

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2005

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HOUSE BILL 635  
Committee Substitute Favorable 5/11/05  
Third Edition Engrossed 5/26/05

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. The board is not required to provide a public comment period under this section if no regular meeting is held during the month."

**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

1 the same positions when the number of persons wishing to attend the hearing exceeds  
2 the capacity of the hall, and (iv) providing for the maintenance of order and decorum in  
3 the conduct of the hearing. The board is not required to provide a public comment  
4 period under this section if no regular meeting is held during the month."

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

7 **"§ 160A-81.1. Public comment period during regular meetings.**

8         The council shall provide at least one period for public comment per month at a  
9 regular meeting of the council. The council may adopt reasonable rules governing the  
10 conduct of the public comment period, including, but not limited to, rules (i) fixing the  
11 maximum time allotted to each speaker, (ii) providing for the designation of spokesmen  
12 for groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions, (iii) providing for the  
13 selection of delegates from groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions  
14 when the number of persons wishing to attend the hearing exceeds the capacity of the  
15 hall, and (iv) providing for the maintenance of order and decorum in the conduct of the  
16 hearing. The council is not required to provide a public comment period under this  
17 section if no regular meeting is held during the month."

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