# Oversight in the News

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- While 3,100 hurricane survivors lack permanent homes, ReBuild NC employees earn big salaries (NC Newsline, 10/12/2023)
  - A legislative oversight committee in North Carolina has criticized the state's hurricane recovery program, ReBuild NC, for mismanagement and inefficiencies. The agency, tasked with helping hurricane survivors, has been under scrutiny for its wasteful spending of federal funds, including excessive salaries for top officials and ineffective programs. Despite intense scrutiny, ReBuild NC has faced no serious consequences, leaving more than 3,100 homeowners stuck in various phases of the recovery process, raising concerns about the agency's mission and effectiveness.

- About 1,000 North Carolinians a day enroll in expanded Medicaid. Is that good? (NC Newsline, 2/7/2024)
  - Around 1,000 people daily are enrolling in government health insurance through Medicaid expansion in North Carolina, with approximately 349,000 of the estimated 600,000 eligible individuals having enrolled since the program's launch on December 1. State Senator Ralph Hise expressed concern about the seemingly slow initial push in enrollment, prompting

discussions at two legislative oversight hearings about strategies to increase participation. The state aims to complete the two-year enrollment projection faster than anticipated, with the federal government covering 90% of the cost for those enrolled in expanded Medicaid.

- Outdated? Flash drives and government transparency (The Carolina Journal, 2/14/2024)
  - The General Assembly in 2024 has moved away from copying committee hearings onto CDs, opting for flash drives instead, according to the legislative library staff. However, access to committee footage remains limited, requiring public members to contact the legislative library to retrieve past footage. Despite livestreaming House sessions on YouTube, committee footage is not readily available for replay, prompting calls for improved public access and transparency, especially for those unable to attend hearings in person or during working hours.

- NC legislators push to rein in government overreach with REINS Act (The Carolina Journal, 3/18/2025)
  - North Carolina legislators have introduced a state-level version of the REINS Act that would require legislative approval for any state agency rule with an economic impact exceeding $1 million. Supporters argue the bill would strengthen oversight of executive agencies and prevent regulatory overreach, while opponents raise concerns about delays in implementing important rules. The proposal follows similar efforts in other states and reflects ongoing debates over the balance of power between legislative and executive branches.

- House oversight committee continues “agency reset” hearings (North State Journal, 3/21/2025)
  - The House Oversight Committee continued its series of "agency reset" hearings, focusing on reviewing state agencies' performance and accountability measures. Lawmakers questioned agency leaders about budget utilization, staffing concerns, and the implementation of previous audit recommendations. Committee members emphasized the need for improved transparency and efficiency in state operations.

- Expert warns of ‘benefits cliff’ as North Carolina considers study of welfare program consolidation (The Carolina Journal, 4/2/2024)
  - A joint legislative oversight committee heard expert testimony on the issue of benefits cliffs, where slight wage increases can lead families to lose public benefits, resulting in a net income loss. Lawmakers are considering a study bill on benefits cliffs and potentially consolidating welfare programs under the “One Door” policy. Solutions such as implementing transition

periods for benefit losses could help families navigate these challenges and promote long-term economic advancement.

- Legislative investigation: ABSS violated state laws and its own policies in no-bid mold contracts (The Alamance News, 6/13/2024)
  - The Alamance-Burlington School System (ABSS) is facing allegations that it violated state laws and its own policies by awarding no-bid contracts for mold remediation, according to a legislative investigation. The report by the Joint Legislative Commission on Government Operations suggests that the school system's handling of mold issues and contract awards may have circumvented competitive bidding processes and transparency requirements. The investigation also raises concerns about potential conflicts of interest and lack of oversight in the contracting process.
    - Read the report

- NC Innovation president testifies under oath to state lawmakers on group's finances, oversight (WRAL News, 7/9/2024)
  - NC Innovation president, Bennett Waters, testified before the North Carolina House Oversight Committee, defending the group's mission to enhance the state's competitiveness in the national 'innovation arms race.' The public-private partnership, backed by $500 million in state funding, aims to replicate the success of the Research Triangle Park in other cities with public universities across North Carolina. Despite criticism and calls for an audit from a board member, Waters assured the committee that the board has oversight over the management and that the professional staff is balancing the organization's needs with board requests. The group has not yet used state funding for grants, relying instead on private donations and investment income. Some lawmakers expressed doubts about the program's investment returns and the bypassing of the vetting process during budget negotiations.

- Scathing audit for N.C. oversight of nursing homes (NC Health News, 12/21/2024)
  - A recent audit by the North Carolina Office of the State Auditor criticizes the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for failing to conduct timely inspections and investigations of nursing homes. The audit found that 68% of inspections were delayed, with some facilities going over 20 months without review, and 39% of complaints were not investigated within the mandated 60-day period. DHHS attributes these delays to staffing shortages and increased

workloads during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- NC lawmakers holding Helene hearings as they plan more recovery funding (WUNC, 1/29/2025)
  - A North Carolina legislative oversight committee held a hearing on recovery efforts in western North Carolina following Helene, with lawmakers and Gov. Josh Stein's administration discussing funding shortfalls and rebuilding priorities. Officials reported that the state expects to receive about $15.7 billion in federal aid, significantly less than the $26 billion requested, raising concerns about delays in permanent housing recovery and infrastructure repairs. Lawmakers emphasized the need for clear funding requests, while state officials highlighted priorities such as rebuilding private roads and bridges, addressing housing delays, and removing storm debris to reduce wildfire risks.

- State auditor rolls out Helene recovery dashboard (North State Journal, 2/23/2025)
  - The North Carolina State Auditor has launched the Helene Recovery Dashboard to track the use of federal disaster relief funds. The tool is intended to improve transparency and oversight of spending related to Hurricane Helene recovery efforts. Officials hope the dashboard will help identify delays or mismanagement in fund distribution.
    - See the Dashboard

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- State Auditor's Office launches new transparency effort (The Transylvania Times, 7/22/2025)
  - The North Carolina Office of the State Auditor launched an online budget dashboard providing detailed data on its revenue, expenses, and vendor payments for fiscal year 2025. According to State Auditor Dave Boliek, the tool is intended to enhance government accountability and transparency by making spending information publicly accessible. The dashboard will be updated periodically to allow users to track trends and compare spending over time.
    - OSA Internal Budget Dashboard

- North Carolina Legislature overrides veto to pass REINS-style legislative oversight of rules bill (Ballotpedia, 7/31/2025)
  - On July 29, the North Carolina legislature overrode Gov. Josh Stein's veto of House Bill 402, enacting a law requiring legislative approval for agency rules projected to cost $20 million or more over five years. The law also sets voting thresholds for multi-member commissions to approve costly rules and exempts those needed to comply with federal requirements. According to Ballotpedia, North Carolina became the fifth state in 2025 to enact a REINS-style law and the second to do so through a veto override.

- NC Republican lawmakers criticize state health officials for cutting Medicaid provider rates (NC Newsline, 10/14/2025)
  - Several North Carolina Republican lawmakers criticized state health officials during a recent oversight committee meeting for reducing Medicaid provider reimbursement rates. Lawmakers raised concerns that the rate cuts could harm patient access and strain healthcare providers, particularly in rural areas. According to officials from the Department of Health and Human Services, the reductions were due to budget constraints and higher-than-expected costs following Medicaid expansion.

- As more NC juveniles face charges, lawmakers confront the need for more resources (NC Newsline, 12/12/2025)
  - North Carolina lawmakers discussed increasing support for juvenile justice systems during a recent oversight committee meeting, citing a rise in youth entering the system since the "Raise the Age" law took effect. According to officials, resource shortages, including staff and treatment programs, have strained the system's capacity to manage the growing caseload. Legislators indicated the need for expanded funding and services to address long-term rehabilitation and public safety.

- NC legislators question hospital fees charged for outpatient care (NC Newsline, 3/12/2026)
  - North Carolina legislators on an oversight committee questioned hospital representatives about fees charged for outpatient care, focusing on billing practices that may increase costs for patients. During the hearing, lawmakers cited concerns about transparency and whether such fees were justified, while hospital officials reportedly defended the charges as necessary to cover operational expenses. Committee members indicated they were considering potential

policy responses to address pricing practices and improve consumer protections.

- House unanimously passes Dominique Moody Safety Act (The Carolina Journal, 6/17/2026)
  - According to lawmakers, the North Carolina House unanimously passed Senate Bill 280, the "Dominique Moody Safety Act," to strengthen oversight of high-risk child welfare cases by creating a state-level escalation team within the Department of Health and Human Services, expanding training, requiring verifiable documentation of child protective services assessments, and increasing accountability measures. The legislation follows the death of six-year-old Dominique Moody and recent House Oversight Committee scrutiny of Mecklenburg County's handling of repeated abuse reports, where state reviewers found multiple screening and case management failures. Lawmakers said the bill is intended to improve coordination among agencies, identify patterns of risk earlier, and help prevent future child fatalities.

- Audit: 78% of NC inactive landfills not monitored (WBT, 7/13/2026)
  - According to a performance audit by the North Carolina Office of the State Auditor, 534 of the state's 688 pre-regulatory inactive landfill sites (78%) are not being actively monitored, despite most being located near homes, schools, or drinking water wells and posing potential public health and environmental risks. The audit attributed slow progress to limited funding, restricted access to privately owned sites, and the high estimated cost of investigation and remediation, projecting it could take about 99 years to address the remaining sites at the current pace. The auditors recommended that the Department of Environmental Quality improve site prioritization, pursue additional funding, and work with the General Assembly to strengthen its authority to access high-risk properties. The department agreed with the findings and recommendations.

- Audit: NC paid $111M for Helene base camps without tracking key services (Carolina Coast Online, 7/28/2026)
  - A rapid response report from the North Carolina Office of the State Auditor raised questions about more than $111 million spent by North Carolina Emergency Management to operate 55 Hurricane Helene base camps, finding the state paid fixed contract rates for meals, showers, laundry, beds, and staffing without tracking actual usage or requiring key performance metrics. According to the audit, costs were based largely on anticipated demand rather than documented use, and it recommended evaluating utilization and costs to inform future disaster

responses rather than questioning the need for the emergency services. In its response, NCEM said the spending reflected the unprecedented scale of the disaster, noted FEMA had determined the costs were necessary and eligible for 100% federal reimbursement, and argued that disaster procurement prioritizes rapid response and life safety over tracking individual service usage.