



# HOUSE BILL 279: COVID-Related Tax Chngs/UI Tech Correct.

2021-2022 General Assembly

<b>Committee:</b>	House Finance. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	<b>Date:</b>	April 12, 2021
<b>Introduced by:</b>	Reps. Howard, Szoka, Bradford, Setzer	<b>Prepared by:</b>	Trina Griffin
<b>Analysis of:</b>	PCS to First Edition H279-CSSVxfr-12		Staff Attorney

**OVERVIEW:** *The Proposed Committee Substitute for House Bill 279 would do the following:*

- Clarify that the extra credit grants and federal stimulus payments received as COVID-19 relief are not considered income for determining eligibility for property tax exemptions based on income.
- Provide for the nonaccrual of interest on 2020 individual income tax returns filed on or before May 17, 2021 and extend the statute of limitations for requesting a refund consistent with the extension provided by the IRS.
- Make a technical correction to S.L. 2021-5, which was S114, DES COVID Modifications and Technical Changes, enacted earlier this session.

**CURRENT LAW & BILL ANALYSIS:**

**Section 1.1.** – In order to qualify for the elderly or disabled homestead exclusion or the homestead circuit breaker program, an applicant's income must not exceed an income limit set by statute. "Income" is defined as "All moneys received from every source other than gifts or inheritances received from a spouse, lineal ancestor, or lineal descendant. For married applicants residing with their spouses, the income of both spouses must be included whether or not the property is in both names." Under this definition, COVID-19 relief in the form of Recovery Rebates or Extra Credit Grants would be considered income.

Section 1.1 would provide that these COVID-19 relief payments are not income for purposes of qualifying for either of these income-based property tax relief programs.

**Section 1.2.** – On March 17, 2021, the IRS extended the federal income tax filing due date for individuals for the 2020 tax year from April 15, 2021, to May 17, 2021. On March 18, 2021, the Secretary of Revenue announced that the Department will extend the tax filing and payment deadline to mirror the announced deadline change from the Internal Revenue Service. This extension will also apply to partnership and estate and trust tax returns. While the Secretary has the authority to waive penalties associated with failure to file timely returns or make timely payments, the Secretary does not have statutory authority to waive, or otherwise prevent, the accrual of interest on late payments. Without a statutory change, tax payments received after April 15 would be charged interest, accruing from April 15 until the date of payment.

On March 29, 2021, the IRS also extended the deadline for filing a claim for refund to May 17, 2021. Normally, a taxpayer has three years to claim a refund.

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Section 1.2 would provide for the nonaccrual of interest on individual income tax due on or before April 15, 2021, from April 15 through May 17, 2021, and would extend the statute of limitations for requesting a refund to May 17, 2021, for claims for which the statute of limitations would otherwise expire on or after April 15, 2021, and before May 17, 2021.

**Section 2.1.** – S.L. 2021-5 made various changes to the unemployment insurance system. Section 3 of that act clarified that wages that reduce UI benefits must be earned in the same week as the benefits are paid. The introductory language of the bill section contained an incorrect statutory reference.

Section 2.1 of the bill would correct that reference – from G.S. 96-14(b) to G.S. 96.14.2(b).

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Except as otherwise provided, this bill would become effective when it becomes law.