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# Old North State Report – June 11, 2024

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## **LEGISLATIVE NEWS**

#### PROPOSED CAMPAIGN FINANCE CHANGES PASSED BY SENATE

North Carolina lawmakers have put forward a proposal that could grant corporations significant influence over state elections through a potential loophole, according to state elections officials. Presently, corporations are prohibited from directly contributing to political candidates in the state. However, they can make unlimited donations to federal political fundraising committees called 527 committees, named for that section of the tax code that governs them. The proposed change would allow these 527s to donate to North Carolina state political parties. State political parties can receive unlimited contributions and provide unlimited funds to their candidates. The State Board of Elections was unaware of the proposed changes which were added to <a href="House Bill 237">House Bill 237</a> regarding provisions on face masks and penalties for protesters. On Thursday, the measure passed the state Senate without debate.

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# **VOTING LAW CHANGE COULD BECOME NEW CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT**

State lawmakers, led by Speaker Tim Moore, have introduced a bill, known as <u>House Bill 1074</u>, aimed at amending the wording of the state constitution regarding citizen voting laws. The bill does not change the eligibility criteria for voting but modifies the language relating to U.S. citizen requirements. The bill's proponents believe changes are necessary to clarify that only United States citizens can vote in North Carolina elections. The House elections law committee gave initial approval to the measure Wednesday. If it passes the full legislature, the new amendment would be put on the ballot in 2024 for voters to decide if it will ultimately become a constitutional amendment. The proposed change would restrict voting rights to only U.S. citizens who are 18 years old and meet the qualifications outlined in the Constitution. The bill does not impact the voting rights of naturalized citizens.

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## "RIGHT TO TRY" LEGISLATION HEARD IN HOUSE HEALTH COMMITTEE

The House Health Committee discussed House Bill 1029, known as the "Right to Try Individualized Treatments." It is the companion bill to Senate Bill 871, which is currently in the Senate Judiciary Committee. Representatives Allen Chesser, Hugh Blackwell, Larry Potts, and Timothy Reeder are sponsors of House Bill 1029. The bill expands on existing legislation in North Carolina since 2015. It allows individuals with terminal or severely debilitated illnesses to pursue experimental treatments independently. The bill does not impose any requirements on insurance companies, manufacturers, or doctors. Health insurance providers are not obligated to cover experimental treatments, and physicians are not held liable if a patient were to die due to experimental treatment.

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## JUVENILE JUSTICE BILL SENT TO THE GOVERNOR

State lawmakers have passed a bill that would automatically transfer young offenders from juvenile court to adult court. The House voted to accept changes made by the Senate, supported by a lobbying group representing local prosecutors, to the "Raise the Age" law. The bill, known as <u>House Bill 834</u>, defines delinquent juveniles and excludes 16 and 17-year-olds accused of certain felony crimes, automatically trying them as adults. These crimes could range from murder to larceny. Previously, high-level felony cases for teenagers were only moved to adult court after an indictment. The bill is headed for Governor Roy Cooper's desk; however, Cooper has yet to respond to the bill.

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## NC CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES ANTICIPATE EASY VICTORIES IN NOVEMBER

North Carolina candidates are on track to join the freshman class of the 119th Congress. They are all nominees in U.S. House races the nonpartisan Cook Political Report with Amy Walter assesses as safely Republican. Pat Harrigan, a former Army Green Beret, is favored in the 10th District, a Republican-friendly district. Mark Harris, a pastor, has an advantage in the 8th District seat. Brad Knott, a former federal prosecutor, won a primary runoff in the 13th District, succeeding Wiley Nickel. Addison McDowell, a former healthcare lobbyist, is unopposed in the 6th District. State House Speaker Tim Moore won the Republican primary in the 14th District.

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