

Editor's Preface

Since 1955 the UNC Chapel Hill School of Government's Institute of Government has published periodic summaries of legislation enacted by the North Carolina General Assembly. Initially these summaries were published in special issues of *Popular Government*. Beginning in 1974, however, the Institute began publishing the summaries annually as a separate book, *North Carolina Legislation*.

North Carolina Legislation 2003 is the fortieth of these summaries and deals with newly enacted legislation of interest and importance to state and local government officials. It is organized by subject matter and divided into twenty-four chapters. In some instances, to provide different emphases or points of view, the same legislation is discussed in more than one chapter. With two exceptions, each chapter was written by a School of Government faculty member with expertise in the particular field addressed. The two exceptions are Chapter 12, "Information Technology," written in part by staff members of the North Carolina League of Municipalities and the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners; and Chapter 23, "State Taxation," written by members of the General Assembly's professional staff.

The text of all bills discussed in this book may be viewed on the Internet at the General Assembly's Web site: <http://www.ncleg.net>. This site also includes a detailed legislative history of all action taken on each bill and, for some bills, a summary of the fiscal impact of the bill.

Albeit comprehensive, this book does not summarize every legislative enactment of the 2003 General Assembly. For example, some important legislation that does not have a substantial impact on state or local governments, such as that involving business regulation or insurance, is not discussed at all. Local legislation of importance to a single jurisdiction often is treated only briefly. Readers who need information on public bills not covered in this book may wish to consult *Summaries of Substantive Ratified Legislation, 2003 General Assembly*, which contains brief summaries of all public laws enacted during the session. This compilation is published by the General Assembly's Research Division and posted on the Internet at the General Assembly's Web site. A list of General Statutes affected by 2003 legislation, prepared by the General Assembly's Bill Drafting Division, is also on-line at the same site.

The Institute of Government also publishes two separate reports, *Final Disposition of Bills* and the *Index of Legislation*, that provide additional information with respect to public and private bills considered in 2003. These publications can be purchased through the School of Government Publications Sales Office (telephone: 919.966.4119; e-mail: sales@iogmail.iog.unc.edu).

Each day the General Assembly is in session, the Institute's Legislative Reporting Service publishes the *Daily Bulletin*. The *Daily Bulletin* includes summaries written by Institute of Government faculty members of every bill and resolution introduced in the state House and Senate, summaries of all amendments and committee substitutes adopted by the House and Senate, and a daily report of all action taken on the floor of both chambers relative to legislation. The *Daily Bulletin* is available by paid subscription, with delivery via U.S. mail, fax, or e-mail. For information on subscriptions, contact the School of Government Publications Sales Office (telephone: 919.966.4119; e-mail: sales@iogmail.iog.unc.edu).

Throughout the book, references to legislation enacted during the 2003 session are cited by the Session Law number of the act (for example, S.L. 2003-105), followed by a parenthetical reference to the number of the Senate or House bill that was enacted (for example, S 236). Generally the effective date of new legislation is not noted if it is prior to the production date of this book. References to the General Statutes of North Carolina are abbreviated as G.S. (for example, G.S. 105-374).

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