

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005

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HOUSE BILL 635
Committee Substitute Favorable 5/11/05

Short Title: Public Comment at Local Board Meetings.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 15, 2005

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO REQUIRE AT LEAST ONE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD PER MONTH AT A REGULAR MEETING OF A LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION, COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, OR MUNICIPAL GOVERNING BOARD.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

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

The local board of education shall provide at least one period for public comment per month at a regular meeting of the board. The board may adopt reasonable rules governing the conduct of the public comment period, including, but not limited to, rules (i) fixing the maximum time allotted to each speaker, (ii) providing for the designation of spokesmen for groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions, (iii) providing for the selection of delegates from groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions when the number of persons wishing to attend the hearing exceeds the capacity of the hall, and (iv) providing for the maintenance of order and decorum in the conduct of the hearing."

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

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

The board of commissioners shall provide at least one period for public comment per month at a regular meeting of the board. The board may adopt reasonable rules governing the conduct of the public comment period, including, but not limited to, rules (i) fixing the maximum time allotted to each speaker, (ii) providing for the designation of spokesmen for groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions, (iii) providing for the selection of delegates from groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions when the number of persons wishing to attend the hearing exceeds

1 the capacity of the hall, and (iv) providing for the maintenance of order and decorum in
2 the conduct of the hearing."

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

5 **"§ 160A-81.1. Public comment period during regular meetings.**

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

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