maximum duration of unemployment benefits from 12/20 weeks to 26 weeks and increase the maximum amount of unemployment benefits from \$350 to \$450 per week.

Filed 05/14/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/18/2020.

[S 803](#). **Racial Justice**. Capital Projects Appropriations. This bill was amended to include funding (previously included in the 2019 state budget bill that was vetoed (for other reasons) by Gov. Cooper) for a monument to African Americans at the State Capitol and Freedom Park in Raleigh.

Amended 06/15/2020.

Passed Senate (48-0) 06/15/2020.

[S 828](#). **Electoral Justice**. This bill, introduced by Democratic lawmakers, would allow all voters to use the more flexible rules for absentee voting available to military personnel who vote by absentee (mail in) ballot.

Filed 05/21/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/22/2020.

[S 834](#). **Health Care**. Close the Medicaid gap.

Filed 05/26/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/27/2020.

[S 837](#). Environmental Justice. Regulates production and disposal of PFAS chemicals.

Filed 05/26/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/27/2020.

[S 838](#). Environmental Justice. Funds study of production and disposal of PFAS chemicals.

Filed 05/26/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/27/2020.

[S 839](#). Health Care/Public Education. Provides funding for personal protective equipment and hazard pay for designated public school employees.

Filed 05/26/2020.

Referred to Senate Appropriations Committee 05/27/2020.

[S 849](#). Economic Justice/Poverty. Allows persons convicted of drug-related felonies to receive food and nutrition services.

Filed 05/26/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 05/27/2020.

[S 860](#). Health Care. Requires state agencies to develop plans for releasing inmates and juvenile offenders to address COVID-19 emergency.

Filed 05/26/2020.

Referred to Senate Appropriations Committee 05/27/2020.

[S 861](#). Electoral Justice. This bill, included by Democratic Senators, includes provisions that go beyond those included in the bipartisan elections bill (H 1169).

Filed 05/28/2020.

Referred to Senate Rules Committee 06/01/2020.