



A weekly newsletter on North Carolina General Assembly news relevant to the North Carolina tourism industry

## NCTIA Board Meeting in May

NCTIA Executive Director Vince Chelena sent an email to the NCTIA membership about the NCTIA Board of Directors meeting initially scheduled on Sunday, March 17.

"The Visit NC Tourism Conference in Greenville added a session and many board members want to attend," the email read. So Chelena consulted with NCTIA Board President Jessica Roberts and it was decided the spring NCTIA Board of Directors meeting will be rescheduled for May in Raleigh while the General Assembly is in Session.

"This adjustment will afford those of us attending the meeting the opportunity to speak with legislative leadership about the anticipated (and not so friendly) legislative bills expected to be introduced in the short session," wrote Chelena. "Both Jessica and I will be at the VisitNC conference and available to address any pressing issues. We look forward to seeing you in Greenville."

Details of the May Board meeting, including a specific date, will be announced in the coming weeks. NCTIA will also announce online options for those who cannot attend the meeting in person.

## New Food Safety Law Threatens NC Bars

*The following article is excerpted from WRAL, which published the story on February 20. Click to read the entire story written by Keely Arthur.*

The North Carolina General Assembly is working on changing a new law that was just passed involving food safety at bars. The law requires bars to go through the same permitting and health inspections that restaurants do. However, bars say some of those changes are too expensive or impossible to make.

5 On Your Side spoke with several bar owners in researching this story, including Leslie and Brendan Cox, the owners of The Beagle in historic downtown Pittsboro.

The Beagle operates differently than a lot of bars that serve food.

"We don't operate like a restaurant; we understand the limitations of our space," said Brendan Cox.

Most of their food is made in an inspected commercial kitchen at OakLeaf in Carrboro, which the Coxes also own. The food is then transported to The Beagle, which is licensed as a private bar, following all established food safety rules. But on March 27, the rules are changing.

The Beagle won't be able to offer food this way anymore, and the Coxes fear it will put the bar out of business.

"The General Assembly is aware of it and has spoken to a number of affected businesses and will be taking a look at language and will make necessary changes to alleviate the burden that the change in law has created," Republican State Senator Tim Moffitt told 5 On Your Side.

Timing could be an issue, the law takes effect March 27, and lawmakers won't be able to take action until after they are back in session in April.

## NCTIA Podcast Previews Primary Election

The [Do Politics Better](#) podcast – sponsored by NCTIA – previews North Carolina's primary election on Tuesday by featuring political scientists Dr. Michael Bitzer (Catawba College) and Dr. Chris Cooper (Western Carolina University). The podcast is co-hosted by NCTIA lobbyists Brian Lewis and Skye David. [Click to listen to this podcast](#), which dropped on Wednesday.

The podcast looks at hot primary races around the state, highlights trends in early voting numbers, and asks and answers important questions like *will political parties continue even as more voters are choosing to be unaffiliated with a party and can a third party candidate ever win the presidency?*