

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2005

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HOUSE BILL 635

Short Title: Public Comment at Local Board Meetings. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Jones; Adams, B. Allen, Pierce, and Wainwright.

Referred to: Ways and Means.

March 15, 2005

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO REQUIRE A PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD DURING EACH  
3 REGULAR MEETING OF A LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION, COUNTY  
4 BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, OR MUNICIPAL GOVERNING BOARD.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 **SECTION 1.** Article 5 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended  
7 by adding a new section to read:

8 "**§ 115C-51. Public comment period during regular meetings.**

9 For the first 30 minutes of each regular meeting of the local board of education, a  
10 period shall be provided for public comment. The board may adopt reasonable rules  
11 governing the conduct of the public comment period, including, but not limited to, rules  
12 (i) fixing the maximum time allotted to each speaker, (ii) providing for the designation  
13 of spokesmen for groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions, (iii)  
14 providing for the selection of delegates from groups of persons supporting or opposing  
15 the same positions when the number of persons wishing to attend the hearing exceeds  
16 the capacity of the hall, and (iv) providing for the maintenance of order and decorum in  
17 the conduct of the hearing."

18 **SECTION 2.** Part 3 of Article 4 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes is  
19 amended by adding a new section to read:

20 "**§ 153A-52.1. Public comment period during regular meetings.**

21 For the first 30 minutes of each regular meeting of the board of commissioners, a  
22 period shall be provided for public comment. The board may adopt reasonable rules  
23 governing the conduct of the public comment period, including, but not limited to, rules  
24 (i) fixing the maximum time allotted to each speaker, (ii) providing for the designation  
25 of spokesmen for groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions, (iii)  
26 providing for the selection of delegates from groups of persons supporting or opposing  
27 the same positions when the number of persons wishing to attend the hearing exceeds  
28 the capacity of the hall, and (iv) providing for the maintenance of order and decorum in  
29 the conduct of the hearing."

1           **SECTION 3.** Part 3 of Article 5 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes is  
2 amended by adding a new section to read:

3 **"§ 160A-81.1. Public comment period during regular meetings.**

4           For the first 30 minutes of each regular meeting of the council, a period shall be  
5 provided for public comment. The council may adopt reasonable rules governing the  
6 conduct of the public comment period, including, but not limited to, rules (i) fixing the  
7 maximum time allotted to each speaker, (ii) providing for the designation of spokesmen  
8 for groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions, (iii) providing for the  
9 selection of delegates from groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions  
10 when the number of persons wishing to attend the hearing exceeds the capacity of the  
11 hall, and (iv) providing for the maintenance of order and decorum in the conduct of the  
12 hearing."

13           **SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law.