



# 2019-2020 Session Legislative Business Ratings



**NCFREE**  
NORTH CAROLINA FREE  
ENTERPRISE FOUNDATION

CONNECTING THE DOTS FOR DECISION-MAKERS



# Overview of the Legislative Business Ratings

Traditionally, NCFREE has released its Legislative Business Ratings (LBR) at the conclusion of the session of the North Carolina General Assembly that occurs in the odd-numbered year (what's commonly referred to as the 'Long Session').

But this year, NCFREE is updating its 2019 LBR to incorporate the General Assembly's actions during the 2020 session to provide relief to businesses and industries in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, this cumulative rating covers the entirety of both the 2019 and 2020 Legislative Session.

Consistent with previous versions of the LBR, NCFREE's analytical assessment of the business disposition of all 170 state House and Senate members is based on confidential input from a group of more than 300 business leaders, business trade association executives, and government affairs professionals.

This survey pool represents a diverse cross-section of business interests, with geographic diversity as well as an appropriate array relative to company size and scope, and industry sectors.

The 2019-2020 LBR contains two parts:

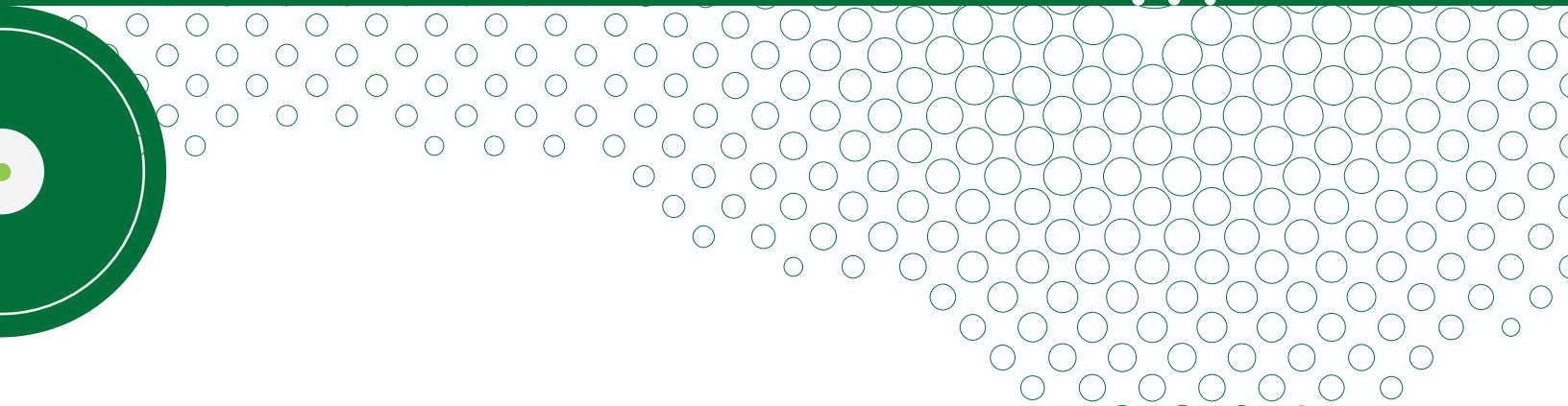
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An **Objective** evaluation consisting of recorded votes taken during the 2019 and 2020 Legislative Sessions where the votes 'presented a clear philosophical division on key issues of interest and concern to the business community.' The vote could be for a bill, an amendment, concurrence, or to override a veto.

2

A **Subjective** assessment, conducted in 2019, in which survey respondents rated every legislator based on the respondent's 'personal experience as to the percentage of time that legislator was supportive on issues important to the overall business climate of North Carolina.'

Those surveyed were asked to consider factors such as 'legislators making themselves accessible or information sharing and discussion, and maintaining a business-like approach to the conduct of legislative duties.' Respondents made this assessment using a 100-point scale (in 10-point increments) and were asked to rate only those legislators they knew and interacted with during session.



## Understanding the NCFREE Legislative Business Rating

The 2019-2020 LBR is the 2:1 weighted average of the 2019-2020 **Objective** and the 2019 **Subjective** ratings. Legislators who were the primary sponsors of legislation selected for the 2019 LBR were given a .25 “bonus” credit that was added to their individual rating.

$$\left[ \frac{\left( \text{2019-2020 Objective} * 2 \right) + \left( \text{2019 Subjective} \right)}{3} \right] + \left( \text{\# of Key 2019 Bill Primary Sponsorships} * .25 \right) = \text{2019-2020 Session LBR}$$

The 2019-2020 final rating provides a straightforward metric: the closer the rating is to 100, the more aligned with the principles of free enterprise that legislator was during the 2019-2020 Session of the General Assembly.

NCFREE determined that the rating of 70 or higher indicates that a legislator can be counted on — both in votes cast as well as general disposition on business issues and in their approach to legislative duties — to consistently exhibit strong support for free enterprise, and comprise the solid base of business-minded legislators. Those with a rating between 70 and 55 are considered to be occasional in their support of free enterprise issues.

For additional information on our methodology and key votes, please refer to page 9.



# Senate LBR Table

Member	District	2019 LBR	2020 Objective Score	2019-2020 Session LBR
Paul Newton	36	99.3	100	99.3
Tom McInnis	25	98.3	100	98.3
Rick Gunn	24	97.9	100	98.0
Joyce Krawiec	31	97.6	100	97.6
Norman Sanderson	2	97.2	100	97.2
Phillip (Phil) Berger	30	96.9	100	96.9
Harry Brown	6	96.7	100	96.7
James (Jim) Davis	50	96.7	100	96.7
Brent Jackson	10	96.7	100	96.7
Ralph Hise	47	96.3	100	96.3
Chuck Edwards	48	95.8	100	95.8
Danny Earl Britt	13	95.8	100	95.8
Jim Perry (Appointed 1.31.19)	7	95.7	100	95.7
John Alexander	18	95.6	100	95.6
Kathy Harrington	43	95.6	100	95.6
William (Bill) Rabon	8	95.2	100	95.2
Andy Wells (Resigned 7.27.20)	42	94.7	100	94.7
Carl Ford	33	94.5	87.5	94.5
Jim Burgin	12	94.2	100	94.2
Warren Daniel	46	94.2	100	94.2
Vickie Sawyer	34	94.0	100	94.0
Bob Steinburg	1	93.9	100	93.9
Ted Alexander	44	92.9	100	92.9
Deanna Ballard	45	92.8	100	92.8
Don Davis	5	90.4	100	92.6
Jerry Tillman (Resigned 6.30.20)	26	90.5	100	92.4

Member	District	2019 LBR	2020 Objective Score	2019-2020 Session LBR
Rick Horner	11	91.7	100	91.7
Todd Johnson	35	90.1	100	90.1
Eddie Gallimore	29	87.2	71.4	87.2
Paul A. Lowe, Jr.	32	74.0	100	81.0
Sam Searcy	17	73.6	100	79.1
Robert B. (Ben) Clark	21	70.5	100	77.5
Mike Woodard	22	70.8	100	77.4
Daniel (Dan) Blue	14	75.4	71.4	73.6
Erica D. Smith	3	63.7	87.5	68.9
Milton F. (Toby) Fitch	4	58.7	100	68.0
Jay Chaudhuri	15	49.7	87.5	60.8
Kirk deViere	19	45.8	100	59.2
Wiley Nickel	16	61.5	50	57.1
Terry Van Duyn	49	48.5	83.3	56.0
Jeff Jackson	37	44.4	100	54.8
Valerie Foushee	23	44.3	100	51.0
Joyce Waddell	40	41.7	75	48.3
Michael Garrett	27	44.7	62.5	48.0
Harper Peterson	9	44.7	57.1	45.4
Mujtaba Mohammed	38	41.6	50	43.8
Gladys Robinson	28	32.9	62.5	42.1
Natasha Marcus	41	26.2	75	39.5
Rob Bryan (Appointed 10.2.19)		n/a	100	100
Henry M. Michaux (Appointed 1.15.20) (Resigned 3.31.20)		n/a	100	100
Natalie S. Murdock		n/a	50	50

The following Senators were not present for any selected votes, and therefore were not included in NCFREE's 2020 Legislative Business Review:

David W. Craven, Jr., District 26 (Appointed 7.17.20)  
Dean Proctor, District (Appointed 8.10.20)

# House LBR Table

Member	District	2019 LBR	2020 Objective Score	2019-2020 Session LBR
John R. Bell, IV	10	99.1	100	99.1
Larry W. Potts	81	99.1	100	99.1
Jon Hardister	59	93.7	100	98.9
Chris Humphrey	12	97.6	100	97.6
Jerry Carter	65	97.5	100	97.5
Mark Brody	55	97.3	100	97.3
Patricia (Pat) McElraft	13	92.1	100	97.2
John Sauls	51	92.0	100	97.1
Brenden Jones	46	97.0	100	97.0
Kevin Corbin	120	96.7	100	96.7
Julia C. Howard	77	96.7	100	96.7
Wayne Sasser	67	96.7	100	96.7
Carson Smith	16	96.7	100	96.7
Jake Johnson <small>(Appointed 8.2.19)</small>	113	91.5	100	96.7
Jimmy Dixon	4	96.6	100	96.6
Jason Saine	97	96.4	100	96.4
Allen McNeill	78	96.3	100	96.3
Frank Iler	17	91.2	100	96.3
John Szoka	45	96.1	100	96.1
Destin Hall	87	95.7	100	95.7
Larry Yarborough	2	85.4	100	95.7
Tim Moore	111	95.6	100	95.6
Lisa Stone Barnes	7	90.5	100	95.6
Bobby Hanig	6	95.6	100	95.6
John A. Fraley	95	95.5	100	95.5

Member	District	2019 LBR	2020 Objective Score	2019-2020 Session LBR
Ted Davis, Jr.	19	95.3	100	95.3
Larry Strickland	28	95.3	100	95.3
Kyle Hall	91	95.3	100	95.3
Holly Grange	20	95.0	100	95.0
David Lewis	53	98.4	83.3	94.9
Edward "Ed" Goodwin	1	94.8	100	94.8
Steve Jarvis	80	94.2	100	94.2
Donny Lambeth	75	94.2	100	94.2
Debra Conrad <small>(Resigned 7.31.20)</small>	74	78.3	100	94.0
Jeffrey McNeely <small>(Appointed 7.5.19)</small>	84	93.8	100	93.8
Hugh Blackwell	86	73.2	100	93.7
William D. Brisson	22	91.8	100	93.4
James (Jamie) Boles, Jr.	52	91.8	100	93.4
Dennis Riddell	64	86.7	100	93.2
John A. Torbett	108	91.3	100	92.9
Stephen Ross	63	86.1	100	92.6
Donna McDowell White	26	90.7	100	92.3
Dana Bumgardner	109	91.9	100	91.9
David Rogers	112	84.5	100	91.0
Patricia (Pat) Hurley	70	89.4	100	91.0
Jeffrey Elmore	94	80.4	100	90.7
Kelly E. Hastings	110	80.1	100	90.3
Mitchell S. Setzer	89	88.5	100	90.1
Philip (Phil) Shepard	15	69.5	100	90.0
D. Craig Horn	68	83.4	100	89.9

# House LBR Table

Member	District	2019 LBR	2020 Objective Score	2019-2020 Session LBR
John Faircloth	62	86.4	100	89.7
Michele D. Presnell	118	85.7	100	88.9
Michael H. Wray	27	84.9	100	88.1
Sarah Stevens	90	71.7	100	88.1
Michael Speciale	3	84.2	100	85.8
Keith Kidwell	79	84.7	100	84.7
Dean Arp	69	91.8	100	83.9
Jay Adams	96	80.9	100	83.7
Josh Dobson	85	71.0	100	83.7
Walter L. (Lee) Zachary	73	80.5	83.3	83.3
Harry Warren	76	79.4	100	82.7
Larry Pittman	83	77.7	100	81
Cecil Brockman	60	75.6	75	78.5
Charles Graham	47	70.2	66.7	78.3
George Cleveland	14	74.6	100	78.3
Garland Pierce	48	76.8	83.3	78.2
William (Billy) Richardson	44	66.4	50	77.8
Brian Turner	116	77.5	83.3	75.3
Nasif Majeed	99	77.1	66.7	75.0
Scott Brewer <small>(Appointed 5.1.19)</small>	66	76.3	83.3	72.6
Charles (Chuck) McGrady	117	67.6	100	72.5
Howard Hunter, III	5	70.9	83.3	72.3
Allison Dahle	11	45.9	66.7	71.5
Elmer Floyd	43	74.6	50	70.4
Terry Garrison	32	70.0	66.7	69.5

Member	District	2019 LBR	2020 Objective Score	2019-2020 Session LBR
Ray Russell	93	69.5	66.7	69.4
Kelly Alexander	107	73.5	66.7	67.8
James Gailliard	25	64.4	83.3	67.8
Ashton Wheeler Clemmons	57	62.6	66.7	67.4
Evelyn Terry	71	67.1	75	66.8
Wesley Harris	105	66.2	66.7	65.6
Marvin Lucas	42	64.5	75	65.4
Graig Meyer	50	69.4	33.3	62.6
Robert Reives	54	60.9	60	62.5
Shelly Willingham	23	66.5	66.7	62.5
John Ager	115	66.2	66.7	62.1
Brandon Lofton	104	69.5	50	62.0
Joe John	40	64.5	66.7	60.5
Joe Sam Queen	119	59.4	66.7	60.5
Raymond Smith	21	61.2	66.7	60.4
Amos L. Quick	58	52.4	40	59.7
Christy Clark	98	62.1	50	59.7
Becky Carney	102	67.0	50	59.5
Carla Cunningham	106	59.7	50	59.3
Jean Farmer-Butterfield <small>(Resigned 7.16.20)</small>	24	55.0	80	58.5
Gale Adcock	41	57.6	66.7	56.7
Carolyn G. Logan	101	62.7	50	56.7
Yvonne Lewis Holley	38	58.8	50	56.4
Zack Hawkins	31	49.2	83.3	55.5
Terence Everitt	35	60.4	50	54.4

Member	District	2019 LBR	2020 Objective Score	2019-2020 Session LBR
Mary Belk	88	60.2	50	54.2
Chaz Beasley	92	61.4	50	53.8
Rosa Gill	33	44.5	66.7	52.2
Sydney Batch	37	49.5	50	52.1
Cynthia Ball	49	56.3	50	52.0
John Autry	100	58.0	33.3	50.2
Rachel Hunt	103	50.0	50	49.1
Darren Jackson	39	55.7	33.3	46.3
Julie von Haefen	36	55.3	33.3	45.9
Kandie D. Smith	8	35.6	83.3	45.3
Deb Butler	18	48.9	50	44.5
Derwin Montgomery	72	36.6	66.7	42.9
Verla Insko	56	41.8	50	40.2
Marcia Morey	30	41.7	50	39.0
Grier Martin	34	42.7	33.3	37.9
Susan Fisher	114	40.4	33.3	34.6
Pricey Harrison	61	33.5	40	30.1
<b>Kristin Baker</b> <small>(Appointed 3.19.20)</small>	<b>82</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Perrin Jones, MD</b> <small>(Appointed 9.25.19)</small>	<b>9</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Vernetta Alston <small>(Appointed 4.13.20)</small>	29	n/a	50	50



The following Representatives were not present for any selected votes, and therefore were not included in NCFREE's 2020 Legislative Business Review:

Linda Cooper-Suggs, District 24 (Appointed 7.27.20)

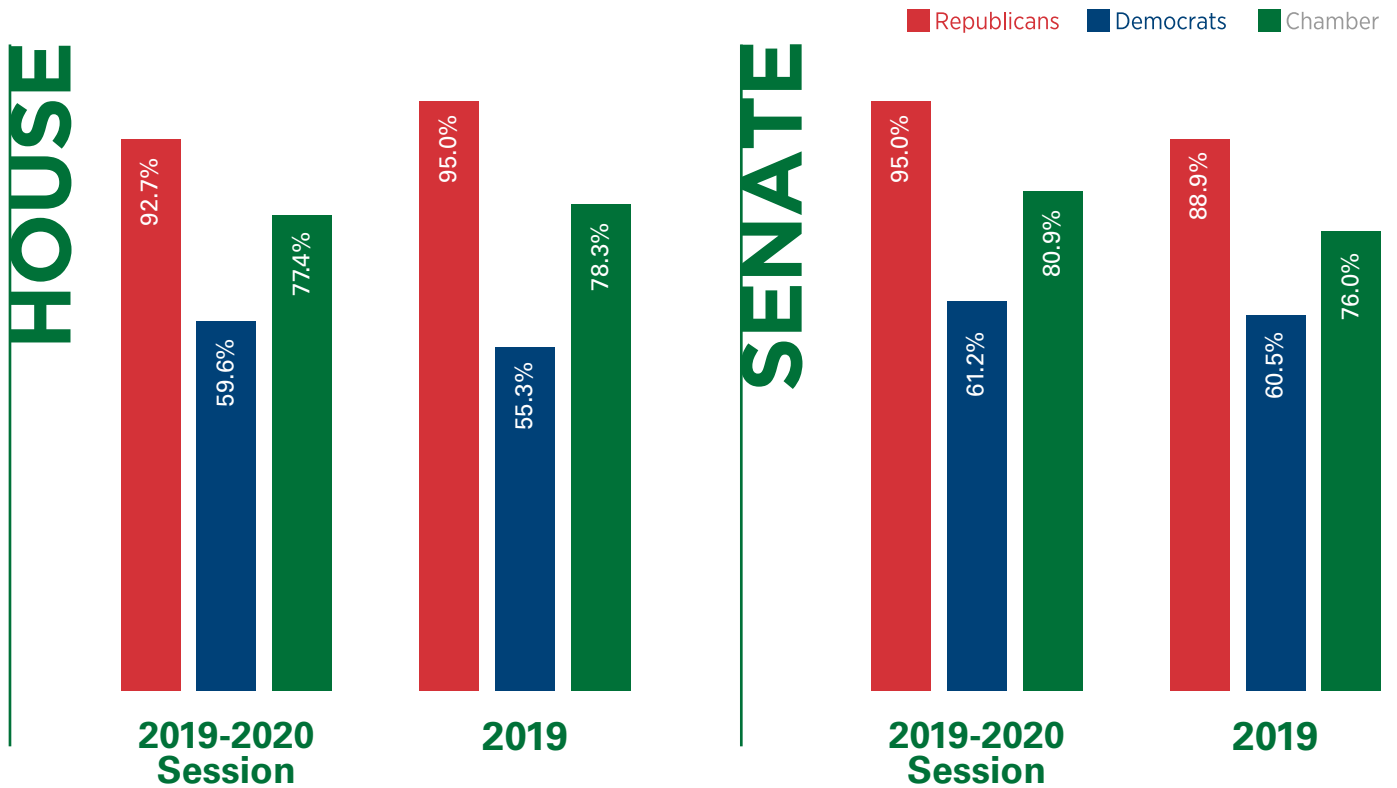
Wes Schollander, District 74 (Appointed 8.19.20)



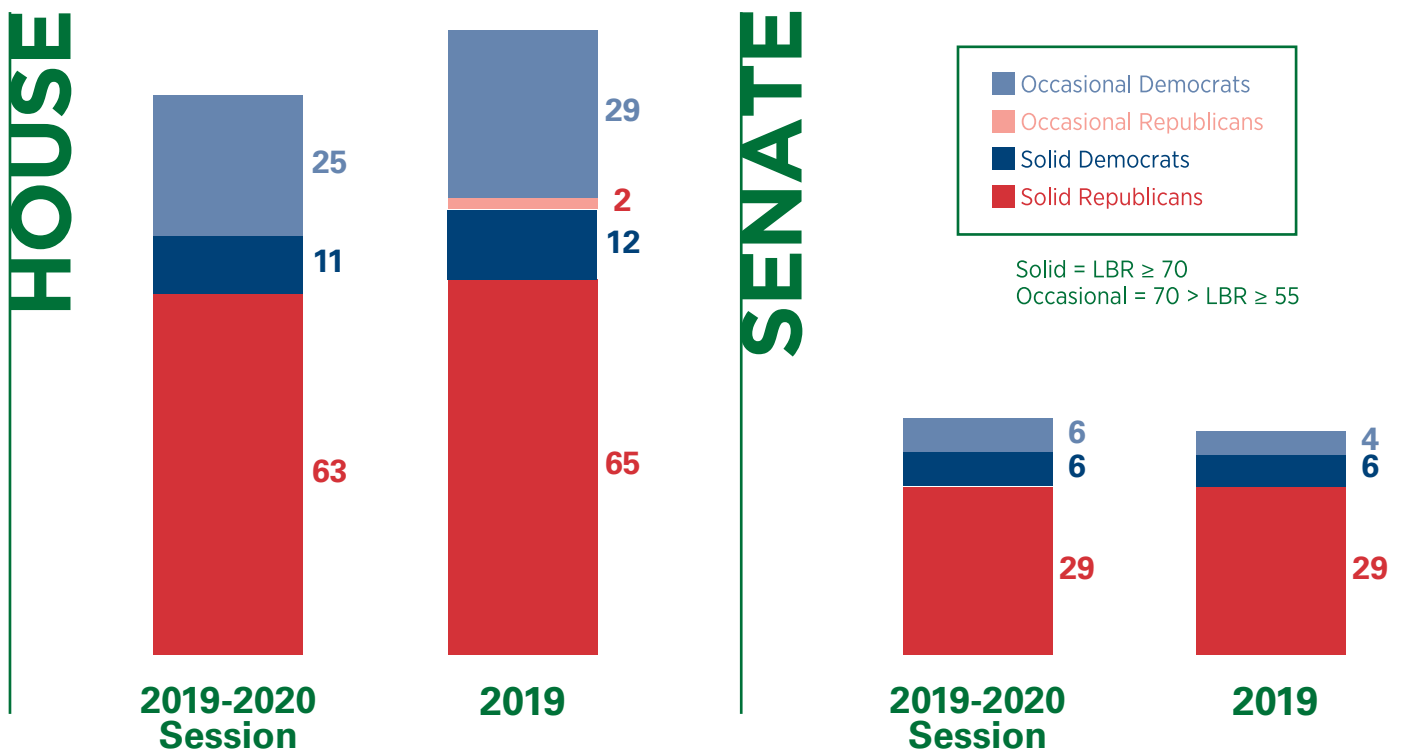
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## AVERAGE LBR BY CHAMBER, 2019 vs. 2019-2020 SESSION



## SOLID AND OCCASIONAL SUPPORT by CHAMBER, 2019 vs. 2019-2020 SESSION





The NCFREE Research Committee reviewed all Objective evaluation recommendations made by those surveyed and selected the votes reflecting an appropriately diverse array, which represent:

- Meaningful issues to the business community;
- Matters in which free enterprise principles were distinctly involved; and
- A clear distinction of legislative perspectives on business issues.

Voting histories were secured from the NC General Assembly website and matched against the preferred position on the selected vote to produce the **Objective** score. The objective score represents that percentage of time a legislator voted the preferred position.

Any excused vote was not included in the calculations, but a recorded “not voting” was considered and calculated as having not taken the preferred free enterprise position.

In terms of the votes selected for this analysis, finding absolute unanimity within the business community for any piece of legislation, let alone a single vote, is a challenge regardless of subject matter or constituency impacted.

Because the NCFREE LBR utilizes input from a large number of individuals within the business community familiar with what transpired during the legislative session, it is a broad-based approach that avoids being simply a characterization of lobbying successes or failures. This assures the NCFREE LBR is an impartial and unbiased evaluation of disposition and not simply a scorecard measuring a singular legislative agenda.

For calculation of **Objective** and **Subjective** scores to form an overall Legislative Business Rating for each legislator, the NCFREE Research Committee considered the overall tone and tenor of the current legislative environment, the partisan balance in both chambers, and the volume of significant and important issues that came to an actual vote during the session.

Consequently, the NCFREE Research Committee decided to utilize a 2:1 weighted calculation of 2019-2020 Objective to 2019 Subjective ratings to form the overall rating. In 2019, the NCFREE Research committee added another dimension to the overall rating of legislators: if a legislator was a primary sponsor of bills among those selected for the 2019 Objective rating, they received a **“bonus”** credit of .25 added to their overall rating.

In effect, weighting the 2019-2020 **Objective** twice as much as the 2019 **Subjective** and adding a **“bonus”** credit for 2019 primary sponsorship prioritizes a legislator’s voting record while highlighting those who champion legislation that positively impacts the business community.

# Selected Senate Votes

Bill	Short Title	Primary Sponsors	Vote	Preferred Vote
HD 806	Open Exercise & Fitness Facilities	Not listed*	Conference Report Motion 8 to Adopt	Aye
SB 315	North Carolina Farm Act of 2019-20	Not listed*	Conference Report	Aye
HB 118	COVID-19 Liability Safe Harbor	Not listed*	Second Reading	Aye
SB 704	COVID-19 Recovery Act	Not listed*	Motion 9 to Concur	Aye
SB720	GSC Conforming Amends/ 2019 Land-Use Changes	Not listed*	Second Reading	Aye
HB 471	Exempt Direct Primary Care from DOI Regs	Not listed*	Second Reading	Aye
SB 553	Regulatory Reform Act of 2019	Not listed*	Motion 11 Veto Override	Aye
HB 645	Revisions to Outdoor Advertising Laws	Saine, Dixon, Jones, Wray	Senate 2nd Reading	Aye
SB 355	Land-Use Regulatory Changes	Bishop, Newton, Searcy	Senate 2nd Reading	Aye
SB 553	Regulatory Reform Act of 2019	Sanderson, Wells	Senate 2nd Reading	Aye
SB 622	Tax Reduction Act of 2019	Tillman, Hise, Newton	Senate 2rd Reading	Aye
SB 86	Small Business Healthcare Act	Bishop, Krawiec, Edwards	Senate 2nd Reading	Aye
SB 315	NC Farm Act	B. Jackson, Sanderson, Johnson	Senate 2nd reading	Aye
SB 529	Fees/Returned Checks	Gunn, D. Davis	Senate 2nd Reading	Aye
HJR 253	Confirm James Gilles/Industrial Commission	Lewis	Senate 2nd	Aye
HJR 254	Confirm Ken Goodman/Industrial Commission	Lewis	Senate 2nd	Aye
HJR 255	Confirm Louis Bledsoe/Sp. Superior Ct. Judge	Lewis	Senate 2nd	Aye
HB 131	Map Act	Conrad, Lambeth, Potts, Torbett	Senate 2nd Reading	Aye

\*Primary sponsors are not listed for selected 2020 bills. “Bonus” credit was only given to 2019 primary bill sponsors.

For additional information on legislation and votes referred to in this report, visit the NC General Assembly website at [www.ncleg.gov](http://www.ncleg.gov).

# Selected House Votes

Bill	Short Title	Primary Sponsors	Vote	Preferred Vote
HB 536	Temp Outdoor Restaurants for Outdoor Seating	Not listed*	M11 Concur	Aye
HB 806	Open Exercise & Fitness Facilities	Not listed*	Conference Report Adoption	Aye
SB 315	North Carolina Farm Act of 2019-20	Not listed*	Conference Report Adoption	Aye
HB 118	COVID-19 Liability Safe Harbor	Not listed*	M11 Concur	Aye
SB 704	COVID-19 Recovery Act	Not listed*	Second Reading	Aye
HB 471	Exempt Direct Primary Care from DOI Regs	Not listed*	M11 Concur	Aye
SB 529	Fees/Returned Checks	Gunn, D. Davis	House 2nd Reading	Aye
SB 86	Small Business Healthcare Act	Bishop, Krawiec, Edwards	House 2nd Reading	Aye
SB 86	Small Business Healthcare Act	Bishop, Krawiec, Edwards	Second Reading	Nay
SB 553	Regulatory Reform Act of 2019	Sanderson, Wells	House 3rd Reading	Aye
HB 645	Revisions to Outdoor Advertising Laws	Saine, Dixon, Jones, Wray	House 2nd Reading	Aye
HB 645	Revisions to Outdoor Advertising Laws	Saine, Dixon, Jones, Wray	M11 Concur	Aye
HB 675	2019 Building Code Regulatory Reform	Brody, Riddell, Hardister, Richardson	House 2nd Reading	Aye
SB 315	NC Farm Act	B. Jackson, Sanderson, Johnson	House 2nd Reading	Aye
HJR 254	Confirm Ken Goodman/Industrial Commission	Lewis	House 2nd Reading	Aye
HJR 255	Confirm Louis Bledsoe/Sp. Superior Ct. Judge	Lewis	House 2nd Reading	Aye
HB 131	Map Act	Conrad, Lambeth, Potts, Torbett	House 2nd Reading	Aye
SB 310	Electric Co-Op Rural Broadband Services	Brown, Newton, Woodard	House 2nd reading	Aye

\*Primary sponsors are not listed for selected 2020 bills. “Bonus” credit was only given to 2019 primary bill sponsors.

For additional information on legislation and votes referred to in this report, visit the NC General Assembly website at [www.ncleg.gov](http://www.ncleg.gov).

## About the North Carolina Free Enterprise Foundation



NC FreeEnterprise Foundation (NCFREE) is the premier research organization in the state seeking to provide non-partisan analysis of the political landscape and its impact on North Carolina's business environment.



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