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Subject: REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY W. MOORE'S RALEIGH REPORT - March 23, 2015

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REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY W. MOORE'S RALEIGH REPORT

ON THE FLOOR

This week, the Senate passed [H 157](#), Amend Environmental Laws; [S 161](#), Supreme Court Sessions in Morganton; [S 185](#), Clarify Credit for Time Served; [S 5](#), Union County Local Act; [S 114](#), Custodial Parent/Party Cooperate with Child Support; [S 139](#), Town of Sylva/Parking Ordinances; and [S 142](#), Cumberland County Civic Center Commission.

On Wednesday, March 18, the Senate elected eight members to the UNC Board of Governors. The eight members include W. Louis Bissette, Jr., John C. Fennebresque, Thomas C. Goolsby, Hiram Frank Grainger, Anna Spangler Nelson, O. Temple Sloan, III, William Webb and Michael Leighton Williford.

The House passed [H 7](#), Amend Firearm Restoration Law; [H 58](#), Certain Counties Sheriff/Food Purchases; [H 102](#), Utility Vehicles/Law Enforcement; [H 5](#), Military Veterans Special Plate; [H 113](#), Protect Our Students Act; [H 18](#), Planning Year for CIHSS; [H 35](#), Education Innovation Task Force; [H 73](#), Cary Annexation; and [H 138](#), Arts Education Requirement.

On Thursday, March 19, the House elected eight members to the UNC Board of Governors. The eight members include David Powers, Jim Holmes, Mary Ann Maxwell, Walter Davenport, Pearl Burris-Floyd, John Alex Mitchell, C. Philip Byers, and Joe Thomas Knott, III.

COMMITTEES

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee Meetings

The House and Senate continued with joint appropriations subcommittee meetings as they work towards putting together a budget for this year. Individual subcommittees met this week and reviewed specific budget areas such as Transportation, Health and Human Services, Education, Public Safety, General Government and Information Technology. These committees took this time to review the current budget and identify key priorities for the upcoming year. Members will continue their work when they return next week.

House Education Committee – Community Colleges

The Committee met on Tuesday, March 17, to take up [H 129](#), High Achieving Tuition Scholarships. H 129 would create a scholarship program for top-performing high school students attending in-state community colleges. The scholarship would cover the cost of four academic semesters of no more than 16 credit hours each. \$2,000,000 would be appropriated in fiscal year 2016-17 and \$3,500,000 in reoccurring funds for 2017-18. H 129 received a favorable report and was referred to the House Education Committee on Universities.

House Transportation Committee

The Committee met on Tuesday, March 17, to address [H 183](#), Repeal Map Act. H 183 would repeal the Transportation Corridor Official Map Act. The act, passed in 1987, set aside corridors for future highways before they became developed. Members of the public addressed the Committee to complain that the designation has prevented them from selling their property. The Committee will resume discussion at its next meeting on March 24.

House Education – K-12 Committee

The Committee met on Tuesday, March 17, and approved three bills. [H 13](#), Amend School Health Assessment Requirement, would require each child presented for admission into the public schools for the first time to submit proof of a health assessment. It also would require the health assessment transmittal form to be permanently maintained in the child's official school record. [H 29](#), Technical Changes to Courses of Study Statute, would make organizational and technical changes to the courses of study statutes. [H 138](#), Arts Education Requirement, would direct the State Board of Education to require one arts education credit prior to graduation from high school.

House Health Committee

The Committee met on Wednesday, March 18, and approved [H 119](#), PED Recs/Publicly Funded Substance Abuse Svcs. H 119 would integrate state-operated alcohol and drug abuse treatment centers into the array of publicly funded substance abuse services managed by local management entities. This bill also would reallocate direct appropriations for ADATCS to the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services for management by the LME/MCOS. Finally, this bill would seek to strengthen the performance management system for publicly funded substance abuse services, as recommended by the Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee.

House Commerce and Job Development Committee

The Committee met on Wednesday, March 18, and approved [H 108](#), Site and Building Development Fund. The bill would create a fund to provide loans to local government units for the development of sites and buildings.

House Banking Committee

The Committee met on Thursday, March 19, and discussed three bills. The Committee discussed, but took no action on [H 104](#), Eliminate Audited Financial Statement Req., and [H 105](#), Reduce Mortgage Lender Surety Bonds. The Committee approved [H 106](#), Amend Banking Commission Membership. H 106 would convert one of the positions on the Commission currently held by a public member so that it is a position that must be held by a person licensed as a mortgage loan originator.

House Environment Committee

The Committee met on Thursday, March 19, to hear a report from DENR about risk-based remediation of contaminated sites. No votes were taken.

Senate Select Committee on UNC Board of Governors

The Committee met Monday, March 16, and approved a slate of nominees for consideration. The slate included W. Louis Bissette, Jr., Robert J. Brown, Jesse James Cureton, Brenda B. Diggs, Ericka Ellis-Stewart, John C. Fennebresque, Thomas C. Goolsby, Hiram Frank Grainger, Benjamin P. Jenkins, III, Charles Bryan McCurry, Jr., Anna Spangler Nelson, O. Temple Sloan, III, William Webb, Michael Leighton Williford and Terry Kevin Yeagan.

Senate Finance Committee

The Committee met on Tuesday, March 17, and Wednesday, March 18. On Tuesday, the Committee continued its discussion with respect to State economic development incentive programs and heard from Secretary Skvarla of the Department of Commerce. On Wednesday, the Committee heard two bills. [H 41](#), Revenue Laws Technical Changes, contains two parts – technical corrections nearly identical to those previously approved by the Senate in [S 19](#), and an update to the Internal Revenue Code reference that is identical to that previously approved by the Senate in S 20. The Committee approved H 41. The Committee also had discussions, but took no action, on [S 305](#), NCEMPA Asset Sale. That bill would enact legislative changes needed to effectuate the sale of the ownership interest in electric generation facilities of a municipal power agency to an investor-owned utility.

Senate Commerce Committee

The Committee met on Wednesday, March 18, to discuss [S 305](#), NCEMPA Asset Sale. S 305 would allow for the sale of the NC Eastern Municipal Power Agency's ownership of power plants to Duke Energy Progress. The bill was up for discussion only and will be voted on at next week's meeting on Wednesday, March 25.

In The News

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Governor, Agencies Lag in Public Info Requests

More than a month after WRAL News asked 18 of North Carolina's top government leaders for their travel records, two agencies have yet to provide a single document showing where the governor and lieutenant governor went in 2014. The requests were part of an experiment to see how quickly and thoroughly the state's top agencies respond to public information requests. The project was timed for Sunshine Week, a national initiative to promote the importance of open government and freedom of information.

Judges Side with Governor Against Legislature

A three-judge panel sided with Gov. Pat McCrory in ruling that the General Assembly violated North Carolina's Constitution by creating three commissions, including one overseeing the cleanup of coal ash dumps, for which the majority of members are chosen by legislators. Citing required separation of legislative and executive powers, the Superior Court judges struck down the appointment process created last summer by the Coal Ash Management Commission, in which six of nine members are appointed by legislative leaders. House Speaker Tim Moore and Senate leader Phil Berger immediately said they would appeal the decision.

Rep. Hall Wants Student ID's Accepted, Longer Voting Period

Rep. Hall filed two bills: 1) A bill that would extend early voting by a week; 2) A bill that would allow college students to use their college ID card as their newly-required photo identification when voting. The early voting period is now less days because of a law passed in 2013. Rep. Hall said even though more people voted early in this last election, he believes the law is still flawed. "As a result, people kind of fought back so to say, "Despite what restrictions you put on me, I'm going fight through the process—the long lines, the shortened period and try to vote anyway.' If they are going to be user-friendly, if they are going to be responsive to what the voters are saying, they will pass both of these bills," said Rep. Hall.

Study Has Troubling Findings About Child Health in NC

While some of the grades show the state is moving in the right direction, others are disturbing. “By many measures, North Carolina’s 2.2 million children are safer and healthier than they were a generation ago ...” the report states. But the obstacles children have to face — especially considering that one in four under the age of 18 lives at or below the poverty level — are sobering. The state earned a D because of the number of impoverished children. The poverty rate increases from 25 to 28 percent for children under the age of 8. The grades reflect the 2013 rate, which was defined by the federal government as \$23,550 for a family of four.

[NC, Similar States See Uninsured Rates Lower More Slowly](#)

States that did not expand Medicaid after the Affordable Care Act – including North Carolina – saw their uninsured population decrease at a slower clip than those that expanded Medicaid. That might not come as a surprise, but the Obama Administration on Monday put numbers to what many had already assumed. Among low-income uninsured populations in states that expanded Medicaid, the uninsured rate dropped by 13 percent since the ACA became law five years ago. In the other states – again, including North Carolina – the rate decreased by 7 percent.

[Report Highlights NC’s Ongoing Economic Struggles](#)

It's been seven years since the Great Recession hit North Carolina, but seven isn't such a lucky number for thousands of North Carolinians still reeling from the impact, according to a report released this week by the North Carolina Budget and Tax Center. The analysis found that there still isn't enough jobs in the state to keep up with population growth and that the percentage of people employed still falls below pre-recession levels. Report author Patrick McHugh said it's important to look at the whole picture when judging the state's recovery.

[Report Says NC Women Won't See Equal Pay Until 2064](#)

North Carolina ranks 23rd among U.S. states in women's employment and earnings compared to men, according to a report released Thursday by the Institute for Women's Policy Research Nationally, the gap between men's and women's earnings won't close until 2058 if current trends continue. In North Carolina, pay equality won't come until 2064. The report, "Status of Women in the States," examines several factors related to employment and earnings: Wages, wage ratio, labor force participation rate and share of all workers in managerial and professional jobs.

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Please remember that you can listen to committee meetings and press conferences on the General Assembly's website at www.ncleg.net. Once on the site, select "Audio," and then make your selection – House Chamber, Senate Chamber, Appropriations Committee Room or Press Conference Room. A schedule of committee meetings and other events is also available on the website.

