

News Roundup

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The lead story of the week – besides the beginning of the ACC tournament, naturally – is the introduction of [S 306](#), a bill designed to break the logjam in the execution of death sentences by, among other things, addressing concerns about medical personnel participating in executions; allowing flexibility regarding the procedures for lethal injection; and repealing the Racial Justice Act retroactively. WRAL has the story [here](#). The Conference of District Attorneys supports the bill and the Republican legislature may view it sympathetically, but of course it is too early to tell.

In other news:

1. The owner of International Internet Technologies (IIT), a leading provider of electronic sweepstakes software, has been arrested in Florida. Essentially, Florida authorities contend that he was using a charitable organization as a front for illegal gambling. Read the News and Observer story [here](#). We'll see what effect this has, if any, on IIT's operations and litigation strategy here in North Carolina.
2. Remember [Miller v. Alabama](#), which held that a juvenile convicted of murder may not *automatically* be sentenced to life without parole? And how the \$64,000 question regarding that case is whether it applies retroactively to the 80+ North Carolina inmates already serving mandatory life without parole sentences for crimes committed when they were under 18? Well, this isn't an answer for North Carolina, but the United States Department of Justice has [conceded, in an Eighth Circuit case](#), that *Miller* is substantive, not procedural, and so should apply retroactively.
3. This week, I noted a couple of stories relating to activity on the roads. First, [in Kentucky](#), law enforcement has found the texting while driving ban to be unenforceable, since it's impossible to tell whether a driver who is fiddling with a phone is texting or dialing or what. North Carolina officers, have you had a similar experience here? Second, an Ohio judge has ruled, in essence, that speed cameras are a scam and has barred their use. The full story is [here](#).
4. The new *U.S. News* law school rankings [are out](#). They're pretty much the same, at least at the top. But there's mounting evidence that the shrinking applicant pool has [reduced the quality of students at many schools](#). One possibility is an ever-increasing supply of ever-less-capable lawyers. Fantastic.
5. Finally, two stories I just couldn't resist. One, more and more communities are building teeny tiny parks for the purpose of making their neighborhoods off limits to sex offenders. [This New York Times](#) story chronicles a Los Angeles park that will be less than 1,000 square feet and is positioned at a busy intersection. Great for the kids! And [this story](#) reports on a counterfeiter who returned a printer to Wal-Mart . . . with a sheet of fake hundred dollar bills still inside. You can guess how the story ends.