

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019**

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**HOUSE BILL 17
Committee Substitute Favorable 2/13/19
Committee Substitute #2 Favorable 7/11/19**

Short Title: Local Option Meals Tax/Brunswick Co. Munis.

(Local)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 4, 2019

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE MUNICIPALITIES LOCATED IN BRUNSWICK COUNTY TO LEVY BY REFERENDUM A PREPARED FOOD AND BEVERAGES TAX.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) Authorization. – If the majority of those voting in a referendum held pursuant to this act vote for the levy of the tax, the governing body of a municipality in Brunswick County may, by resolution and after 10 days' public notice, levy a local prepared food and beverages tax of one-half percent (0.5%) of the sales price of prepared food and beverages sold within the municipality at retail for consumption on or off the premises by a retailer subject to sales tax under G.S. 105-164.4(a)(1). For purposes of catering, the tax applies to food and beverage served in the town without regard to the residency of the caterer. This tax is in addition to State and local sales tax.

SECTION 1.(b) Vote. – The governing body of a municipality in Brunswick County may direct the county board of elections to conduct an advisory referendum on the question of whether to levy a local prepared food and beverages tax in the taxing unit as provided in this act. The election shall be held in accordance with the procedures of G.S. 163-287.

SECTION 1.(c) Ballot Question. – The form of the question to be presented on a ballot for a special election concerning the levy of the tax authorized by this act shall be:

" [] FOR [] AGAINST

One-half percent (0.5%) local prepared food and beverages tax, in addition to the current local sales and use taxes."

SECTION 1.(d) Definitions. – The definitions in G.S. 105-164.3 apply to this section to the extent they are not inconsistent with the provisions of this section. In addition, the following definitions apply in this act:

- (1) Net proceeds. – Gross proceeds less the cost to the town of administering and collecting the tax.
- (2) Prepared food and beverages. – The term includes the following:
 - a. Prepared food, as defined in G.S. 105-164.3.
 - b. An alcoholic beverage, as defined in G.S. 18B-101.

SECTION 1.(e) Exemptions. – The prepared food and beverages tax does not apply to the following sales of prepared food and beverages:

- (1) Prepared food and beverages served to residents in boardinghouses and sold together on a periodic basis with rental of a sleeping room or lodging.
- (2) Retail sales exempt from taxation under G.S. 105-164.13.
- (3) Retail sales through or by means of vending machines.



- 1 (4) Prepared food and beverages served by a retailer subject to the local
2 occupancy tax if the charge for the prepared food and beverages is included
3 in a single, nonitemized sales price together with the charge for rental of a
4 room, lodging, or accommodation furnished by the retailer.
- 5 (5) Prepared food and beverages furnished without charge by an employer to an
6 employee.
- 7 (6) Retail sales by grocers or by grocery sections of supermarkets or other
8 diversified retail establishments, other than sales of prepared food and
9 beverages in the delicatessen or similar department of the grocer or grocery
10 section.
- 11 (7) Prepared food and beverages served on a federal military reservation.

12 **SECTION 1.(f)** Collection. – Every retailer subject to the tax levied under this
13 section shall, on and after the effective date of the levy of the tax, collect the tax. This tax shall
14 be collected as part of the charge for furnishing prepared food and beverages. The tax shall be
15 stated separately on the sales document and shall be paid by the purchaser to the retailer as trustee
16 for and on account of the municipality. The tax shall be added to the sales price and shall be
17 passed on to the purchaser instead of being borne by the retailer. The entity collecting the tax
18 shall design, print, and furnish to all appropriate businesses and persons in the town the necessary
19 forms for filing returns and instructions to ensure the full collection of the tax.

20 **SECTION 1.(g)** Administration. – The municipality may enter into an agreement
21 with Brunswick County for the administration and collection of the tax levied under this section.
22 In the absence of an agreement, the municipality shall administer the tax levied under this section.
23 A tax levied under this section is due and payable to the local administering authority as agent
24 for the taxing entity in monthly installments on or before the 20th day of the month following the
25 month in which the tax accrues. Every retailer liable for the tax shall, on or before the 20th day
26 of each month, prepare and render a return on a form prescribed by the municipality or, at the
27 municipality's direction, the entity administering and collecting the tax. The return shall show
28 the total gross receipts derived in the preceding month from sales to which the tax applies.

29 A return filed under this section is not a public record and may not be disclosed except
30 in accordance with G.S. 160A-208.1.

31 The provisions of Article 5 and Article 9 of Chapter 105 of the General Statutes apply
32 to this section to the extent they are not inconsistent with the provisions of this section. The
33 uniform meals tax penalty provisions of G.S. 160A-214.1 apply to a tax levied under this section.

34 **SECTION 1.(h)** Refunds. – The entity administering the tax shall refund to a
35 nonprofit or governmental entity the prepared food and beverages tax paid by the entity on
36 eligible purchases of prepared food and beverages. A nonprofit or governmental entity's purchase
37 of prepared food and beverages is eligible for a refund under this subsection if the entity is entitled
38 to a refund under G.S. 105-164.14(b) or (c) of local sales and use tax paid on the purchase or if
39 the sale is exempt under G.S. 105-164.13. The time limitations, application requirements,
40 penalties, and restrictions provided in G.S. 105-164.14(b), (d), and (d1) apply to refunds to
41 nonprofit entities; the time, limitations, application requirements, penalties, and restrictions
42 provided in G.S. 105-164.14(c), (d), and (d1) apply to refunds to governmental entities. When
43 an entity applies for a refund of the prepared food and beverages tax paid by it on purchases, it
44 shall attach to its application a copy of the application submitted to the Department of Revenue
45 under G.S. 105-164.14 for a refund of the sales and use tax on the same purchases or a written
46 statement that the purchases were exempt from the tax. An applicant for a refund under this
47 subsection shall provide any information required by the entity administering the tax to
48 substantiate the claim.

49 **SECTION 1.(i)** Use of Proceeds. – The proceeds of a tax levied under this section
50 shall be used as provided in this subsection. The entity administering and collecting the tax may
51 deduct from the gross proceeds of the taxes collected under this act an amount not to exceed three

1 percent (3%) of the gross proceeds to pay for the direct cost of administering and collecting the
2 taxes. The remaining proceeds shall be used for beach nourishment or to construct and improve
3 public infrastructure and facilities or both.

4 **SECTION 1.(j)** Effective Date of Levy. – A tax levied under this section shall
5 become effective on the date specified in the resolution levying the tax. The date shall be the first
6 day of a calendar month and may not be before the first day of the fourth month after the date the
7 resolution is adopted.

8 **SECTION 1.(k)** Repeal. – Repeal or reduction of a tax levied under this section does
9 not affect a liability for a tax that attached before the effective date of the repeal or reduction, nor
10 does it affect a right to a refund of a tax that accrued before the effective date of the repeal or
11 reduction. Any repeal or reduction shall become effective on the first day of a month. Any repeal
12 or reduction may not become effective until the end of the fiscal year in which the repeal
13 resolution is adopted.

14 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.