



SENATE BILL 185: Abolish Columbus/Cleveland County Coroner.

2017-2018 General Assembly

Committee:	House State and Local Government I	Date:	May 10, 2017
Introduced by:	Sen. Britt	Prepared by:	Giles Perry
Analysis of:	PCS to Second Edition S185-CSBK-24		Jessica Sammons Committee Co-Counsel

OVERVIEW: *The proposed committee substitute (PCS) for Senate Bill 185 would abolish the office of coroner in Columbus and Cleveland Counties.*

The PCS clarifies that the changes specific to Cleveland County would be effective on the earlier of a vacancy in the office of coroner or the expiration of the current elected term of office.

[As introduced, this bill was identical to H290, as introduced by Rep. Brenden Jones, which is currently in Senate Rules and Operations of the Senate.]

CURRENT LAW: Chapter 152 of the General Statutes sets out the duties of elected county coroners in the State.

BILL ANALYSIS: The PCS for Senate Bill 185 would abolish the office of the coroner in Columbus and Cleveland Counties. Chapter 152 of the General Statutes would not apply to Columbus and Cleveland Counties.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Section 1 of this act (applicable to Columbus County) would be effective when it becomes law. Section 2 of this act (applicable to Cleveland County) would be effective on the earlier of a vacancy in the office of coroner or the expiration of the current elected term of office.

BACKGROUND:

- From 1965-67, several local laws were enacted providing for the appointment of medical doctors as county medical examiners, and abolishing the office of coroner in several counties.
- In 1967, the General Assembly enacted S.L. 1967-1154, which established the State Office of Chief Medical Examiner, to provide for a Statewide system for postmortem examinations of deaths related to crimes, suicide, prison confinement, or other specified circumstances.
- Since the 1960s, the office of elected county coroner has been abolished in most counties.
- There are currently six counties in which the office of county coroner has not been abolished: Avery, Bladen, Cleveland, Columbus, Hoke, and Yadkin.

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