

## House Approves Deferral Of ABC Renewal Permit For Bar Owners

By Donna Martinez

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The North Carolina House approved legislation Thursday that extends deferrals for ABC permit renewal fees to benefit bar owners unexpectedly hit with renewal bills last month despite continued restrictions on their operations. House Bill 4 Extend ABC Permit Renewal Fee Deferral would retroactively extend the deferral of ABC permit fees for businesses prohibited from operating under the Governor's Executive Order 141 until 90 days after all orders limiting those permittees' full operation are rescinded or expire.

The legislation allows certain ABC permittees whose operation is limited by executive orders to request a refund of any permit fees paid for 2020-2021, and directs the ABC Commission to reinstate or reactivate any permits that the Commission cancelled or moved to inactive status.

House Alcoholic Beverage Control Committee Chairman Tim Moffitt (R-Henderson) said Thursday that struggling bar owners deserve relief and regulatory certainty for their financial planning.

"These are family businesses hurting in North Carolina, who need help now and should not be required to pay fees to a state government that is strictly limiting their ability to generate revenue and operate as planned," Chairman Moffitt said.

"The folks working in our service economy are facing unprecedented challenges and I am committed to supporting their continued needs as we turn North Carolina towards recovery."

Speaker Tim Moore (R-Cleveland) thanked House lawmakers for getting to work quickly on the issue.

"House lawmakers began working to get relief to these business owners again as soon as the news of their permit renewal fees was reported, and we are committed to delivering this assistance as they continue to face economic restrictions on their livelihoods," Speaker Moore said Thursday.