



# HOUSE BILL 717: Abolish Office of County Coroner.

2021-2022 General Assembly

<b>Committee:</b>	House State Government. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	<b>Date:</b>	May 5, 2021
<b>Introduced by:</b>	Reps. Boles, Miller, Hunter, Wray	<b>Prepared by:</b>	Brad Krehely
<b>Analysis of:</b>	PCS to First Edition H717-CSR-N-15		Committee Co-Counsel

**OVERVIEW:** *House Bill 717 would abolish the office of county coroner in North Carolina and would make conforming changes to the relevant statutes. The Proposed Committee Substitute (PCS) added Section 14.5 which makes a conforming change to remove a reference to "coroners" in G.S. 58-76-25.*

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

### BILL ANALYSIS:

**Section 1** would abolish the office of county coroner by repealing Chapter 152 of the General Statutes.

**Sections 2-28** would remove references to "coroners" in various statutes and would make other conforming changes.

**Section 29** would provide that in those counties where the office of coroner has not been abolished, the coroner would serve until the expiration of his or her term and, during that time, the provisions of Chapter 152 of the General Statutes, the conforming statutes listed in Part II of this act, and any local acts related to the coroner and applicable to those counties would remain in full force and effect in those counties. Upon the expiration of each coroner's term, the office of coroner in that county would be abolished, and the provisions of Chapter 152 of the General Statutes, the conforming statutes listed in Part II of this act, and any local acts related to the coroner and applicable to that county would be repealed.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** The act would be effective when it becomes law.

### 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 nearly every county of the State. Yadkin County does still elect its coroner. The current coroner is serving a term that will end in 2022.

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