



Mail



Calendar



Contacts



Email Settings



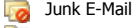
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Drafts [4]



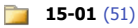
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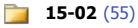
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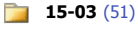
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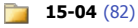
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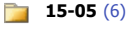
15-02 (55)



15-03 (51)



15-04 (82)



15-05 (6)



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Fwd: Newsletter from Senator Joel Ford

Joel Ford [joeldford@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, May 05, 2015 5:01 PM

Joel D. M. Ford

Subject: Newsletter from Senator Joel Ford**Vol. 2, Ed. 4****May 1, 2015****Committees**[Agriculture/Env./Natural Resources](#)[Appropriations/Base Budget](#)[Appropriations on Dept. of Transportation](#)[Commerce](#)[Finance](#)[Information & Technology](#)[Insurance](#)[Rules and Operations of the Senate](#)[Transportation](#)

Greetings Constituents and Friends,

The General Assembly crossover for a bill heard in either chamber was April 30th. Over one thousand bills have been filed this Legislative Long Session, some of which have already been declared dead in committees or did not meet the crossover deadline. However, major legislative bills that will impact tax payers, counties, and cities will move forward this session. The legislature will be busy taking on pressing issues from changing how sales taxes are distributed to restoring the tax deduction for seniors.

This year, the House is in charge of proposing the 2015-16 state budget. After they release their budget, there will be, without a doubt, a serious debate between both chambers of the General Assembly in regards to the proposed budget. Last year's budget negotiation debacle dragged the Legislative Short Session into August when it was supposed to adjourn in late June. I support a clean comprehensive budget that ensures that the state meets the needs of all North Carolinians.

Please feel free to forward this letter to your family and friends so they can stay in the loop as to what is going on in Raleigh. Send us their contact information so we can add them to our Newsletter listserv!

As always, please continue to refer to the North Carolina General Assembly www.ncleg.net/, to track information on committee meetings, bill status, legislative updates, etc. The North Carolina state government www.ncgov.com is helpful for in-depth information regarding our state resources.

*****Main Street Democrats*****

Earlier this year, I, along with fourteen other members, joined the NC General Assembly Main Street Democratic Caucus. I am pleased to now serve as Vice Chairman of that Caucus. Our website launched in mid-April and you can sign up to receive Caucus updates! Visit our website here, www.mainstdems.org. You can also like our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/MainStDems and/or follow us on Twitter [@MainStDems](https://twitter.com/MainStDems).

*****LEGISLATIVE UPDATE*******Sponsored Bills**

Adjust Cap on Turnpike Projects: I sponsored SB 188, which raises the cap on Turnpike projects that the Turnpike Authority may study and undertake. This bill will allow the Turnpike Authority to take on no more than eleven transportation projects in North Carolina. With today's growing needs concerning transportation, this act will allow the NC Department of Transportation to take on more projects that fits the needs of commuters. The bill passed the Senate and was sent to the House.

Public Safety- I also sponsored SB 442 which would revise the conditions under which counties and cities may inspect buildings or structures for public safety. SB 442 reads, *"The inspection department may make periodic inspections only when there is reasonable cause to believe that unsafe, unsanitary, or otherwise hazardous or unlawful conditions may exist in a residential building or structure."* The bill was sent to the Rules and Operations of the Senate Committee on March 26. However, it did not meet the crossover deadline, which means it will not be considered in the House. I believe that we must continue to find ways to allow our counties and cities the flexibility to inspect buildings and structures.

SB 327: I sponsored this bill which would allow banks to conduct promotions raffles. *"A bank may offer a savings promotion raffle in which the sole consideration required for a chance of winning designated prizes is the deposit of a minimum specified amount of money in a savings account or other savings program offered by the bank."* The bill successfully passed its third reading on April 22 and was sent to the House.

Co-sponsored Bills

Autism Insurance Reform: Last year, the Senate failed to bring an Autism Insurance reform bill to a vote after gaining bipartisan support in the House. The bill has been reintroduced in the Senate, and I have co-sponsored it. SB 676 would provide coverage for the treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders. The bill passed third reading in the Senate and was sent to the House.

Transportation Network Companies (TNC): I co-sponsored a bill that would regulate TNC's in the state. Transportation offered by Uber, Lyft and other similar service companies will be subject to new regulations offered by SB 541 if passed into law. The act would require TNC's to have a permit from the DMV in order to operate in the state. The bill would also require maintenance of insurance liability and background checks for drivers. I strongly support the entrepreneurship spirit that leads to innovative ways to improve services to everyday consumers. I support this bill because I believe that it is important that these companies abide by regulatory rules in order to keep all involved parties safe. The bill was referenced to the Senate Transportation Committee, but did not meet the crossover deadline. I will continue to advocate for a solution to ensure that these new services abide by safety regulations.

IN THE NEWS

Senate Bill 343 is garnering attention amongst lawmakers in North Carolina. This act would charge students over 16 years old with a felony if the student assaults a teacher on school property. I explained to WBTV that I am in favor of teachers' protection in the classroom, but charging students with a felony is insane. [Go to WBTV to watch the full interview.](#)

[WFAE 90.7:](#) Earlier this month, I participated in the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce Summit as a panelist urging for a solution to extend a jet fuel tax exemption for American Airlines. I expressed that failing to address this fuel tax credit issue could potentially cause the loss of a major airline as a hub in Charlotte.

DISTRICT/RELATED NEWS

Taxes: Tax day has come and gone and many North Carolinians were surprised to see smaller tax returns than they expected. Most [North Carolinians making less than \\$84,000 saw their tax rates go up](#) as a result of the tax reform of 2013. [One million two hundred thousand](#) (1,200,000) North Carolinians saw a rapid tax increase when the state eradicated the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which allowed those who make less than \$55,000 to keep more money in their pockets. If you saw your tax rate go up, please share your story so you can start a conversation about reforming NC's tax system.

ΔΣΘ Day: On April 15, I met with the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority sisters for Delta Day at the General Assembly. The Delta sisters met with legislators to discuss how to improve NC's HBCUs and how to better the lives of working families.



*****SPECIAL THANKS*****

Thank you for voicing your issues, thoughts, and concerns through your many e-mails, phone calls, and office visits. I appreciate receiving input from you and am honored to be serving you in the 2015 Long Legislative Session. Please feel free to contact me, or my office.

Senator Joel D. M. Ford
North Carolina State Senate
Legislative Building
16 West Jones Street, Room 1119
Raleigh, NC 27601
(919) 733-5955 phone
(919) 754-3254 fax
Joel.Ford@ncleg.net

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