

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009

S

1

SENATE BILL 156

Short Title: Session Limits. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Berger of Rockingham; Allran, Blake, Brock, Brown, East, Forrester,
Goodall, Jacumin, Preston, Stevens, and Tillman.

Referred to: Ways and Means.

February 12, 2009

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO AMEND THE NORTH CAROLINA CONSTITUTION TO LIMIT THE
3 LENGTH OF LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS AND TO PROVIDE FOR AN EARLIER
4 CONVENING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR ORGANIZATION.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 11(1) of Article II of the North Carolina Constitution reads
7 as rewritten:

8 "(1) Regular sessions.

9 (a) The General Assembly shall meet in regular session ~~in 1973~~ after the term of
10 office for Senators and Representatives commences in 2010 and every two
11 years thereafter on the day prescribed by law.

12 (b) Odd-numbered years. – Beginning with the regular session in 2011, during
13 an odd-numbered year, the General Assembly shall remain in session for no
14 more than 90 calendar days, except that this period may be extended by joint
15 resolution once per regular session for not more than 10 calendar days. The
16 month of December beginning on the first Wednesday in the month in each
17 preceding even-numbered year is also included in the calculation of the limit
18 of days the General Assembly may meet in odd-numbered years. If the
19 General Assembly, upon convening of the regular session, meets initially for
20 not more than two consecutive calendar days and then adjourns for not less
21 than 30 calendar days, that period of adjournment shall be excluded from the
22 90 calendar days.

23 (c) Even-numbered years. – If the regular session meets in even-numbered
24 years, the General Assembly shall remain in session for no more than 45
25 calendar days, except that this period may be extended by joint resolution
26 once per regular session for not more than 10 calendar days, but the month
27 of December beginning on the first Wednesday in the month of each
28 even-numbered year is excluded from the calculation of the maximum
29 number of days the General Assembly can meet in that year.

30 (d) Any reconvened session called under Section 5 of Article III of this
31 Constitution shall be excluded from the calculations of this section.

32 (e) Neither house shall proceed upon public business unless a majority of all of
33 its members are actually present.

34 (f) No valid action, other than a resolution of adjournment, may be taken by the
35 General Assembly after the time limits prescribed in this section have
36 expired."



1 **SECTION 2.** Section 9 of Article II of the North Carolina Constitution reads as
2 rewritten:

3 **"Sec. 9. Term of office.**

4 The term of office of Senators and Representatives shall commence on the first day of
5 ~~January~~ Wednesday in December next after their election."

6 **SECTION 3.** The amendments set out in this act shall be submitted to the qualified
7 voters of the State at the next statewide election, primary or otherwise, which election shall be
8 conducted under the laws then governing elections in the State. Ballots, voting systems, or
9 both may be used in accordance with Chapter 163 of the General Statutes. The question to be
10 used in the voting systems and ballots shall be:

11 " FOR AGAINST

12 Constitutional amendments limiting the length of the legislative session and making
13 conforming amendments concerning the date of the beginning of the term."

14 **SECTION 4.** If a majority of votes cast on the question are in favor of the
15 amendments set out in this act, the State Board of Elections shall certify the amendments to the
16 Secretary of State whereupon the amendments shall become effective. The Secretary of State
17 shall enroll the amendments so certified among the permanent records of that office.

18 **SECTION 5.** This act is effective when it becomes law.