

WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

NOTE: This is the thirteenth 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.

Among the introductions were bills calling for a Constitutional convention and requiring certain organizations (apparently the NAACP in particular) to file annual reports; both measures are akin to gubernatorial suggestions, but neither came from administration spokesmen.

Municipal Annexation

Bills extending city limits biennially produce a legislative headache. The 1947 General Assembly supplied an aspirin, with a statewide law providing for extension by municipal ordinance in the absence of objection; however, the aspirin contained a grain of poison in providing a vote on annexation by dissatisfied outside residents, and many cities have continued to annex by direct legislative action. After experiencing this migraine reaction for the first time, in dealing with the Charlotte, Greensboro, and Thomasville bills, Representative Wooten sought this week to change the remedy. HB 1051 would take annexation matters from both the Assembly and the electorate and transfer the final word to the courts. Either the governing body of a city or 51 per cent of the adjacent property owners could initiate the action; in case of a dispute, the superior court would hear the case, and if it found certain conditions to be present, it would approve the annexation.

An extraordinary amount of General Assembly attention was devoted to a still-unresolved House struggle over a local bill to extend Charlotte's city limits. Perhaps more significant forensic fireworks flashed in the Senate over the driver-training bill and in the House over bills to eliminate salacious literature from Tarheel newstands.

An unusual provision would authorize outside residents to contract with the city to make specified payments, after which they could not be annexed for 15 years.

A Durham annexation measure introduced the same day provides another approach. It would allow the city to annex by ordinance, but only within a specified area and only after the city council had made a study and a series of specified findings. Incidentally, the final vote on the Charlotte annexation bill is expected Tuesday.

State Government

In the wake of the administration's bill calling for a Constitutional-revision study commission, Senators Martin and Hamilton submitted a proposal which would ask a vote in the 1958 general elections on the question of calling a Constitutional convention. The convention would consist of 100 elected delegates (one per county) and its recommendations would be submitted for approval of the people in 1960. The state's past four Constitutional conventions (in 1861, 1865, 1868, and 1875) were all composed of 120 members, apportioned on the same basis as the House of Representatives.

Two more Reorganization Commission bills were introduced. One would require all occupational licensing boards to file annual reports with the Secretary of State giving information concerning their operations, to maintain up-to-date registers of their licenses, and to submit to annual audits by or under the direction of the State Auditor. The second bill clarifies the responsibilities of the State Personnel Director in classifying and setting salary ranges for positions of persons subject to the State Personnel Act. The state property management and prisoner work-release bills were ratified.

Stung by the complaints of coastal residents, the 1955 General Assembly created a commission to study the problem of salt marsh mosquito control. This week the commission's recommendations (in the form of three bills) were introduced in both houses. They would direct the State Board of Health to set up mosquito-control units, convert the commission into a permanent advisory group for the Board of Health, and authorize creation of local mosquito-control districts by landowners.

HB 1041 would raise the pay of superior court judges from \$11,000 to \$12,000 and increase their expense allowances from \$2,500 to \$3,500 annually.

County Government

Two proposals of the Association of County Commissioners were introduced. HB 1033 would authorize county commissioners to name roads in unincorporated areas, and HB 1034 would allow them to mark county vehicles with

the county seal instead of the name of the county. Other bills of interest to county officials would (a) permit counties to lend their credit to hospital districts (in anticipation of tax collections in the district), (b) exempt from ad valorem taxation for one year stored, re-dried tobacco intended for shipment out of the county, and (c) provide for a county-wide school supplement tax election when all the city administrative school units in a county petition for consolidation with the county unit.

The bill providing for a jury commissioner to prepare jury lists was killed by a House committee. HB 385, requiring JP's to use pre-numbered warrants and receipts and submit to annual audits, was amended to apply to only 22 counties before passing the House.

Business Regulation

Another legislative perennial, the measure aimed at non-par banks (i.e., banks which charge a fee on remittances covering checks) came in this week. This time it has been softened so as to apply only to banks or branch offices having average deposits of \$2½ millions; such banks would not charge such fees. SB 388 would allow a plumbing and heating contractor's license to be issued in the name of a business organization, so long as an officer or employee authorized to act for the business is licensed, executes contracts, and supervises work; now only individuals may be licensed. SB 397 would rewrite the laws relating to credit units; among other changes, it would permit interest charges of 1 per cent per month (the limit is now 6 per cent per year). State income tax relief would be given to producers of asbestos, mica, tungsten, manganese, lithium and other commercial minerals by HB 1024; it would authorize them to take a 23 per cent annual depletion allowance (conforming to the federal law).

The bills requiring licensed physicians to register every two years

and tightening provisions for the licensing of dentists have been ratified, along with SB 162 regulating unfair trade practices in the diamond industry.

Miscellaneous

Senators engaged in a lengthy debate before passing the bill establishing a statewide driver-training program in the high schools; most of the controversy turned around the question of whether an additional fee of \$1 per car registration was actually needed to finance the program.

Representative Satterfield introduced a bill which would require annual reports by corporations having as their objects (on a racial or religious basis) the advancement or suppression of the interests of a

particular group (including promotion or restriction of employment) the affecting of the administration of justice, or facilitating or restricting voting. The reports would have to give the names of in-state members and employees and of contributors, and to list expenditures in the state.

HR 1014 asks Congress to call a Constitutional convention to amend the federal Constitution so as to allocate a state's electoral votes in proportion to the popular vote. The "lawyer's bills" to abolish the Rule in Shelley's Case and to permit recovery in tort actions on a comparative negligence basis were killed in a House committee. Unseasonably cool weather was in-

sufficient to prevent a resolution asked the Board of Public Buildings and Grounds to air condition the legislative chambers.

Conference Track Meet Here Wednesday

Sport fans of this section will have an opportunity of seeing a high school track meet for the first time in a number of years when the Albemarle Conference meet is conducted on Memorial Field in Hertford next Wednesday night beginning at 7:30 o'clock.

Four teams, Williamson, Asheboro, Edenton and Perquimans, will have entries in the track and field events. These will consist of the

100, 220 and 440 yard dashes, a mile race and mile relay. Field events will include the broad jump, high jump, javelin throw and shot put.

A small admission will be charged to help defray the costs of conducting the track meet.

Old Moral In New Frame
"Freddie," said the teacher, "give me a sentence using the word diadem."

Freddie had overheard certain remarks at home and out of his subconscious store of worldly wisdom he drew this reply:

"Drivers who hurry across railroad crossings diadem sight quicker than those who stop, look and listen."

NOTICE!

BY ORDER OF THE PERQUIMANS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

I will advertise for sale, on June 1, 1957, all Real Estate on which 1956 taxes have not been paid, and also will levy on all delinquent Personal Property Taxes. I will hold the sale of the Real Estate on Monday, July 1, 1957. Please make prompt settlement now and save yourself the additional cost of advertising.

J.K. WHITE

SHERIFF OF PERQUIMANS COUNTY



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