SENATE BILL 3
Judiciary I Committee Substitute Adopted 2/18/03

Short Title: Session Limits.	(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 10, 2003

1   A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2   AN ACT TO AMEND THE NORTH CAROLINA CONSTITUTION TO LIMIT THE
3   LENGTH OF LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS AND TO PROVIDE FOR AN EARLIER
4   CONVENING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR ORGANIZATION.
5   The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:
6   **SECTION 1.** Section 11(1) of Article II of the North Carolina Constitution
7   reads as rewritten:
8   "(1)   Regular sessions.
9   (a)   The General Assembly shall meet in regular session ~~in 1973~~ after the
10   term of office for Senators and Representatives commences in 2004
11   and every two years thereafter on the day prescribed by law.
12   (b)   Odd-numbered years. – Beginning with the regular session in 2005,
13   during an odd-numbered year, the General Assembly shall remain in
14   session for no more than 135 calendar days, except that this period
15   may be extended by joint resolution once per regular session for not
16   more than 10 calendar days. The month of December beginning on the
17   first Wednesday in the month in each preceding even-numbered year is
18   also included in the calculation of the limit of days the General
19   Assembly may meet in odd-numbered years. If the General Assembly,
20   upon convening of the regular session, meets initially for not more
21   than two consecutive calendar days and then adjourns for not less than
22   30 calendar days, that period of adjournment shall be excluded from
23   the 135 calendar days.
24   (c)   Even-numbered years. – If the regular session meets in even-numbered
25   years, the General Assembly shall remain in session for no more than
26   60 calendar days, except that this period may be extended by joint
27   resolution once per regular session for not more than 10 calendar days,
28   but the month of December beginning on the first Wednesday in the
29   month of each even-numbered year is excluded from the calculation of

1   the maximum number of days the General Assembly can meet in that
2   year.
3   (d)   Any reconvened session called under Section 5 of Article III of this
4   Constitution shall be excluded from the calculations of this section.
5   (e)   Neither house shall proceed upon public business unless a majority of
6   all of its members are actually present.
7   (f)   No valid action, other than a resolution of adjournment, may be taken
8   by the General Assembly after the time limits prescribed in this section
9   have expired."
10   **SECTION 2.** Section 9 of Article II of the North Carolina Constitution reads
11 as rewritten:
12 "**Sec. 9. Term of office.**
13   The term of office of Senators and Representatives shall commence on the first ~~day~~
14 ~~of January~~ Wednesday in December next after their election."
15   **SECTION 3.** The amendments set out in Sections 1 and 2 of this act shall be
16 submitted to the qualified voters of the State at the next statewide election, primary or
17 otherwise, which election shall be conducted under the laws then governing elections in
18 the State. Ballots, voting systems, or both may be used in accordance with Chapter 163
19 of the General Statutes. The question to be used in the voting systems and ballots shall
20 be:
21   "**[ ] FOR   [ ] AGAINST**
22   Constitutional amendments limiting the length of the legislative session and
23 making conforming amendments concerning the date of the beginning of the term."
24   **SECTION 4.** If a majority of votes cast on the question are in favor of the
25 amendments set out in Sections 1 and 2 of this act, the State Board of Elections shall
26 certify the amendments to the Secretary of State whereupon the amendments shall
27 become effective. The Secretary of State shall enroll the amendments so certified
28 among the permanent records of that office.
29   **SECTION 5.** This act is effective when it becomes law.