

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2025

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SENATE SIMPLE RESOLUTION DRSR15001-MC-5

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Sponsors: Senator Rabon (Primary Sponsor).

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Referred  
to:

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1 A SENATE RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE PERMANENT RULES OF THE SENATE FOR  
2 THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE 2025 GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

3 Be it resolved by the Senate:

4 **SECTION 1.** The permanent rules for the Regular Session of the Senate shall be as  
5 follows:

6 **PERMANENT RULES OF**  
7 **THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE SENATE**  
8 **2025 GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**

- 9 I. Order of Business, Rules 1-7  
10 II. Conduct of Debate, Rules 8-17  
11 III. Motions, Rules 18-24.1  
12 IV. Voting, Rules 25-30  
13 V. Committees, Rules 31-37.2  
14 VI. Handling Bills, Rules 38-59.2  
15 VII. Legislative Officers and Employees, Rules 60-65  
16 VIII. General Rules, Rules 66-77.

17 **I. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

18 **RULE 1. Rules controlling the Senate of North Carolina and its committees.** –  
19 The following rules shall govern and control all actions and procedures of the Senate and its  
20 committees.

21 **RULE 1.1. Emergencies.** – In the event of a disaster, natural or otherwise, that  
22 precludes the General Assembly from meeting in the Legislative Building, the members will be  
23 notified by the President Pro Tempore where and when the Senate will convene.

24 **RULE 2. Convening hour.** – (a) The Presiding Officer shall take the Chair at the  
25 hour fixed by the Senate upon adjournment on the preceding legislative day and shall call the  
26 members to order. In case the Senate adjourned on the preceding legislative day without having  
27 fixed the hour of reconvening, the Senate shall reconvene on the next legislative day at 2:00 P.M.

28 (b) At the hour fixed by the Senate upon adjournment on the preceding legislative  
29 day, or at the hour to which the Senate has previously recessed on that same legislative day, and  
30 upon direction from the President Pro Tempore of the Senate or the Chair of the Committee on  
31 Rules and Operations of the Senate, the Principal Clerk of the Senate may convene the Senate  
32 for the purpose of announcing to the Chamber that the Senate stands in recess until a later,  
33 specified hour.

34 **RULE 3. Opening the session.** – The Presiding Officer shall, upon order being  
35 obtained, have the sessions of the Senate opened with prayer.



1           **RULE 4. Convening and presiding in absence of President.** – In the absence of the  
2 President, the President Pro Tempore or a Senator designated by the President Pro Tempore shall  
3 convene or reconvene the Senate and preside, and during such time shall be vested with all  
4 powers of the President of the Senate except that of casting a vote in case of a tie when the  
5 President Pro Tempore or the designated Presiding Officer has already voted on the question as  
6 a Senator. In the event of the absence of the President and President Pro Tempore at any time  
7 fixed for the reconvening of the Senate, the Senate shall be called to order by a member  
8 designated by the President Pro Tempore, or if no member is designated, by the Deputy President  
9 Pro Tempore of the Senate. If no member has been designated and the Deputy President Pro  
10 Tempore is also absent, the Senate shall be called to order by the Chair of the Committee on  
11 Rules and Operations of the Senate, who shall designate some member to act as Presiding Officer.  
12 The Principal Clerk of the Senate may convene the Senate for the purpose of notifying the  
13 Chamber that the Senate stands in recess pursuant to Rule 2(b) of these rules.

14           **RULE 5. Quorum.** – (a) A quorum consists of a majority of all the qualified members  
15 of the Senate.

16           (b) When a lesser number than a quorum convenes, the Senators present may send  
17 the Sergeant-at-Arms or any person, for any or all absent Senators, as a majority of the Senators  
18 present determines.

19           **RULE 6. Approval of Journal.** – After the prayer, the Presiding Officer shall cause  
20 the Journal of the preceding day to be read and approved, unless the President Pro Tempore or,  
21 in the President Pro Tempore's absence, the Deputy President Pro Tempore of the Senate or some  
22 member of the Senate by motion sustained by a majority of the members present, has the reading  
23 thereof dispensed with and the same approved as written.

24           **RULE 7. Order of business.** – After approval of the Journal, the order of business  
25 shall be as follows:

- 26           (1) Reports of standing committees.
- 27           (2) Reports of select committees.
- 28           (3) Introduction of bills, petitions, and resolutions.
- 29           (4) Messages from the House of Representatives.
- 30           (5) Veto messages from the Governor.
- 31           (6) Unfinished business of preceding day.
- 32           (7) Special orders.
- 33           (8) General orders:
  - 34           a. Local bills in numerical order, Senate bills first:
    - 35           1. Third reading roll call and electronic voting system votes.
    - 36           2. Second reading roll call and electronic voting system votes.
    - 37           3. Second reading viva voce.
    - 38           4. Third reading viva voce.
  - 39           b. Public bills in numerical order, Senate bills first:
    - 40           1. Third reading roll call and electronic voting system votes.
    - 41           2. Second reading roll call and electronic voting system votes.
    - 42           3. Second reading viva voce.
    - 43           4. Third reading viva voce.
- 44           (9) Moments of Personal Privilege, reading of Senatorial Statements, and  
45 explanation of votes.

## 46           **II. CONDUCT OF DEBATE**

47           **RULE 8. Presiding Officer to maintain order.** – The Presiding Officer shall have  
48 general direction of the Hall of the Senate and shall be authorized to take such action as is  
49 necessary to maintain order. In case of any disturbance or disorderly conduct in the galleries or  
50 lobbies, the Presiding Officer shall have the power to order those areas cleared. In addition, the  
51 Presiding Officer shall, upon request by the President Pro Tempore, the Deputy President Pro

1 Tempore, or the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate, order those areas  
2 cleared.

3 RULE 9. (Reserved for future use).

4 RULE 10. **Points of order.** – (a) The Presiding Officer shall preserve order and  
5 decorum and proceed with the business of the Senate according to the rules adopted. The  
6 Presiding Officer shall decide all questions of order, subject to an appeal to the Chair of the  
7 Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate, whose decision may be appealed to the Senate  
8 by any member, on which appeal no member shall speak more than once unless by leave of the  
9 Senate. A two-thirds vote of the membership of the Senate present and voting is necessary to  
10 sustain any appeal from the ruling of the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the  
11 Senate.

12 (b) In the event the Senate Rules do not provide for or cover any point of order  
13 raised by any Senator, the rules of the United States House of Representatives shall govern.

14 (c) When a Senator is called to order, that Senator shall take the assigned seat  
15 until the Presiding Officer determines whether that Senator was in order or not; if decided to be  
16 out of order, that Senator shall not proceed without the permission of the Senate; and every  
17 question of order shall be decided by the Presiding Officer, subject to an appeal to the Chair of  
18 the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate, whose decision may be appealed to the  
19 Senate by any Senator; and if a Senator is called to order for words spoken, the words to which  
20 an exception is made shall be immediately preserved by the Principal Clerk, so that the Presiding  
21 Officer, Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate, or Senate may be better  
22 able to judge the matter.

23 RULE 11. **Debating and voting by Lieutenant Governor.** – The Lieutenant  
24 Governor, as President of the Senate, being a Constitutional Officer, shall not have the right to  
25 debate any question or to address the Senate upon any proposition unless by permission of the  
26 majority of members present and shall have the right to vote only when there is a tie vote upon  
27 any question or election.

28 RULE 12. **Obtaining recognition.** – (a) When any Senator is about to speak in debate  
29 or deliver any matter to the Senate, that Senator shall rise and respectfully address the Presiding  
30 Officer. No member shall speak further until recognized by the Presiding Officer. The Presiding  
31 Officer shall recognize the first to rise and, when two or more members rise at the same time, the  
32 Presiding Officer shall name the member to speak, giving priority to the President Pro Tempore,  
33 the Deputy President Pro Tempore, or the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of  
34 the Senate.

35 (b) A Senator who has the floor may yield the floor to another Senator only for  
36 the purpose of allowing another Senator to state a question. Only the Presiding Officer may award  
37 the floor to any Senator.

38 (c) A Senator who has obtained the floor may be interrupted only for the  
39 following reasons:

40 (1) A request that the member speaking yield for a question;

41 (2) A point of order; or

42 (3) A parliamentary inquiry.

43 (d) When a Senator refers to a bill, the bill number and short title must be used.

44 RULE 13. (Reserved for future use).

45 RULE 14. **Limitations on individual debate.** – (a) No Senator shall speak on the  
46 same reading more than (i) twice on the main question, (ii) 30 minutes for the first speech and  
47 15 minutes for the second speech, and (iii) once on any motion or appeal, and then no longer than  
48 10 minutes; provided, however, the President Pro Tempore, the Deputy President Pro Tempore,  
49 or the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate may alter some or all of the  
50 limitations in this rule following consultation with the minority leader of the Senate and approval  
51 of the majority of the members present.

1 (b) With leave of the Senate, any member of the Senate may address the Senate  
2 from the well of the Senate.

3 **RULE 15. Senatorial Statements.** – A Senatorial Statement may be utilized by a  
4 Senator to recognize constituents and events of significance and when a Resolution is not  
5 permitted under Rule 40.1. A Senatorial Statement may not be used to explain a vote, debate a  
6 bill, or in any way disrupt the regular business of the Senate. A Senatorial Statement shall be in  
7 writing and in a form prescribed by the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the  
8 Senate. A Senatorial Statement shall speak in the voice of the Senator submitting the Statement,  
9 is not a statement by the Senate, and is not subject to a vote by the Senate. A Senator may use a  
10 Moment of Personal Privilege under Rule 15.1 for a time not to exceed three minutes to read  
11 some or all of a Senatorial Statement provided the Presiding Officer determines the question  
12 raised in the Statement is one of privilege. Upon motion supported by a majority present and  
13 voting, a Senatorial Statement may be spread upon the Journal.

14 **RULE 15.1. Moments of Personal Privilege.** – (a) Upon recognition by the Presiding  
15 Officer for that purpose, any Senator may speak for a time not exceeding three minutes on a  
16 Moment of Personal Privilege.

17 (b) A Moment of Personal Privilege may not be used to explain a vote, debate a  
18 bill, or in any way disrupt the regular business of the Senate, nor shall such opportunities be used  
19 to solicit support or sponsors for any bill. The Presiding Officer shall determine if the question  
20 raised is one of privilege and shall, without the point of order being raised, enforce this rule,  
21 subject to an appeal to the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate whose  
22 decision may be appealed to the Senate by any Senator, on which appeal no member shall speak  
23 more than once unless by leave of the Senate. A two-thirds vote of the membership of the Senate  
24 present and voting is necessary to sustain any appeal from the ruling of the Chair of the  
25 Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.

26 **RULE 15.2. Explanation of vote.** – Any Senator may explain that Senator's vote on  
27 any bill that day by obtaining permission of the Presiding Officer for that purpose. No more than  
28 three minutes shall be consumed in such explanation.

29 **RULE 16. Final orders of business.** – Senatorial Statements, Moments of Personal  
30 Privilege, and explanations of votes shall be the last orders of the Senate's business that day and  
31 explanations of votes shall be made after the final vote has been taken.

32 **RULE 17. General decorum.** – (a) Male Senators and male visitors shall not wear  
33 any head covering in the Senate Chamber while the Senate is in session, unless his religion  
34 requires his head to be covered. All persons on the Senate floor while the Senate is in session  
35 shall be dressed in business attire, including coat and tie for men.

36 (b) No derogatory remark reflecting personally upon any Senator or Senators  
37 shall be in order upon the floor of the Senate unless preceded by a motion or resolution of censure.

38 (c) When the Presiding Officer is putting a question, or a division by counting is  
39 in progress, no Senator shall walk out of or across the Chamber, nor when a Senator is speaking,  
40 pass between that Senator and the Presiding Officer.

41 (d) When a motion to adjourn or for recess is affirmatively determined, no  
42 member or officer shall leave that member's or officer's place until adjournment or recess is  
43 declared by the Presiding Officer.

44 (e) Smoking shall not be allowed in the Senate Chamber.

45 (f) No remark soliciting the donation of funds for the support of any person or  
46 organization shall be in order upon the floor of the Senate, unless the remark has some relevance  
47 to a bill or resolution before the body. No article of any kind soliciting business or donations may  
48 be placed by any person anywhere in the Senate Chamber or in any Senate office.

49 (g) The President Pro Tempore may authorize and provide for the broadcasting  
50 of Senate sessions via television or internet.

1 (h) Reading of newspapers, magazines, periodicals, or books shall not be  
2 permitted while the Senate is in session. This rule does not prohibit the use of electronic devices,  
3 the use of quotations during debate or for personal privilege.

4 (i) The operation of electronic devices whose sound cannot be muted is  
5 prohibited on the floor or in the gallery while the Senate is in session.

6 (j) No member of the Senate shall place any item on another Senator's Chamber  
7 desk or in another Senator's office unless the item conspicuously displays the name of the Senator  
8 placing the item.

9 (k) No person other than the member, the member's legislative assistant, or the  
10 Principal Clerk's office or staff under the direction of the Principal Clerk shall place any matter  
11 on the member's Chamber desk, then only materials relevant to the business of the Senate, or as  
12 allowed under subsection (j) of this rule.

13 (l) Neither food nor beverage shall be permitted in the galleries.

### 14 III. MOTIONS

15 **RULE 18. Motions generally.** – Any motion shall be reduced to writing, if requested  
16 by the Presiding Officer or a Senator, and read by the Presiding Officer or Reading Clerk before  
17 the same is debated. Any motion may be withdrawn by the introducer at any time before decision  
18 or amendment. No motion relating to a bill shall be in order which does not identify the bill by  
19 its number and short title. Except as otherwise specifically provided in these rules, no second is  
20 required.

21 **RULE 19. Motion; order of precedence.** – When a question is before the Senate, no  
22 motion shall be received except those herein specified, which motions shall have precedence as  
23 follows:

24 (1) To adjourn.

25 (2) To resolve into the Committee of the Whole Senate.

26 (3) To lay on the table.

27 (4) For the previous question.

28 (5) To postpone indefinitely.

29 (6) To postpone to a certain day.

30 (7) To re-refer to a standing committee.

31 (8) To refer to a select committee.

32 (9) To amend.

33 **RULE 20. Motions requiring a second.** – The motions to adjourn, to resolve into the  
34 Committee of the Whole Senate, to lay on the table, and to call for the previous question shall be  
35 seconded and decided without debate.

36 **RULE 21. Motions to postpone to certain day and to commit.** – The respective  
37 motions to postpone to a certain day, to resolve into the Committee of the Whole Senate, or to  
38 commit to a standing or select committee shall preclude debate on the main question.

39 **RULE 22. Motion to substitute.** – Subject to Rule 19, a member may offer a motion  
40 to substitute to any motion, except the motions for the previous question, to table, to resolve into  
41 the Committee of the Whole Senate, or to adjourn. No motion to substitute shall be offered to a  
42 motion to substitute.

43 **RULE 23. Motion for previous question.** – (a) The previous question may be moved  
44 upon a pending single motion, any pending amendment or amendments, and/or the pending bill  
45 to its passage on that reading or all readings or the pending resolution to its adoption. An  
46 authorized Senator moving the previous question shall specify to what the motion applies. Unless  
47 specified, the motion shall be deemed to apply to the current question.

48 (b) The previous question shall be as follows: "Shall the main question be now  
49 put?" and until it is decided shall preclude all amendments and debate. If this question is decided  
50 in the affirmative, the "main question" shall be on the passage of the bill, resolution, or other

1 matter under consideration; but when amendments are pending, the question shall be taken upon  
2 such amendments in their inverse order, without further debate or amendment.

3 (c) Only one of the following Senators may move the previous question:

4 (1) The chair of the committee submitting the report on the bill or other matter  
5 under consideration;

6 (2) The member introducing the bill or other matter under consideration;

7 (3) The member in charge of the measure, who shall be designated by the chair  
8 of the committee reporting the same to the Senate at the time the bill or other  
9 matter under consideration is reported to the Senate or taken up for  
10 consideration;

11 (4) The Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate; or

12 (5) The President Pro Tempore.

13 **RULE 24. Motion to reconsider.** – (a) When a question has been once put and  
14 decided, any Senator who voted in the majority may move to reconsider the vote thereof. No  
15 motion for reconsideration shall be in order unless made on the same day or on the next legislative  
16 day on which the vote took place. When the next legislative day has by motion of the Senate been  
17 restricted as to matters which may be considered, a motion to reconsider shall be in order on the  
18 next succeeding day upon which regular business is conducted. No question shall be reconsidered  
19 more than once.

20 (b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this rule, a motion to reconsider is in order  
21 at any time if made by the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate or the  
22 President Pro Tempore for the sole purpose of correcting grammatical errors in bills in the  
23 possession of the Senate.

24 (c) If a bill has gone out of the possession of the Senate and a motion to reconsider  
25 under these rules is passed, the bill shall not be enrolled unless it again passes third reading. The  
26 Principal Clerk shall notify the House of Representatives and the Enrolling Clerk of any action  
27 under this subsection.

28 **RULE 24.1. Motion to adjourn; motion to stand in recess; standard stipulations.**  
29 – A motion to adjourn or stand in recess shall be subject to receipt and referral of committee  
30 reports, the introduction of bills, referral and re-referral of bills, reading of Senatorial Statements,  
31 receipt of House messages, ratification of bills, announcement of committee assignments, and  
32 messages from the Governor.

33 A Senator may request that a motion to adjourn be made in honor or in memory of a  
34 person or an event of significance. The request shall be in writing and shall be submitted to the  
35 Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate on the day prior to the day the  
36 motion to adjourn is to be made.

#### 37 IV. VOTING

38 **RULE 25. Use of electronic voting system.** – (a) Votes on the following questions  
39 shall be taken on the electronic voting system, and the ayes and noes shall be recorded on the  
40 Journal:

41 (1) All questions on which the Constitution of North Carolina requires that the  
42 ayes and noes be taken and recorded on the Journal;

43 (2) All questions on which a call for the ayes and noes under Rule 26(b) has been  
44 sustained;

45 (3) Second and third readings of bills proposing amendment of the Constitution  
46 of North Carolina; and

47 (4) The vote on approval of a bill that was vetoed by the Governor.

48 (b) Votes on the following questions shall be taken on the electronic voting  
49 system, and the resulting totals shall be recorded on the Journal:

1 (1) Second reading of all public bills, all amendments to public bills offered after  
2 second reading, third reading if a public bill was amended after second  
3 reading, and all conference reports on public bills.

4 (2) Any other question upon direction of the Presiding Officer or upon motion of  
5 any Senator supported by one-fifth of the Senators present.

6 (c) When the electronic voting system is used, the Presiding Officer shall fix and  
7 announce the time, not to exceed one minute, which shall be allowed for voting on the question  
8 before the Senate. The system shall be set to lock automatically and to record the vote when that  
9 time has expired. Once the system has locked and recorded a vote, the vote shall be printed by  
10 the system.

11 (d) The voting station at each Senator's desk in the Chamber shall be used only  
12 by the Senator to whom the station is assigned. Under no circumstances shall any other person  
13 vote at a Senator's station. It is a breach of the ethical obligation of a Senator either to request  
14 that another vote at the requesting Senator's station or to vote at another Senator's station. The  
15 Presiding Officer shall enforce this rule without exception.

16 (e) When the electronic voting system is used, the Presiding Officer shall state  
17 the question and shall then state substantially the following: "All in favor vote 'aye'; all opposed  
18 vote 'no'; \_\_\_\_\_ seconds will be allowed for voting on this question; the Clerk will record the  
19 vote." After the machine locks and records the vote, the Presiding Officer shall announce the  
20 vote and declare the result, and no member may vote thereafter.

21 (f) One copy of the machine printout of the vote record shall be filed in the Office  
22 of the Principal Clerk, and one copy shall be filed in the Legislative Library where it shall be  
23 open to public inspection.

24 (g) When the Presiding Officer ascertains that the electronic voting system is  
25 inoperative before a vote is taken or while a vote is being taken on the electronic system, the  
26 Presiding Officer shall announce that fact to the Senate, and any partial electronic system voting  
27 record shall be voided. In such a case, if the Constitution of North Carolina or the Rules of the  
28 Senate require a call of the ayes and noes, the Clerk shall call the roll of the Senate, and the ayes  
29 and noes shall be taken manually and shall be recorded on the Journal. All other votes shall be  
30 taken as prescribed in Senate Rule 26. If, after a vote is taken on the electronic system, it is  
31 discovered that a malfunction caused an error in the electronic system printout, the Presiding  
32 Officer shall direct the Reading Clerk and the Principal Clerk to verify and correct the printout  
33 record and so advise the Senate.

34 (h) For the purpose of identifying motions on which the vote is taken on the  
35 electronic system (the identification codes having no relation to the order of precedence of  
36 motions), the motions are coded as follows:

- 37 (1) To lay on the table.  
38 (2) To resolve into the Committee of the Whole Senate.  
39 (3) For the previous question.  
40 (4) To postpone indefinitely.  
41 (5) To postpone to a day certain.  
42 (6) To refer to a committee.  
43 (7) To reconsider.  
44 (8) To adopt.  
45 (9) To concur.  
46 (10) To take from the table.  
47 (11) Miscellaneous.

48 **RULE 26. Voice votes; call for division; call for ayes and noes.** – (a) When the  
49 electronic voting system is not used, all votes on which a call of the roll of the Senate is not  
50 required shall be taken by voice vote. The question shall be put as follows: "Those in favor say  
51 'aye,'" and, after the affirmative vote is expressed, "Opposed 'no'"; after which the Presiding

1 Officer shall announce the result. If a division on any vote is desired, it must be called for  
2 immediately before the result of the voting is announced on any question, and, upon such call,  
3 the Presiding Officer shall require the members to stand and be counted for and against the  
4 proposition under consideration.

5 (b) The ayes and the noes may be called for on any question before the vote is  
6 taken. If a Senator desires the ayes and noes recorded on the Journal on a question, that Senator  
7 shall address the Presiding Officer and obtain recognition and say, "Upon that question I call for  
8 the ayes and noes." Whereupon the Presiding Officer shall say, "Is the call sustained?" If one-fifth  
9 of the remaining Senators present then stand, the vote shall be taken on the electronic voting  
10 system if it is operative, and the ayes and noes shall be recorded on the Journal. If the electronic  
11 voting system is inoperative, the roll of the Senate shall be called and the ayes and noes taken  
12 manually and recorded on the Journal. If fewer than one-fifth of the Senators present stand to  
13 sustain the call, the Presiding Officer shall announce, "An insufficient number up," and a vote by  
14 electronic voting or by voice, whichever is appropriate under the Rules of the Senate, shall be  
15 taken.

16 RULE 27. (Reserved for future use).

17 RULE 28. **Dividing question.** – (a) If a bill is subject to division into separate parts  
18 so that each part states a separate and distinct proposition capable of standing alone, a Senator  
19 may move that the question be divided. The motion shall:

- 20 (1) Be in writing,
- 21 (2) Be submitted to the Principal Clerk at the time the motion is made, and
- 22 (3) Clearly state how the question is to be divided.

23 Upon a majority vote of the membership of the Senate present and voting, the motion shall be  
24 adopted.

25 (b) If the motion to divide the question is adopted, then there shall be no further  
26 amendment or debate on any of the distinct propositions.

27 (c) If the question is divided and any part thereof fails, then the bill or resolution  
28 and any pending amendments shall be removed from the calendar and re-referred to the  
29 committee from which the bill or resolution was reported.

30 (d) Only one motion to divide the question shall be in order during consideration  
31 of a bill or resolution.

32 RULE 29. **Duty to vote; excuses.** – (a) Every Senator who is within the Senate  
33 Chamber when the question is stated by the Presiding Officer shall vote thereon unless that  
34 Senator is excused by the Senate.

35 (b) A Senator who is a member of a committee shall, upon request, be excused  
36 from deliberations and voting on the bill while it is before the committee. The Senator must make  
37 the request to the chair of the committee when the bill is first taken up for consideration and  
38 before any motion or vote on the bill or any amendment to the bill. The Senator making the  
39 request for excuse in committee must renew that request for excuse on the floor of the Senate as  
40 set forth in this rule.

41 (c) Any Senator may move to be excused at any time from voting on any matter.  
42 The Senator may make a brief statement of the reasons for the motion which question shall be  
43 taken without debate on the motion.

44 (d) The Senator may send forward to the Principal Clerk, on a form provided by  
45 the Clerk, a concise statement of the reason for the motion, and the Clerk shall include this  
46 statement in the Journal.

47 (e) The Senator so excused shall not debate the bill or any amendment to the bill,  
48 vote on the bill, offer or vote on any amendment to the bill, or offer or vote on any motion  
49 concerning the bill at that reading, any subsequent reading, or any subsequent consideration of  
50 the bill.



1 (f) A Senator may move that the excuse of that Senator from deliberations on a  
2 particular bill be withdrawn, which question shall be determined without debate. The Senator  
3 shall send forward to the Principal Clerk, on a form provided by the Clerk, the written request.

4 (g) A motion to be excused or for the withdrawal of an excuse shall be taken  
5 without debate.

6 (h) A motion by any Senator to change that Senator's vote must be made in open  
7 session on the same legislative day as the vote is taken. This subsection may not be suspended.

8 RULE 30. (Reserved for future use).

#### 9 V. COMMITTEES

10 RULE 31. **Appointment of committees.** – The President Pro Tempore of the Senate  
11 shall have the exclusive right and authority to appoint the membership of all committees,  
12 including regular and select, and to appoint committee chairs and vice-chairs and to establish  
13 select committees, but this does not exclude the right of the Senate by resolution to establish  
14 select committees. Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the  
15 Senate, the Senate may alter the name, number, and composition of the standing committees by  
16 a three-fifths vote of the membership of the Senate present and voting.

17 RULE 32. **List of standing/select committees.** – The standing committees shall be:

18 Agriculture, Energy, and Environment

19 Appropriations/Base Budget

20 Appropriations on Department of Transportation

21 Appropriations on Education/Higher Education

22 Appropriations on General Government and Information Technology

23 Appropriations on Health and Human Services

24 Appropriations on Justice and Public Safety

25 Appropriations on Agriculture, Natural, and Economic Resources

26 Commerce and Insurance

27 Committee of the Whole Senate

28 Education/Higher Education

29 Elections

30 Finance

31 Health Care

32 Judiciary

33 Pensions and Retirement and Aging

34 Regulatory Reform

35 Rules and Operations of the Senate

36 State and Local Government

37 Transportation

38 RULE 33. **Notice of committee meetings.** – (a) Public notice of all committee  
39 meetings shall be given in the Senate. The required notice may be waived as to any meeting by  
40 the attendance at that meeting of all of the members of the committee or by personal waiver.

41 (b) The chair of the committee shall notify or cause to be notified the sponsor of  
42 each bill that is set for hearing or consideration before the committee as to the date, time, and  
43 place of that meeting.

44 (c) The published calendar shall reflect those committee notices received in the  
45 Office of the Principal Clerk prior to 3:30 P.M. or as announced in the daily session.

46 RULE 34. **Membership of committees; quorum.** – (a) Membership on standing  
47 committees shall consist of no fewer than five Senators, including the chairs and vice-chairs and  
48 ranking minority members.

49 The President Pro Tempore shall have the exclusive right and authority to determine  
50 the total number of members and the number of members of each political party of each

1 committee. No Senator shall hold membership on more than 12 standing committees unless the  
2 Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate provides otherwise.

3 A quorum of the Appropriations/Base Budget and Finance Committees shall consist  
4 of a majority of the committee. A quorum of any other committee shall consist of either the chair  
5 and five members or a majority of the committee, whichever is fewer.

6 (b) The President Pro Tempore and the Deputy President Pro Tempore may serve  
7 as voting ex officio members of each Senate committee and subcommittee.

8 (c) The Vice-Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate may  
9 exercise any authority given to the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate  
10 under these rules in the absence of, or at the direction of, the Chair.

11 **RULE 35. Roll call vote in committee.** – No roll call vote may be taken in any  
12 committee. The committee chair may vote in committee.

13 **RULE 36. Standing committee and standing subcommittee meetings.** – No  
14 committee or subcommittee shall hold a secret meeting. All meetings of committees and  
15 subcommittees shall be open to the public, except as provided in G.S. 143-318.14A(e). In no  
16 event shall final action be taken by any committee or subcommittee except in open session.

17 **RULE 36.1. Committee minutes to Legislative Library.** – The chair of a committee  
18 shall ensure that minutes, in a format and medium approved by the Chair of the Committee on  
19 Rules and Operations of the Senate, are compiled for each of the committee's meetings. The  
20 minutes shall indicate the number of members present and the actions taken by the committee at  
21 the meeting. Not later than 30 days after the adjournment of each session of the General  
22 Assembly, the chair shall deliver the minutes to the Legislative Library. The President Pro  
23 Tempore of the Senate may grant a reasonable extension of time for filing said minutes upon  
24 application of the committee chair.

25 **RULE 37. Committee of the Whole Senate.** – Notwithstanding the provisions of  
26 Rules 33, 34, and 35, the Senate may resolve into the Committee of the Whole Senate by motion.  
27 When such a motion is seconded, the President shall put the question without debate: "Shall the  
28 Senate resolve itself into the Committee of the Whole Senate for consideration of \_\_\_\_\_?",  
29 stating the matter or matters identified by the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations  
30 of the Senate to be considered. Only the President Pro Tempore, the Deputy President Pro  
31 Tempore, or the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate may move to  
32 resolve into the Committee of the Whole Senate. The Committee of the Whole Senate shall  
33 convene in the Senate Chambers and shall utilize electronic voting. Unless otherwise stated, the  
34 Rules and Operations of the Senate apply to the Committee of the Whole Senate and the Principal  
35 Clerk of the Senate shall be the Committee Assistant, but shall not record committee activity on  
36 the Journal. The Chair shall be the President Pro Tempore of the Senate or his designee.

37 **RULE 37.1. Membership, quorum, and voting.** – Every Senator shall be a member  
38 of the Committee of the Whole Senate. A quorum of a Committee of the Whole Senate is 26  
39 members.

40 **RULE 37.2. Committee substitutes; report of the Committee of the Whole  
41 Senate; adjournment.** – (a) The committee of the Whole Senate shall not consider committee  
42 substitutes.

43 (b) The Chair may entertain a motion that the Committee adjourn after the Chair  
44 has announced that the Committee has finished the business for which it was convened.

45 (c) The Chair of the Committee of the Whole Senate shall report the bill to the  
46 Senate immediately following the adjournment of the Committee, including any amendments  
47 that were adopted in the Committee.

48 (d) The Chair shall announce the adjournment of the Committee of the Whole  
49 Senate and the members shall adjourn and, if the Committee was resolved out of an unadjourned  
50 session, the Senate shall resume session.

## 51 VI. HANDLING BILLS

1           **RULE 38. Application of rules.** – All provisions of these rules applying to bills,  
2 including, but not limited to, provisions governing the introduction, eligibility, and filing of bills,  
3 shall apply also to resolutions and petitions.

4           **RULE 39. Form of bills.** – (a) Unless variation is authorized by the Committee on  
5 Rules and Operations of the Senate, bills submitted for introduction shall be in a  
6 computer-generated form prepared by the Legislative Services Office and approved by the  
7 Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.

8           (b) Whenever a bill is filed, it shall be submitted to the Principal Clerk in the form  
9 of a Senate e-jacket.

10           **RULE 39.1. Public and local bills; limitation on local bills becoming public bills.**  
11 – (a) A public bill is a bill affecting 15 or more counties. A local bill is one affecting fewer than  
12 15 counties. No bill may be considered unless the bill has been made available to the entire  
13 membership of the Senate.

14           (b) A local bill that has become a public bill shall not be considered in the Senate  
15 unless one of the following applies:

16           (1) The North Carolina Constitution prescribes that the bill as filed must be a  
17 public bill because of its subject matter.

18           (2) The bill became a public bill because counties were added, but the bill relates  
19 to the subject matter contained in the original bill.

20           **RULE 40. Introduction of bills.** – (a) Pursuant to G.S. 120-11.1, on January 8, 2025,  
21 a simple resolution to establish the Senate Permanent Rules, and a joint resolution to adjourn to  
22 January 29, 2025, may be filed. No other bills are eligible to be filed on January 8, 2025.

23           (a1) Every bill filed for introduction shall contain on the Senate e-jacket the title  
24 of the document and the name of the Senator or Senators sponsoring it. No more than three  
25 Senators may be listed as primary sponsors. The Senator whose name appears first shall deliver  
26 the Senate e-jacket to the Office of the Principal Clerk either physically or electronically using  
27 the member's electronic dashboard. Subject to any authorization prescribed by the Principal  
28 Clerk, a member's legislative assistant may deliver a Senate e-jacket by any method allowed  
29 under this rule.

30           (a2) The Senate Principal Clerk shall receive bills for introduction during regular  
31 session on any day the Senate holds a session until 4:00 P.M.

32           (a3) All bills shall be numbered by the Office of the Principal Clerk when filed and  
33 shall be considered introduced when presented to the Senate on the next legislative day for the  
34 first reading. When a bill is presented with more than one primary sponsor, the Chair of the  
35 Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate shall designate, as bill manager, one of the  
36 primary sponsors. Senators may only cosponsor legislation electronically.

37           (b) Any Senator who wishes to cosponsor a bill or resolution that has been filed  
38 may do so no later than 5:00 P.M. on the next legislative day after the adjournment of the session  
39 during which the bill or resolution was first read and referred, but only electronically under  
40 procedures approved by the Principal Clerk.

41           (c) No member may introduce a public bill that has no substantive provisions. A  
42 member may introduce one local bill that contains no substantive provisions in an odd-numbered  
43 year. A member may introduce one local bill that contains no substantive provisions in an  
44 even-numbered year if the bill is otherwise eligible and either (i) the member did not introduce  
45 such a bill during the previous year or (ii) the member did introduce such a bill during the  
46 previous year but no substantive provisions were added.

47           **RULE 40.1. Limitations on certain resolutions.** – (a) A Senator may file a resolution  
48 that memorializes, celebrates, commends, or commemorates a deceased former member of the  
49 General Assembly.

1 (b) Resolutions of this nature that do not relate to deceased former members shall  
2 be excluded from introduction and consideration by the Senate. Senators shall instead utilize  
3 Senatorial Statements to recognize other individuals or events of significance.

4 (c) The Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate may refer  
5 any such resolution to a committee or place the resolution on the Senate's calendar for a date  
6 certain.

7 (d) During the Senate's consideration of a resolution relating to a deceased  
8 member, the Presiding Officer shall order the Chamber secured by the Sergeant-at-Arms so as to  
9 prevent the entry or exit of any person.

10 **RULE 40.2. Deadlines on filing for introduction of bills.** – (a) All local bills must  
11 be submitted to either the Legislative Drafting Division or the Legislative Analysis Division of  
12 the Legislative Services Office by 4:00 P.M. on Thursday, February 13, 2025, and must be filed  
13 for introduction in the Senate before 4:00 P.M. on Thursday, February 27, 2025.

14 (b) All public bills and resolutions, except those listed in subsection (b1) of this  
15 rule, must be submitted to either the Legislative Drafting Division or the Legislative Analysis  
16 Division of the Legislative Services Office by 4:00 P.M. on Thursday, February 27, 2025, and  
17 must be filed for introduction in the Senate before 4:00 P.M. on Tuesday, March 25, 2025.

18 (b1) The following bills are not subject to subsection (b) of this rule: (i) those  
19 providing for action on gubernatorial nominations or appointments, (ii) those providing for action  
20 on appointments by the General Assembly pursuant to G.S. 120-121, (iii) those proposing  
21 amendments to the North Carolina Constitution, (iv) those containing statutory amendments  
22 necessary to implement proposed amendments to the North Carolina Constitution, (v) those  
23 establishing districts for Congress or State or local entities, (vi) those addressing election laws,  
24 (vii) those ratifying amendments to the United States Constitution, and (viii) those adjourning  
25 the General Assembly.

26 (c) A two-thirds vote of the membership of the Senate present and voting shall be  
27 required to file for introduction any bill or resolution after the dates established by this rule.

28 (d) Bills that are subject to Rule 42 of these rules and local bills may be filed in  
29 any regular session that convenes in an even-numbered year.

30 **RULE 41. Crossover bill deadline; exemptions.** – (a) In order to be eligible for  
31 consideration by the Senate during the 2025 or 2026 Regular Session of the 2025 General  
32 Assembly, all House bills other than those described in subsection (b) of this rule must be  
33 received and read on the floor of the Senate as a message from the House no later than Thursday,  
34 May 8, 2025, provided that a message from the House received by the next legislative day stating  
35 that a bill has passed its third reading and is being engrossed shall comply with the requirements  
36 of this rule and provided that the House accepts Senate bills ordered engrossed on the next  
37 legislative day.

38 (b) The following bills are not subject to subsection (a) of this rule: (i) those  
39 required to be referred to the Committee on Finance or the Committee on Appropriations/Base  
40 Budget by Rule 42, (ii) those providing for action on gubernatorial nominations or appointments,  
41 (iii) those providing for action on appointments by the General Assembly pursuant to  
42 G.S. 120-121, (iv) those providing for amendments to the North Carolina Constitution, (v) those  
43 containing statutory amendments necessary to implement proposed amendments to the North  
44 Carolina Constitution, (vi) those establishing districts for Congress or State or local entities, (vii)  
45 those addressing election laws, (viii) those ratifying an amendment or amendments to the  
46 Constitution of the United States, and (ix) those adjourning the General Assembly.

47 **RULE 41.1. Effect of adjournment resolution.** – Rules 40.2 and 41 are subject to  
48 and may be modified by a resolution jointly adjourning both chambers to a date certain.

49 **RULE 42. Reference of appropriation and finance bills.** – (a) All bills introduced  
50 in the Senate providing for appropriations from the State, or any subdivision thereof, shall, before  
51 being considered by the Senate, be referred to the Committee on Appropriations/Base Budget

1 and bills referred to other committees carrying any such provisions shall be reported to the Senate  
2 as being bills to be referred to the Appropriations/Base Budget Committee before proper action  
3 may be taken by the Senate.

4 (b) All bills introduced in the Senate providing for bond issues, imposing or  
5 raising fees or other revenues payable to the State, its agencies, its licensing boards, or any of its  
6 subdivisions, levying taxes, or in any manner affecting the taxing power of the State or any  
7 subdivision thereof, shall, before being considered by the Senate, be referred to the Committee  
8 on Finance, and bills referred to other committees carrying any such provisions shall be reported  
9 to the Senate as being bills to be referred to the Committee on Finance before proper action may  
10 be taken by the Senate.

11 (c) This rule shall not apply to bills imposing civil penalties, criminal fines,  
12 forfeitures, or penalties for infractions.

13 **RULE 42.1. Fiscal notes.** – (a) A Chair of the Appropriations/Base Budget  
14 Committee, or of the Finance Committee, or of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the  
15 Senate, upon the floor of the Senate, may request that a fiscal analysis be made of a bill,  
16 resolution, or an amendment to a bill or resolution which is in the possession of the Senate and  
17 that a fiscal note be attached to the measure, when in the opinion of that Chair the fiscal effects  
18 of that measure are not apparent from the language of the measure. No bill, resolution, or  
19 amendment for which a fiscal note has been requested may be considered for passage prior to the  
20 fiscal note being attached to it.

21 (b) The fiscal note shall be filed and attached to the bill, resolution, or amendment  
22 within two legislative days of the request. If it is impossible to prepare a fiscal note within two  
23 legislative days, the Director of Fiscal Research shall, in writing, so advise the Presiding Officer,  
24 the Principal Clerk, and the member introducing or proposing the measure and shall indicate the  
25 time when the fiscal note will be ready.

26 (c) The fiscal note shall be prepared by the Fiscal Research Division on a form  
27 approved by the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate as to content and  
28 form and signed by the staff member or members preparing it. If no estimate in dollars is possible,  
29 the fiscal note shall indicate the reasons that no estimate is provided. The fiscal note shall not  
30 comment on the merit but may identify technical problems. The Fiscal Research Division shall  
31 make the fiscal note available to the membership of the Senate.

32 (d) A sponsor of a bill, resolution, or amendment may deliver a copy of that  
33 member's bill, resolution, or amendment to the Fiscal Research Division for the preparation of a  
34 fiscal note. The sponsor shall attach the fiscal note to the bill when the sponsor files the bill or  
35 resolution or to the amendment when the sponsor moves its adoption.

36 (e) The sponsor of a bill, resolution, or amendment to which a fiscal note is  
37 attached who objects to the estimates and information provided may reduce to writing the  
38 objections. These objections shall be appended to the fiscal note attached to the bill, resolution,  
39 or amendment and to the copies of the fiscal note available to the membership.

40 (f) Subsection (a) of this rule shall not apply to the Current Operations  
41 Appropriations Bill or the Capital Improvement Appropriations Bill. This rule shall not apply to  
42 a bill, resolution, or amendment requiring an actuarial note under these rules.

43 **RULE 42.2. Actuarial notes.** – If required by State law:

44 (a) Every bill or resolution proposing any change in the law relative to any:

45 (1) State, municipal, or other retirement system funded in whole or in part out of  
46 public funds; or

47 (2) Program of hospital, medical, disability, or related benefits provided for  
48 teachers and State employees, funded in whole or in part by State funds,

49 shall have attached to it at the time of its consideration by any committee a brief explanatory  
50 statement or note that shall include a reliable estimate of the financial and actuarial effect of the  
51 proposed change, as provided in G.S. 120-114. The actuarial note shall be attached to the jacket

1 of each proposed bill or resolution that is reported favorably by any committee and shall be  
2 clearly designated as an actuarial note. Upon its introduction, a bill or resolution described in  
3 subdivision (a)(1) of this rule shall be referred to the Committee on Pensions and Retirement and  
4 Aging.

5 (b) The sponsor of the bill or resolution shall present a copy of the measure, with  
6 the sponsor's request for an actuarial note, to the Fiscal Research Division, which shall prepare  
7 the actuarial note as promptly as possible but not later than two weeks after the request is made.  
8 Actuarial notes shall be prepared in the order of receipt of request and shall be transmitted to the  
9 sponsor of the measure. The actuarial note of the Fiscal Research Division shall be prepared and  
10 signed by an actuary.

11 (c) The sponsor of the bill or resolution shall also present a copy of the measure  
12 to the chief administrative officer of the system affected by the measure. The chief administrative  
13 officer shall have an actuarial note prepared by the system's actuary on the measure and shall  
14 transmit the note to the sponsor of the measure not later than two weeks after the request is  
15 received. The actuarial note may be attached to the jacket of the measure.

16 (d) The note shall be factual and shall, if possible, provide a reliable estimate of  
17 both the immediate effect and, if determinable, the long-range fiscal and actuarial effect of the  
18 measure. If, after careful investigation, it is determined that no dollar estimate is possible, the  
19 note shall contain a statement to that effect, setting forth the reasons why no dollar estimate can  
20 be given. No comment or opinion shall be included in the actuarial note with regard to the merits  
21 of the measure for which the note is prepared. Technical and mechanical defects in the measure  
22 may be noted.

23 (e) When any committee reports a measure to which an actuarial note is attached  
24 at the time of committee consideration, with any amendment of such nature as would  
25 substantially affect the cost to or the revenues of any system, the chair of the committee reporting  
26 the measure shall obtain from the Fiscal Research Division and the administrator of the affected  
27 system an actuarial note of the fiscal and actuarial effect of the proposed amendment. The  
28 actuarial note shall be attached to the jacket of the measure. A chair of the Appropriations/Base  
29 Budget Committee, or of the Finance Committee, or of the Committee on Rules and Operations  
30 of the Senate, upon the floor of the Senate, may request that an actuarial note be attached to a  
31 bill, resolution, or an amendment that affects the costs to or the revenues of a system described  
32 in this rule and that is in the possession of the Senate, when in the opinion of that chair, the effect  
33 to the cost to or the revenues of a system described in this rule are not apparent from the language  
34 of the measure. No bill, resolution, or amendment for which an actuarial note has been requested  
35 may be considered for passage prior to the actuarial note from both the Fiscal Research Division  
36 and the administrator of the affected system being attached to it.

37 (f) The Fiscal Research Division shall make all relevant actuarial notes available  
38 to the membership of the Senate.

39 **RULE 42.3. Assessment reports.** – Municipal Incorporations. Every legislative  
40 proposal introduced in the Senate, or received in the Senate from the House, proposing the  
41 incorporation of a municipality shall have attached to the jacket of the original bill at the time of  
42 its consideration on second or third readings by the Senate or by any committee of the Senate  
43 prior to a favorable report, a recommendation from the Municipal Incorporations Subcommittee  
44 of the Joint Legislative Committee on Local Government established by Article 20 of Chapter  
45 120 of the General Statutes. The recommendation of that Subcommittee shall be made in  
46 accordance with the provisions and criteria set forth in Article 20 of Chapter 120 of the General  
47 Statutes and shall include the findings required to be made by G.S. 120-166 through  
48 G.S. 120-170.

49 **RULE 42.3A. Proposed increases in incarceration.** – If required by State law:

50 (a) Every bill, amendment, and resolution proposing any change in the law that could  
51 cause a net increase in the length of time for which persons are incarcerated or the number of

1 persons incarcerated, whether by increasing penalties for violating existing laws, by  
2 criminalizing behavior, or by any other means, shall have attached to it at the time of its  
3 consideration by the Senate a fiscal note prepared by the Fiscal Research Division. The fiscal  
4 note shall be prepared in consultation with the Sentencing Policy and Advisory Commission and  
5 shall identify and estimate, for the first five fiscal years the proposed change would be in effect,  
6 all costs of the proposed net increase in incarceration, including capital outlay costs if the  
7 legislation would require increased cell space. If, after careful investigation, the Fiscal Research  
8 Division determines that no dollar estimate is possible, the note shall contain a statement to that  
9 effect, setting forth the reasons why no dollar estimate can be given. No comment or opinion  
10 shall be included in the fiscal note with regard to the merits of the measure for which the note is  
11 prepared. However, technical and mechanical defects may be noted.

12 (b) The sponsor of each bill, amendment, or resolution to which this subsection  
13 applies shall present a copy of the bill, amendment, or resolution with the request for a fiscal note  
14 to the Fiscal Research Division. Upon receipt of the request and the copy of the bill, amendment,  
15 or resolution, the Fiscal Research Division shall prepare the fiscal note as promptly as possible.  
16 The Fiscal Research Division shall prepare the fiscal note and transmit it to the sponsor within  
17 two weeks after the request is made, unless the sponsor agrees to an extension of time.

18 (c) This fiscal note shall be attached to the original of each proposed bill,  
19 amendment, or resolution that is reported favorably by any committee, but shall be separate from  
20 the bill, amendment, or resolution and shall be clearly designated as a fiscal note. A fiscal note  
21 attached to a bill, amendment, or resolution pursuant to this subsection is not a part of the bill,  
22 amendment, or resolution and is not an expression of legislative intent proposed by the bill,  
23 amendment, or resolution.

24 (d) If a committee reports favorably a proposed bill or resolution with an  
25 amendment that proposes a change in the law that could cause a net increase in the length of time  
26 for which persons are incarcerated or the number of persons incarcerated, whether by increasing  
27 penalties for violating existing laws, by criminalizing behavior, or by any other means, the chair  
28 of the committee shall obtain from the Fiscal Research Division and attach to the amended bill  
29 or resolution a fiscal note as provided in this rule.

30 RULE 42.4. (Reserved for future use).

31 **RULE 42.5. Appropriations/Base Budget Committee meetings.** – The  
32 Appropriations/Base Budget Cochairs may in their exclusive discretion direct that the  
33 Appropriations/Base Budget Committee or its subcommittees or both may consider the budget  
34 and the budget plan, including all appropriations, in separate meetings from the House of  
35 Representatives and may do all things separately from the House of Representatives.

36 **RULE 43. First reading; reference to committee.** – All bills filed for introduction  
37 and all House bills received in the Office of the Principal Clerk not later than one and one-half  
38 hours preceding the convening of the Senate, upon presentation to the Senate, shall be read in  
39 regular order of business by their number and title, which shall constitute the first reading of the  
40 bill. The Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate or, in the Chair's absence,  
41 the Vice-Chair of the Committee or the President Pro Tempore may refer to a Senate committee  
42 all bills introduced in the Senate or received from the House of Representatives. Upon the referral  
43 being made, the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate shall notify the  
44 Principal Clerk of the Senate of the referral, and the Reading Clerk shall announce the referral of  
45 the bill. The Principal Clerk shall inform the Presiding Officer of the referral. The title and  
46 referral shall be entered upon the Journal.

47 Bills may be referred to more than one committee serially: e.g., "S.B. \_\_\_\_\_ is  
48 referred to the Committee on Finance and upon a favorable report referred to the  
49 Appropriations/Base Budget Committee."

50 **RULE 44. Bills to receive three readings.** – Every bill shall receive three readings  
51 before being passed, and the Presiding Officer shall give notice at each reading whether it be the

1 first, second, or third. Unless a member of the Senate objects, a bill may be referred to, and  
2 presented to the Senate, by its bill number and short title. The Reading Clerk shall announce the  
3 referral as set forth in Rule 43. No bill shall be amended upon the floor of the Senate, except  
4 under Rule 45.1, until it has been twice read. Senate simple resolutions shall not require three  
5 readings.

6 **RULE 45. Reports of committees.** – Every Senator presenting a report of a  
7 committee shall endorse the report with the name of the committee. The report of the committee  
8 shall show that a quorum of the committee was present and a majority of those present voted in  
9 favor of the report. Every report of the committee upon a bill or resolution shall stand upon the  
10 general orders with the bill or resolution. No committee shall report a bill or resolution without  
11 prejudice.

12 **RULE 45.1. Action on amendment or committee substitute; distribution of**  
13 **committee substitutes.** – (a) If any committee recommends adoption of an amendment or  
14 committee substitute of a bill or resolution, the amendment or committee substitute shall be  
15 considered adopted upon the reading of the committee report. Unless otherwise calendared by  
16 the President Pro Tempore or the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate  
17 pursuant to Rule 47, the bill or resolution, as amended, or its adopted committee substitute shall  
18 be placed on the calendar for the next legislative day or re-referred if the bill or resolution was  
19 serially referred. The committee substitute's original bill or resolution shall lie on the table.

20 (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this rule, a committee substitute for a  
21 simple resolution shall be placed on the calendar for the next legislative day for a vote on its  
22 adoption.

23 (c) Unless (i) a committee substitute of a bill or resolution being considered by a  
24 committee is distributed to members of that committee no later than 6:00 P.M. the day prior to  
25 the committee meeting or (ii) prior approval is given by the Chair of the Committee on Rules and  
26 Operations of the Senate to take up and vote on the committee substitute at the meeting noticed,  
27 the committee substitute shall be carried over to the next day.

28 **RULE 46. Unfavorable report by committee.** – All bills reported unfavorably by  
29 the committee to which they were referred shall lie upon the table but may be taken from the  
30 table and placed upon the calendar by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the Senate present  
31 and voting.

32 **RULE 47. Recall of bill from committee and discharge petition; calendaring,**  
33 **re-calendaring, or referral of a bill to committee.** – (a) Notwithstanding anything to the  
34 contrary, only the President Pro Tempore, the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations  
35 of the Senate, or the chair of a committee to which a bill or other matter is assigned may, with  
36 the consent of a majority of the membership of the Senate present and voting, recall the measure  
37 from its assigned committee to be referred to another committee or the floor. Only the President  
38 Pro Tempore or the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate may, with the  
39 consent of a majority present and voting, calendar a bill or resolution, re-calendar a bill or  
40 resolution appearing on the calendar, or refer or re-refer it to committee.

41 (b) A motion to discharge a committee from consideration of a bill or resolution  
42 may be filed with the Principal Clerk if accompanied by a petition signed by two-thirds of the  
43 membership of the Senate asking that the committee be discharged from further consideration of  
44 the bill or resolution. No petition may be circulated for signatures until 10 legislative days after  
45 the bill has been referred to the committee. No petition may be circulated for signature until  
46 notice has been given on the floor of the Senate that the petition is to be circulated. If such a  
47 motion accompanied by a valid petition is filed, the Principal Clerk shall place that motion on  
48 the calendar for the next legislative day as a special order of business. If the motion is adopted  
49 by two-thirds of the membership of the Senate, then the committee to which the bill or resolution  
50 has been referred is discharged from further consideration of the bill or resolution, and that bill  
51 or resolution is placed on the calendar for the next legislative day as a special order of business.



1 If the committee had, prior to discharge, adopted any amendment or committee substitute for the  
2 bill, it shall be in order to offer that amendment or substitute on the floor as if it were a committee  
3 amendment or substitute. The Principal Clerk shall provide a form for discharge petitions.

4 (c) This rule shall not be temporarily suspended.

5 **RULE 48. Calendar; order to be followed.** – The Presiding Officer and the Principal  
6 Clerk of the Senate shall see that all bills are acted upon by the Senate in the order in which they  
7 stand upon the calendar, unless otherwise ordered in accordance with Rule 47. The published  
8 calendar shall include all bills reported favorably from committees, or placed on the calendar on  
9 motion, and shall include the bill number and short title of each bill on the calendar.

10 **RULE 49. Consideration of gubernatorial nominations or appointments.** – When  
11 received by the Principal Clerk, written notice of a gubernatorial nomination or appointment that  
12 requires confirmation by the General Assembly or the Senate shall be read in session and shall  
13 be referred by the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate, or in the Chair's  
14 absence the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, to the appropriate Senate committee. The Chair  
15 of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate may file an appropriate resolution for  
16 consideration of the nomination or appointment. For statewide or at-large nominations or  
17 appointments, the Principal Clerk shall transmit a copy of the notice of nomination or  
18 appointment to the Senator or Senators representing the county in which the nominee or  
19 appointee resides. For nominations or appointments of persons to represent a particular district  
20 or region of the State, the Principal Clerk shall transmit a copy of the notice of nomination or  
21 appointment to the Senator or Senators representing all or a portion of the particular district or  
22 region to be represented. The chair of the Senate committee receiving referral of any nomination  
23 or appointment shall determine the procedure by which the committee shall consider that  
24 nomination or appointment and may make a report of its recommendation to the Senate.

25 **RULE 50. Third reading requirements.** – No bill on its third reading shall be acted  
26 upon out of the regular order in which it stands on the calendar, and no bill shall be acted upon  
27 on its third reading the same day on which it passed its second reading, unless so ordered by  
28 three-fifths of the membership of the Senate present and voting.

29 **RULE 51. Special orders.** – Any bill or other matter in consideration before the  
30 Senate may be made a special order for a subsequent day or hour by a vote of the majority of the  
31 Senators voting, and if action on the bill is not completed on that day, it shall be returned to its  
32 place on the calendar, unless it is made a special order for another day; and when a special order  
33 is under consideration it shall take precedence over any special order or subsequent order for the  
34 day, but such subsequent order may be taken up immediately after the previous special order has  
35 been disposed of.

36 **RULE 52. Procedure when necessary number of Senators not present.** – If, on  
37 taking the question on a bill, it appears that a constitutional quorum is not present, or if the bill  
38 requires a vote of a certain proportion of all the Senators to pass it, and it appears that such  
39 number is not present, the bill shall be again read and the question taken thereon; if the bill fails  
40 a second time for the want of the necessary number being present and voting, the bill shall not  
41 be finally lost but shall be returned to the calendar in its proper order.

42 **RULE 53. Effect of defeated measure.** – (a) After a bill has been tabled, or has failed  
43 to pass on any of its readings, the contents of such bill or the principal provisions of its subject  
44 matter shall not be embodied in any other measure. After an amendment has been tabled or  
45 defeated on the Senate floor, the contents of such amendment or the principal provisions of its  
46 subject matter shall not be embodied in any other measure. If a substitute amendment is adopted  
47 on the floor, the contents of the previously pending amendment which are not contained in the  
48 substitute shall be considered to have been defeated. Upon the point of order being raised and  
49 sustained by the Presiding Officer, such measure shall be laid upon the table and shall not be  
50 taken therefrom except by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the Senate present and voting:  
51 Provided, no local bill shall be held by the Presiding Officer as embodying the provisions of, or

1 being identical with, any statewide measure which has been laid upon the table or failed to pass  
2 any of its readings.

3 (b) When a bill has been postponed indefinitely by the Senate, the bill shall lie  
4 upon the table and shall not be taken therefrom except by a two-thirds vote of the membership  
5 of the Senate present and voting.

6 **RULE 54. Taking bill from table.** – No bill which has been laid upon the table shall  
7 be taken therefrom except by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the Senate present and  
8 voting.

9 **RULE 54.1. Bill title.** – The title of each bill shall adequately and fairly reflect its  
10 subject matter.

11 **RULE 55. Amending titles of bills.** – When a bill is materially modified or the scope  
12 of its application extended or decreased, or if the county or counties to which it applies is  
13 changed, the title of the bill shall be changed by the committee having it in charge or by the  
14 Principal Clerk, so as to indicate the full purport of the bill as amended and the county or counties  
15 to which it applies.

16 **RULE 56. Corrections of typographical errors in bills.** – The Enrolling Clerk is  
17 authorized to make corrections of typographical errors in the text of bills at any time prior to  
18 ratification. Before the correction is made, the Enrolling Clerk shall have the approval of the  
19 Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate or, in the Chair's absence, the  
20 Vice-Chair of said Committee, the President Pro Tempore, or the Deputy President Pro Tempore.

21 **RULE 56.1. Amendments and committee substitutes adopted by the House to**  
22 **bills originating in the Senate.** – (a) Whenever the House has adopted an amendment or a  
23 committee substitute for a bill originating in the Senate, and has returned the bill to the Senate  
24 for concurrence in that amendment or committee substitute, the Senate may not concur in that  
25 amendment or committee substitute until the next legislative day following the day on which the  
26 Senate receives that measure, unless otherwise calendared by the President Pro Tempore or the  
27 Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate pursuant to Rule 47.

28 (b) The Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate, (or in that  
29 Chair's absence the President Pro Tempore) may, or upon motion supported by a majority of the  
30 membership of the Senate present and voting shall, refer the bill to an appropriate committee for  
31 consideration of the amendment or committee substitute.

32 (c) The Presiding Officer shall, in placing the bill on the calendar, rule whether  
33 the amendment or committee substitute is a material amendment under Article II, Section 23, of  
34 the State's Constitution. If the measure is referred to committee, the committee shall:

35 (1) Report the bill with the recommendation either that the Senate do concur or  
36 that the Senate do not concur; and

37 (2) Advise the Presiding Officer as to whether or not the amendment or committee  
38 substitute is a material amendment under Article II, Section 23, of the State's  
39 Constitution.

40 (d) If the amendment or committee substitute for a bill is not a material  
41 amendment, the question before the Senate shall be concurrence. In the event there is more than  
42 one House amendment, the question shall be concurrence in all the House amendments, and the  
43 question may not be divided, notwithstanding Rule 28. The question that shall be put before the  
44 Senate by the Presiding Officer shall be: "Does the Senate concur in the House amendments  
45 (committee substitute) to S.B. \_\_\_\_\_?"

46 (e) If the amendment or committee substitute for a bill is a material amendment,  
47 the receiving of that bill on messages shall constitute first reading, and the question before the  
48 Senate shall be concurrence on second reading. If the motion is passed, the question then shall  
49 be concurrence on third reading on the next legislative day.

50 (f) No committee substitute adopted by the House to a bill originating in the  
51 Senate may be amended by the Senate.

1           **RULE 57. Conference committee.** – The President Pro Tempore of the Senate, or in  
2 the President Pro Tempore's absence, the Deputy President Pro Tempore, upon motion, may  
3 appoint a conference committee when the Senate fails to concur in amendments or committee  
4 substitutes put by the House to a bill originating in the Senate, or when the House of  
5 Representatives fails to concur in amendments or committee substitutes put by the Senate to a  
6 bill originating in the House. Senate conferees shall include the primary sponsor of the bill. In  
7 considering the bill committed to the conferees, only such matters as are germane to the bill shall  
8 be considered by the conferees, and the conference report shall deal only with such matters. The  
9 matters referred to the conference committee by the conference committee chairs shall go to and  
10 be considered by the conferees appointed by the Senate and the House of Representatives. While  
11 the bill is in conference committee, the Senate's position shall be determined by a majority of the  
12 Senate conferees. Upon agreement by the Senate and House of Representatives, a conference  
13 report shall be drafted reflecting the matters considered and agreed upon by the conferees. The  
14 conference report shall not be amended. A conference report in order under this Rule when  
15 reported to the Senate shall be calendared for consideration of the question of adoption on any  
16 date specified by the Chair of the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate, or in the  
17 absence of the Chair, by the President Pro Tempore. In the absence of any such specification it  
18 shall be calendared for the next legislative day.

19           **RULE 57.1. Germaneness of amendment or committee substitute.** – (a) All floor  
20 amendments shall be germane to the subject matter of the measure under consideration. The  
21 question of germaneness of the proposed floor amendment is in order at any time the measure is  
22 before the body prior to final action on its adoption.

23           (b) In committee, the germaneness of amendments or committee substitutes shall  
24 be determined by the chair of the committee in which such amendments or committee substitutes  
25 are offered.

26           **RULE 58. Certification of passage of bills.** – The Principal Clerk shall certify the  
27 passage of bills by the Senate, with the date thereof, together with the fact whether passed by  
28 vote of three-fifths or two-thirds of the membership of the Senate present and voting, whenever  
29 such vote may be required by the Constitution or laws of the State.

30           **RULE 59. Transmittal of bills to House.** – No bill shall be sent from the Senate on  
31 the day of its passage except on the last day of the session, unless otherwise ordered by a majority  
32 vote of the membership of the Senate present and voting.

33           **RULE 59.1. Engrossment.** – Bills which originate in the Senate and that are amended  
34 shall be engrossed before being sent to the House.

35           **RULE 59.2. Vetoed bills.** – (a) Unless directed otherwise by the President Pro  
36 Tempore of the Senate on behalf of the Senate, the Principal Clerk or an employee designated by  
37 the Principal Clerk shall receive Senate bills not approved by the Governor. The veto message  
38 shall be read in the Senate on the next legislative day following its receipt by the Principal Clerk.

39           (b) Upon a veto message's being read in the Senate, the Chair of the Committee  
40 on Rules and Operations of the Senate shall either refer the bill and the Governor's objections  
41 and veto message to committee or place the bill on the calendar for a day certain. The Chair of  
42 the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate or the Chair's designee shall give the Senate  
43 Minority Leader at least 24 hours' notice that a vetoed bill may be considered by the Senate.

## 44           **VII. LEGISLATIVE OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES**

45           **RULE 60. Pages.** – (a) The President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint pages.  
46 The President Pro Tempore, or such person as the President Pro Tempore may designate, shall  
47 supervise the pages and assign to them their duties. Each page shall be in the tenth, eleventh, or  
48 twelfth grade at the time of service.

49           (b) Members may designate honorary pages by a statement delivered to the  
50 Principal Clerk who will have a certificate issued therefor.

1           **RULE 61. Sergeants-at-Arms.** – (a) There shall be 16 positions of Assistant  
2 Sergeants-at-Arms, to be appointed upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tempore by  
3 the Sergeant-at-Arms, who are to work under his or her supervision and to be assigned such  
4 duties and powers as he or she shall direct.

5           (b) The Sergeant-at-Arms shall be responsible for the safety of the members and  
6 employees of the Senate while in the Senate Chamber or any place in which the Senate or its  
7 committees are in session.

8           (c) The Sergeant-at-Arms shall serve all warrants and subpoenas issued by orders  
9 of the Senate and signed by the Presiding Officer of the Senate, and said warrants and subpoenas  
10 shall be returnable to the Principal Clerk of the Senate.

11           **RULE 62. Principal Clerk's staff.** – The Principal Clerk of the Senate shall employ  
12 all necessary employees and clerks required to carry out the duties of that office. The Principal  
13 Clerk shall have supervision and control and shall assign such duties and powers as the Principal  
14 Clerk shall direct to the employees and clerks of that office.

15           **RULE 63. Legislative assistants and other Senate staff.** – (a) Each member shall  
16 be assigned one legislative assistant position. Additional staff positions may be allocated to  
17 members in the discretion of the President Pro Tempore. The selection of the person to fill a staff  
18 position assigned or allocated to an individual member's office shall be his or her prerogative.

19           (b) Persons seeking an employment position in the office of an individual member  
20 shall file initial applications for employment with the Director of Legislative Assistants and shall  
21 receive compensation as prescribed by the Legislative Services Commission. Their period of  
22 employment shall comply with the period as established by the Legislative Services Commission  
23 unless employment for an extended period is approved by the President Pro Tempore. They shall  
24 adhere to such uniform regulations and other conditions of employment (including retention)  
25 under the direction of the Director of Senate Legislative Assistants as the Committee on Rules  
26 and Operations of the Senate shall adopt.

27           (c) The Director of Senate Legislative Assistants and any assistants shall be  
28 appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

29           **RULE 64. Senate Journal.** – The President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall cause  
30 the Journal of the Senate to be examined daily before the hour of convening to determine if the  
31 proceedings of the previous day have been correctly recorded.

32           **RULE 65. Deputy President Pro Tempore.** – The Senate shall elect a Deputy  
33 President Pro Tempore. Upon a vacancy in the office of President Pro Tempore, the Senate shall  
34 elect one of its members to succeed to that office.

### 35           **VIII. GENERAL RULES**

36           **RULE 66. President to sign papers.** – All addresses and all warrants and subpoenas  
37 issued by order of the Senate shall be signed by the President, the President Pro Tempore, or the  
38 Deputy President Pro Tempore. All acts and resolutions shall be signed by the President, the  
39 President Pro Tempore, the Deputy President Pro Tempore, or by a Senator designated by the  
40 President Pro Tempore to act as Presiding Officer.

41           **RULE 67. Admission to the floor of the Senate.** – No person except members of the  
42 Senate, members of the House of Representatives, staff of the General Assembly; staff of the  
43 Lieutenant Governor; Judges of the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, and Superior Courts; the  
44 Governor and members of the Council of State; former members of the General Assembly; and  
45 persons particularly invited and extended the privileges of the floor by the Presiding Officer shall  
46 be admitted to the floor of the Senate either during its session or be admitted to or remain on the  
47 floor of the Senate within 15 minutes prior to the Senate's scheduled daily session.  
48 Notwithstanding any other provision of these rules, no registered lobbyist shall: (i) be admitted  
49 to the floor of the Senate or Senate Chamber while the Senate is in session, (ii) be admitted to or  
50 remain on the floor of the Senate within 15 minutes prior to the Senate's scheduled daily session,  
51 or (iii) except when a committee is meeting on the floor, be admitted to the floor of the Senate

1 for the 15 minutes after adjournment of the Senate. When the Senate is not in daily session, the  
2 President Pro Tempore shall determine the privileges of the floor.

3 **RULE 67.1. Recognition for extending courtesies.** – (a) Courtesies of the floor and  
4 galleries shall be extended only by the Presiding Officer on the Presiding Officer's own motion  
5 or upon the written request of a member of the Senate to former members of the General  
6 Assembly or to distinguished visitors.

7 (b) The Presiding Officer, upon written request at intervals between various  
8 orders of business, may extend courtesies to schools or other special large groups visiting in the  
9 galleries while they are present, and the Presiding Officer shall, at such times as deemed  
10 appropriate, express to those visitors in the galleries the pleasure of the Senate for their presence.

11 **RULE 68. Privileges of the floor.** – No group or individual other than members of  
12 the Senate may make remarks upon the floor of the Senate.

13 **RULE 69. News media.** – The President Pro Tempore is authorized to assign area  
14 and equipment on the floor of the Senate for the use of the representatives of news media, and  
15 the President Pro Tempore shall provide regulations for the operation of the representatives of  
16 the news media on the floor of the Senate.

17 **RULE 70. Absence without leave.** – No Senator or officer of the Senate shall depart  
18 the service of the Senate without leave or receive pay as a Senator or officer for the time absent  
19 without leave.

20 **RULE 71. Circulation of materials.** – Any material circulated to Senate members  
21 anywhere in the Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building shall bear the name of  
22 the originator. No items may be placed on members' desks in the Senate Chamber except as  
23 permitted under Rule 17.

24 **RULE 72. Assignment of seats; offices.** – (a) The President Pro Tempore of the  
25 Senate shall assign seats in the Senate Chamber to the members elected. The President Pro  
26 Tempore, when assigning seats, may give preferential consideration to the respective members  
27 according to the length of service that each member has rendered in the Senate. No incumbent  
28 appointed to fill an unexpired term in the immediate preceding session shall retain the seat if  
29 requested by a Senator elected to said session.

30 (b) Not later than two weeks after the initial committee assignments become final,  
31 the President Pro Tempore of the Senate is authorized to make assignments of committee rooms  
32 and offices to designated committees, chairs, and members of the Senate. In making such  
33 assignments of individual offices, the President Pro Tempore may give preferential consideration  
34 to the respective members according to the length of service that each member has rendered in  
35 the Senate.

36 **RULE 73. Administrative rules and regulations involving Senate employees.** –  
37 All administrative rules, regulations, and orders involving all individuals employed to perform  
38 duties for the Senate, other than those appointed by the Principal Clerk and the Sergeant-at-Arms,  
39 shall be first approved by the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate.

40 **RULE 74. Public hearings.** – Any Senator may request in writing a public hearing  
41 by the committee considering the bill on a public bill. Requests may be granted at the discretion  
42 of the chair. Notice shall be given not less than five calendar days prior to public hearings. Such  
43 notices shall be issued as information for the press, and the information shall be posted in the  
44 places designated by the Principal Clerk.

45 **RULE 75. Public hearings; filing of written statements.** – Persons desiring to  
46 appear and be heard at a public hearing are encouraged to file with the chair of the committee a  
47 brief or a written statement of the remarks to be made at least 24 hours before the time of the  
48 hearing.

49 **RULE 76. Voting in joint sessions.** – When the Senate sits jointly with the House,  
50 either in committee or in joint session, the Senate reserves the right to vote separately.

1           **RULE 77. Alteration, suspension, or rescission of rules.** – (a) These rules may not  
2 be permanently rescinded or altered except by Senate simple resolution passed by a three-fifths  
3 vote of the membership of the Senate. The introducer of the resolution must, on the floor of the  
4 Senate, give notice of the intent to introduce the resolution on the legislative day preceding its  
5 introduction.

6           (b) Except as otherwise provided herein, the Senate, upon motion of the Chair of  
7 the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate,  
8 or the Deputy President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the three-fifths vote of the membership  
9 of the Senate present and voting, may temporarily suspend any of these rules.

10           **SECTION 2.** This resolution is effective upon adoption.