

WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

NOTE: This is the tenth of a series of weekly summaries prepared by the legislative staff of the Institute of Government on the work of the North Carolina General Assembly of 1957. It is confined to discussions of matters of general interest and major importance.

1957 Session		
Public Bills	180	336 516
Local Bills	155	481 636
Total	335	817 1152

Ratifications 395
 With both the Appropriations Bill and the Revenue Bill in the hands of subcommittees, legislators will concentrate on other matters for a few weeks.

Legislative Reapportionment
 Small-county legislators had the votes, and there apparently will be no reapportionment this year or revision of the Constitutional provisions relating thereto—that summarizes the Senate action Wednesday and Thursday on the Weathers Commission proposals. Senators Bell and Kirkman led the fight for the large counties and Senators Jolly and Martin for the small counties. The issue narrowed down to Senator Jolly's statement that Mecklenburg County receives back from the state only 38% of the tax dollars it pays whereas his county

1955 Session		
Senate House Total	237	339 576
Public Bills	99	319 418
Local Bills	336	618 994

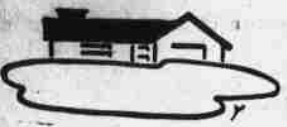
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A. W. Hefren, president
 Max Campbell, secretary

OFFICE AT THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

of Franklin receives 2 1/2 times as much as it pays, and that he fears reapportionment would mean Piedmont representatives could cut off this support and let the small counties wither on the vine of economic progress. When the votes were taken, the small-county representatives first amended the proposal to limit any one county to one Senator; then the measure passed on second reading; and on Thursday both it and the companion proposal to set up a reapportionment commission to act in case of legislative default were killed.

State Government
 An incipient revolt against the Administration's prison-separation plan was quickly quelled Tuesday when the Senate overruled an unfavorable committee report and passed the measure (after an amendment barring any use of monies from the General Fund for support of the new prison department) . . . Undismayed by a recent Supreme Court decision invalidating one of their brother agencies, several of the state's occupational licensing boards submitted bills to change their organization, dues, or requirements for licensing; included were boards regulating dentists, barbers, engineers, land surveyors and architects. A Senate version of the bill creating a board for psychologists was introduced, and a Senate committee gave a favorable report to the bill creating a realtor's licensing board . . . The bills to raise the pay of Superior Court solicitors and prohibit any private law practice by them were amended in both houses to postpone the effective date (except where solicitors want earlier increases) and then referred to Appropriations Committees.

Higher Education
 With the waves of the World War II "baby boom" washing ever closer, college administrators have been desperately planning how best to extend their already crowded facilities. One measure suggested is the establishment of a statewide system of junior colleges, most of whose students would live at home (thus avoiding the expense of building new dormitories). The 1955 General Assembly tentatively put its toe into the water by assuming part of the operational costs of four local colleges. This week the Board of Higher Education urged the state to take the full plunge, with a bill providing for organization and operation of community colleges in accordance with standards of the Board. The colleges (which could offer either liberal arts and sciences or technical courses) would receive assistance on a matching basis from the

state, both for capital improvements and operating costs.

Criminal Law
 The Biblical admonition against bearing false witness would receive legislative implementation by HB 800. It would declare a person knowingly and wilfully making a false accusation of crime guilty of a misdemeanor . . . A gap in the arson laws would be filled by a Senate bill making it a felony to wilfully burn a building under construction . . . The "Peeping Tom" bill, making it a misdemeanor to peep into the room of "any female person" (filling another gap which had allowed peepers at teenagers to avoid punishment), has become law.

Motor Vehicles
 Avowedly seeking to "put teeth into the Financial Responsibility Law so as to avoid a compulsory insurance law, Representative Whitley introduced a bill which would (a) repeal current provisions under which motorists can appeal to superior court from an order suspending their licenses for failure to post security or satisfy judgment after an accident (continuing to drive during the pendency of the appeal) and (b) suspend the registration of all vehicles owned by such a driver for so long as his license remains suspended. Nevertheless, the House Committee on Insurance gave a favorable report to the compulsory insurance bill.

Two other motor vehicles bills found the going rough along the legislative highway. HB 148 (which would authorize the Motor Vehicles Department to suspend the license of a driver entering a plea of nolo contendere on the same basis as that of a driver convicted of a violation, thus plugging a loophole uncovered by a recent Supreme Court decision) fell into the ditch with an unfavorable committee report, but was dragged out and returned to committee. The unmarked patrol car bill is still

unratified, as a result of Senate refusal to concur in House amendments limiting the number of such cars and requiring use of sirens when stopping cars.

Local Government
 A measure which would have provoked quite a stir several years ago was introduced without a murmur this week. HB 749 would authorize the Highway Commission to distribute highway funds to municipalities on the basis of need (rather than on the present formula based on population, mileage and need), and would permit reallocation of funds which have accumulated under the present formula, so long as it does not take the funds to another county. A Senate bill would authorize cities to make contracts in anticipation of Powell Bill funds to be received for the next five years. Other bills of interest would (a) give municipal tax collectors the same power as is now exercised by the county sheriff in collecting delinquent license

taxes, (b) authorize counties and cities to appoint deputy tax collectors, (c) allow cities to sell surplus property on sealed bids after 30 days' notice, (d) permit Lillington to make its own property revaluation for tax purposes, (e) authorize cities to construct (and sewer bonds for) water and sewer systems extending up to 10 miles beyond their limits, and (f) provide a method for reducing the area of an existing sanitary district.

Miscellaneous
 A legislative perennial, the proposal for a statewide liquor referendum, bloomed again this week. Given more chance of success is a measure authorizing seizure and sale of vehicles used to transport materials for making intoxicants . . . A Republican answer to the "anti-Jones" election law would return the state to the pre-1955 situation when ballots could be split by marking a party circle and the names of candidates of the other

party . . . HB 770 would tighten voter-registration procedures in counties using the loose-leaf system . . . SB 319 would levy new taxes on the use of trading stamps and require that the value of unredeemed stamps escheat to the state's public schools . . . Tax refunds for fuels not used on highways would be raised from 5c to 6c per gallon by HB 762 . . . SB 320 would provide for central registration of all divorce decrees in the Office of Vital Statistics.

Vets' Question Box
 Q—I understand that a World War II veteran must file his application for a GI loan by July 25, 1958. Just what steps have to be taken by that date?
 A—By that date, a tender must at least have agreed to make the loan and must have requested VA's approval. The law allows up to an additional year, after that

deadline, to complete the loan.

Q—I have just retired from the Armed Forces after 30 years of service. Would it be possible for my GI insurance premiums to be paid by allotment from my retirement pay?
 A—Yes, however, authorization must be registered with your branch of service.

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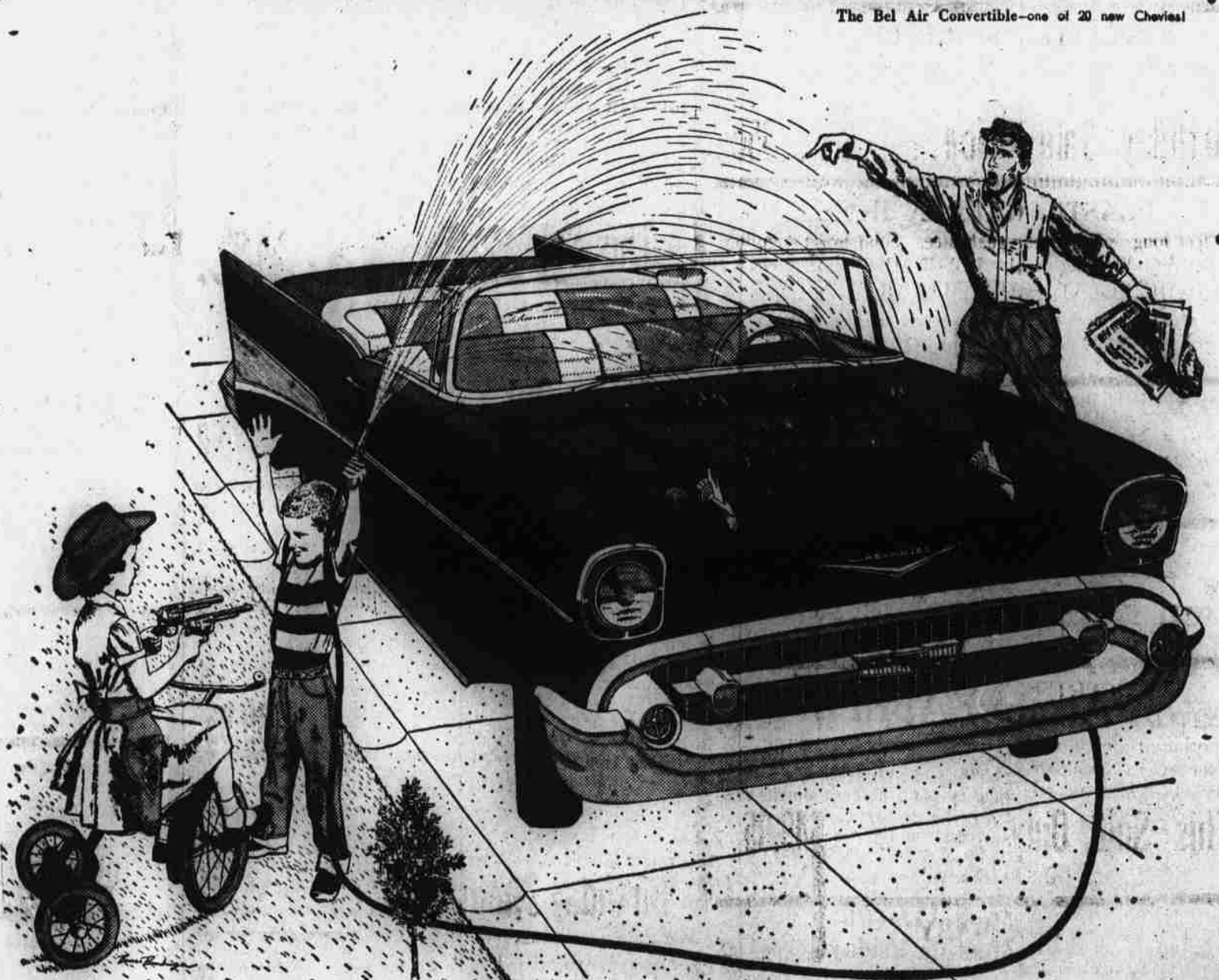
By order of the Town Council, in regular meeting, 1956 delinquent taxes in Hertford will be advertised on May 10, 1957.

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R. C. ELLIOTT

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