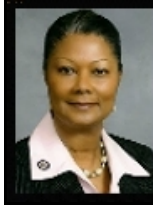



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106th District, Mecklenburg County
Carla.Cunningham@ncleg.net



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THE RALEIGH REPORT APRIL 18, 2016

Lawmaker will return to Raleigh for the short session April 25, 2016 at 7:00 PM. In 2016, the Legislature will be in regular session from April 25 through mid July.

- The Legislature held a two-day session from February 18-19 to redraw Congressional district maps.
- The Legislature held a special session on March 23 to discuss Charlotte's LGBT bathroom ordinance that would have went into effect on April 1. The ordinance would have allowed transgender people to use the bathroom of their choosing by the gender with which they identify. Both the Senate and House passed legislation that prevents local governments from setting up their own anti-discrimination rules. Gov. Pat McCrory(R) signed the bill on March 23, 2016.

HOUSE:

Convenes Mon, Apr 25, 2016 7:00PM

 [House Chamber Audio](#) | ([Archives](#))

 [House Calendar](#)  [RSS](#)

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[Bills with House Action by Day](#)

[House Bills Filed by Day](#)



WORKING THE ISSUES

We can't take on every issue. But I can certainly be a fighter to make sure the issues that are most important to our District are important to Washington.

I live this fight every day as your North Carolina State House Representative. When the cameras are off and campaign season is over, I do not forget my call to action. I do not forget the voices that said *take my story forward and create change*.

I am your servant leader at the NC State level and I will carry your voices with me to the Congress.

Let's build a better tomorrow. *Together we win.*

THE ISSUES

Stagnant Wages
Job Creation and Training
Equal Pay
Social Security and Medicare
Environment
Reinvestment in Early Childhood Education
Infrastructure
College Debt and Tuition Hikes
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Care

Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services

The Committee met on Tuesday, April 12. Secretary Brajer gave some opening comments and

[SENATE:](#)

Convenes Mon, Apr 25, 2016 7:00PM

[Senate Chamber Audio](#)

[Senate Calendar](#) 

[Chamber Dashboard](#)

[Bills with Senate Action by Day](#)

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HB2 Guts Core Worker Anti-discrimination Protections

Bill goes well beyond bathrooms and ends 35 years of basic civil rights for workers

Most of the attention paid to HB2 has thus far focused on the provisions repealing Charlotte's recent anti-discrimination ordinance, especially the provisions addressing bathroom accommodations for transgendered residents. But it's crucial to understand how much farther HB2 goes than just addressing bathroom accommodations—the bill actually guts core worker anti-discrimination protections that state law has long provided to workers.

Since 1985, workers in North Carolina who have been fired because of their religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, or handicap have been able to bring claims in state court under the common law theory of wrongful discharge in violation of public policy, based upon the public policy stated in action based on the North Carolina Equal Employment Practices Act (NCEEPA), N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-422.1, et seq.

- **HB2 eliminates state law remedies for employees who are fired based on their race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap.** Specifically, section 3.2 of the bill ended an employee's private right to sue an employer who fires him or her for any one of these discriminatory reasons. As a result, this leaves employees who are fired simply because they are black or a female or Christian without any effective protections under state law.
- **North Carolina will join Mississippi as the only state without any state law protecting private sector employees from workplace discrimination.** It does not speak well of our state that North Carolina is now in the same civil rights category as Mississippi, a state with a

then Jane Ann Miller, Public Health Program Consultant, Division of Public Health, Injury and Violence Prevention at DHHS, gave a report on the 2015 NC Suicide Prevention Plan. Dr. Randall Williams, Deputy Secretary for Health Services at DHHS, reviewed the statewide standing order for Naloxone. Dr. Courtney Cantrell, Senior Director with the Division of Mental Health, Development Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services with DHHS, gave an update on the Dorothea Dix plan and recommendations to increase availability of community-based, behavioral health treatment and services to reduce emergency department and inpatient services. Belinda Pettiford, Branch Head Division of Public Health with the Women's Health Branch with DHHS, gave an update on DHHS and Gillings School of Public Health report on process for local health departments to apply for and receive state funds on a competitive basis. Dr. Ruth Petersen, Section Chief Division of Public Health, Chronic Disease and Injury Section with DHHS, gave an update from the Diabetes Advisory Council. Deborah Landry, Committee Staff, reviewed the Statewide Early Education and Family Support Programs Subcommittee report. Susan Jacobs, Committee Staff, reviewed the draft committee report and then the Committee voted on the report.

Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Medicaid and NC Health Choice

The Committee met on Tuesday, April 12. The Committee began with a detailed discussion of an audit recently completed by the State Auditor with respect to compliance with federal requirements for the Medicaid and Health Choice programs. The State Auditor presented her report, which was followed by a response from the Division of Medical Assistance. Next, the Committee heard updates from the Division of Medical Assistance with respect to enrollment in the Medicaid program and the budget forecast for the current year. Medicaid is expected to come in at least \$250 million under budget for the 2015-16 fiscal year. The Division of Health Benefits then provided an update on its efforts and their timeline with respect to Medicaid reform. Finally, the Program Evaluation Division presented a report on their study of the timeliness of Medicaid eligibility determinations and the impact that the NC FAST system and the Affordable Care Act had on this.

Report: Upward Mobility Worse in NC than Other Parts of U.S.

Upward mobility in North Carolina lags the rest of the nation, leaving most children of low-income families stuck at the bottom of the economic ladder without a discernible path forward, according to a new report. The report, released Wednesday, found that in 22 of 24 worker commuting zones in the state, the rate of mobility is in the bottom quarter nationally. Charlotte, Raleigh, Fayetteville and Greensboro rank in the bottom 10 of the nation's 100 largest commuting zones. The report, "North Carolina's Economic Imperative: Building an Infrastructure of Opportunity," was done by MDC, a nonpartisan, nonprofit research center in Durham and commissioned by the Charlotte-based John M. Belk Endowment. It was built on data from national economic mobility studies, and profiled eight areas of North Carolina that are tackling the issue.

Read more here: <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/education/article70391652.html>

NC Dips into Emergency Funds to Pay for Unconstitutional Ultrasound Case

North Carolina will have to dip into its emergency fund to pay \$1 million in attorneys' fees for losing a federal lawsuit that overturned the 2011 requirement that women seeking abortions be shown narrated ultrasound images before the procedure. The state Justice Department is asking the Council of State to approve paying the bill with money from the contingency and emergency fund when it meets Tuesday. After the newly Republican-dominated General Assembly took over in 2011, it passed the Woman's Right to Know Act requiring patients be shown narrated ultrasound images at least four hours before receiving abortions. A group of abortion providers sued in federal court and the attorney general defended against the lawsuit.

Read more here: <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/under-the-dome/article68999852.html>

long history of racial discrimination and lack of respect for workers' rights.

• **By eliminating the NCEPA as the basis for any civil action, the General Assembly has severely restricted victims of discrimination from meaningful redress.** As defenders of HB2 were quick to point out, employees can still bring a claim under federal anti-discrimination laws, but for many victims of workplace discrimination that is not a viable option. Federal courts are much less accessible because of the high cost of litigating a claim there, time-consuming administrative exhaustion requirements, limits on damages and a very short deadline to bring a claim (180 days as compared to three years in state court). Moreover, the Human Relations Commission, which the General Assembly has not funded adequately or past June 30, 2016, does not offer victims any redress unless their employer agrees to conciliate.

This legislation is bad news for North Carolina's economy. It empowers businesses to discriminate, and discrimination has never done anything positive to create jobs or grow an economy that works for everyone.

House Bill 2 is a Trojan Horse for Employment Discrimination

Much press has been given to that part of the bill, HB2, that addresses transgender bathrooms. There are good arguments for and against those provisions, and it is a tough question how to serve everyone's interests. But further into the Trojan horse legislation, the drafters tucked provisions that give employers who discriminate a free pass. In a rare feat of double-speak, the legislature affirms the public policy of the state as prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, age, "biological sex" or disability, but then, a few sentences later, takes away citizens' rights to hold violators accountable for such discrimination. For decades, North Carolina citizens who have lost their jobs because of discrimination have been able to walk into a county courthouse and file an action for wrongful discharge. Part III of the law now strips that right away.

Read more here:

http://www.greensboro.com/opinion/columns/jon-wall-the-hidden-danger-of-hb/article_677aa09b-3cef-5fa9-8798-d45d52cf9208.html

YOUR VOICE, YOUR VOTE: Paid Sick Days and Family Leave

Everyone gets sick, but more than a million workers in North Carolina have no opportunity to earn paid sick leave, and even fewer can take longer-term paid leave to address a serious health condition or welcome a new child. When illness inevitably strikes, they must take unpaid time off—sacrificing their wages so they can get well or take care of sick loved ones or recover from pregnancy. They may even face retaliation from their employers and could lose their jobs. North Carolina needs an economy that works for all and ensures broadly shared prosperity.

Research has shown that paid leave policies, such as earned paid sick days and family and medical leave insurance, benefit workers, businesses, and the economy as a whole. Providing workers with paid sick days keeps sick workers at home, preventing contagion from spreading to other workers and customers, and giving them the time they need to fully recover and return to normal levels of productivity. In turn, this boosts businesses bottom lines by reducing turnover and the costs associated with training new employees.

Ensuring workers have paid time off to welcome a newborn, recover from childbirth, or deliver extended medical care to a loved one provides yields similar economic benefits, along with keeping new women attached to the workforce and earning higher wages in the years after childbirth than those that don't. Additionally, providing paid family leave to all workers, regardless of business size, helps level the playing field for small businesses which have often have trouble matching the more generous leave policies of larger employers.

Current Status

- Only 12% of American workers have access to paid family leave through their employers, and less than 40% have personal medical leave through an employer-provided temporary disability program, leaving out millions of workers who can't afford to take time off for family and medical reasons.
- 40% of American workers are protected by the federal Family and Medical Leave Act—the only federal law designed to help working people meet the dual demands of job and family.
- 1.2 million private-sector workers in North Carolina are not entitled to any earned paid sick leave. That's 39% of the private-sector workforce that must give up needed wages and possibly risk their jobs so they can care for their own health needs or the health needs of family members.
- Low-income workers (disproportionately women and workers of color) are significantly less likely to have earned paid sick days. And 60% of those earning less than \$20,000 per year lack access to paid leave.
- Parents with paid sick days are better able to take care of their sick kids. On average, school-age children miss at least 3 school days per year due to health reasons, and younger children have even higher rates of illness. When parents are available to care for their sick children, the children recover more quickly, are less likely to develop serious illnesses, and have improved overall health.

Budget & Tax Center County Economic :Snapshot 2016

By Tazra Mitchell
Policy Analyst, Budget & Tax Center
March 2016

The Budget & Tax Center's Economic Snapshots provide a look at how well counties in North Carolina are faring across key indicators of economic well-being and opportunity. **Below is The Economic Snapshot 2014 & 2015 for Mecklenburg County** on unemployment, poverty, housing, health, education, and supports for working families.

**ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT:
MECKLENBURG COUNTY**

BTC BRIEF: Changes in State Unemployment Insurance Hurting Workers and Communities

By Alexandra Forter Sirota
Director, Budget & Tax Center
March 2016

North Carolinians who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own stand less chance of collecting unemployment insurance or—if they do—replacing prior wages than before changes were made to the system in 2013.

At the same time unemployment insurance (UI) is doing less to stabilize the temporarily unemployed and the communities where they live, it also has failed to establish prudent solvency thresholds that would help avoid having to borrow money from the federal government in the next economic downturn.

North Carolina Unemployment Insurance (UI) failing to provide temporary, partial wage replacement

The unemployment insurance system's purpose is to provide temporary, partial wage replacement at a level that staves off a drop in consumer spending that would destabilize the broader economy. By failing to design the system to cover a significant share of those who have lost their jobs and to provide payment that is meaningful relative to the wages earned through prior work, the system is not as effective as it should be. When UI doesn't help jobless men and women meet basic needs and stay attached to the labor market, it erodes purchases of goods and services in the local economy. In other words, an inadequate UI system doesn't just hurt the jobless; it hurts the businesses where they would shop and, by extension, the economy as a whole.

North Carolina's unemployment insurance system served its role adequately before changes legislated in 2013. It was by no means generous, falling in the middle of the pack among all states on most measures. In the second quarter of 2013, North Carolina reached 39 percent of jobless workers with unemployment insurance—24th in the nation. Today the state ranks last: just 11 percent of jobless North Carolinians received

The Budget and Tax Center's Economic Snapshots provide a look at how well counties in North Carolina are faring across key indicators of economic wellbeing and opportunity.

Mecklenburg County has a population of 1,054,561, which is an increase of 25.9% over the last decade.

AVAILABILITY OF JOBS

- There were 26,939 people looking for work in Mecklenburg County compared to 51,787 job openings in December 2015.
- The county's unemployment rate was 4.8% in December 2015 compared to 4.7% in December 2014.
- There were 99,023 more employed people in the county in December 2015 than there were in December 2007 (when the Great Recession began).

POVERTY AND ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

- 15.2% of county residents (151,386 people) lived in poverty and struggled to make ends meet in 2014; the state poverty rate was 17.2%.
- 21.1% of children in the county (51,963 children) lived in poverty in 2014, compared to 24.1% statewide.
- The poverty rate varies by race: 23.9% of African Americans, 28.8% of Latinos, and 29.5% of American Indians in the county lived in poverty compared to 14.6% of Asian Americans and 7.1% of whites on average from 2010 to 2014.
- 33.4% of the county's residents were low-income on average from 2010 to 2014, meaning their incomes were less than twice the federal poverty level (\$47,700 for a family of four in 2014).

ABILITY TO AFFORD THE BASICS

- The county's hourly median wage of \$18.74 equaled 119.9% of the state median wage of \$15.63 in 2015. The county's median hourly wage grew by 18 cents since the recovery began in 2009.
- For a family size of three it costs \$23.40 per hour to make ends meet in the county, where the hourly median wage equals 80.1% of what's needed.
- Median household income in the county was \$59,049, which equaled 126.7% of the statewide household income of \$46,596 in 2014.
- The richest 5% of the county's households had an average income that was 32 times greater than that of the poorest fifth of households and 7 times greater than that of the middle fifth of households on average from 2010 to 2014.

ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 48.7% of renters in this county spent 30% or more of their income towards rent—meaning their rent was unaffordable—on average from 2010-2014.
- Rent and utilities for a safe, modest two-bedroom unit at the county's fair market monthly rent was \$831 in 2015.
- The two-bedroom housing wage in the county was \$15.98 in 2015, which far exceeds the state's minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour. This means that a person earning the minimum wage would have to work 88 hours per week to afford a modest two bedroom unit at fair market rent.

HEALTHY LIVES AND COMMUNITIES

- 16.2% of the county's residents did not have health insurance, compared to 15.5% of all North Carolinians on average from 2010 to 2014.
- The life expectancy rate for an African-American child born in the county is 76.9 whereas the rate is 81.9 for a white child. The life expectancy for all children born in this county was 80.4 on average from 2012 to 2014.
- There was 1 mental health provider for every 414 residents in the county in 2015.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

- The graduation rate for this county was 88.3% compared to the state rate of 85.6% in 2014-15.
- The graduation rate for Hispanics in this county was 79.6% compared to 86.8% for African Americans, 91.7% for American Indians, 92.3% for Asian Americans, and 93.8% for whites in 2014-15.
- 41.5% of adults in this county had a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to 27.8% statewide on average from 2010 to 2014.
- 40.5% of women in this county had a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to 42.7% of men on average from 2010 to 2014. Of those with this level of educational attainment, the median

unemployment insurance payments in the third quarter of 2015.

For those who do receive unemployment insurance—fewer than 25,000 North Carolinians in December 2015—the average weekly payment amount has fallen by more than \$65 a week on average since the second quarter of 2013. North Carolina had an average weekly benefit amount of \$301 back then—25th in the nation. In the third quarter of 2015, the average weekly benefit was just under \$237—46th in the country. This \$250-a-month loss in money coming into a household forces difficult decisions for families. As an example, for a household with one adult, one child, \$250 is roughly equivalent to a monthly food budget or health care costs.

Another way to illustrate the decline in support to jobless workers from UI is to look at what share of prior wages the unemployed receive. In the second quarter of 2013, UI payments in North Carolina averaged 36 percent of wages, which was 25th in the nation. In the third quarter of 2015, average weekly UI payments as a share of average weekly wages dropped to 27 percent—44th in the nation.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) fails to stabilize local North Carolina labor markets

The recent announcements of a series of mass layoffs to occur in 2016 at a brewery in Eden, NC (520 jobs), a truck manufacturing plant in Salisbury (936 jobs) and at related manufacturing facilities in Gaston and Rowan counties (1,200 jobs) will prove a significant test to a system already demonstrated to be ineffective in serving jobless workers and their communities.

Indeed, the uneven nature of the economic recovery—with some North Carolina communities still mired in unemployment and others faring better—is made worse by the changes made to UI in 2013. Under the previous system in North Carolina, as in most other states, workers who lose their job through no fault of their own can receive up to 26 weeks of unemployment insurance payments. North Carolina now provides no more than 20 weeks.

And now the maximum length for receiving UI payments is allowed to fluctuate, according to

earnings for women was \$41,280 compared to \$64,985 for men.

WORK AND INCOME SUPPORTS TO AVOID POVERTY

- 150,874 of the county's residents received assistance from the food and nutrition services (or food stamps) program in December 2015, with 14.6% of residents receiving assistance.
- Due to the return of the harsh three-month time limit for nondisabled childless adults, 10,086 people in this county (and more than 100,000 statewide) could lose food assistance in 2016 if they don't meet certain exemptions.
- 182,066 people in the county were eligible for Medicaid in December 2015, an increase of 94.5% since December 2007 when the recession began. Estimates suggest that 32,316 North Carolinians in the county would benefit from Medicaid Expansion, delivering nearly \$1.9 billion in economic benefits to the county.
- In 2013, 87,368 tax filers in the county claimed the state Earned Income Tax Credit, which lawmakers allowed to expire that year. The tax credit went to people that worked but earned low wages, and the benefits totaled \$10,100,871 in the county. These were dollars that helped workers make ends meet by allowing them to keep more of what they earned to support their children.

Your Voice Your Vote

Education Pipeline: Adequate Funding to Educate Every Child from Early Years to

Careers

Background

Pre-Kindergarten: State funding for NC Pre-K is 15 percent lower when adjusted for inflation than the 2009 budget year, when funding and the number of children served peaked. Research studies consistently find that quality early childhood education programs dramatically improve the performance of all students and ensure that students who have disabilities or live in poverty come to kindergarten with the necessary skills. North Carolina has been a leader in the development of early childhood education programs and has a national reputation for the quality of its programs. Pre-k must be adequately funded.

School Funding: North Carolina legislators' continued pursuit of costly tax cuts in recent years has greatly reduced revenue for public investments, resulting in public schools lacking adequate resources to ensure that all students receive a quality education regardless of where they live in the state. Amid an improving economy and more students attending public schools, state support for public education remains below pre-recession peak spending in many areas.

- North Carolina continues to rank near the in the bottom 10 states in state funding per-pupil and average teacher pay.
- For current 2015-16 school year, state funding for public education remains below peak 2008 pre- recession spending.
- There have been about \$122 million or 56 percent in cuts to state funding for classroom supplies & textbooks since 2010 when adjusted for inflation.
- Despite nearly 76,000 more students in public schools since in 2008, the number of statefunded teachers and teacher assistants are lower for the current school year compared to 2008.
- Average pay for North Carolina teachers ranks 42nd among states, which many
- The constant underfunding of public schools makes it challenging, if not impossible, for North Carolina to live up to constitutional mandate to provide each student with a sound basic education.

Teachers: Research consistently shows that the success of students is linked to the having quality teachers. The 2015-16 budget did not restore the Teaching Fellows program or teacher mentoring programs. These programs helped young teachers to become successful. In addition, budget cuts have reduced much of the support teachers receive in and out of the classroom.

- The General Assembly claimed to give teachers a well-deserved raise; however, the majority of state dollars for teacher pay increase in the budget for fiscal year 2016 are for one-time \$750 bonus payments. State funding for pay increases in recent years has largely targeted early-career teachers, leaving more experienced educators wondering if they will ever get a meaningful pay increase.
- This budget appears to boost state funding for teacher-assistant positions. However, the

the statewide unemployment rate. That means right now North Carolina's jobless workers can receive a maximum of only 13 weeks until the duration is reset again based on January 2016 data.

The December 2015 state unemployment rate was 5.6 percent, an increase over the prior year, meaning that the six month calibration of maximum weeks lags economic conditions statewide. It also fails to reflect the variation in job opportunities across the state. In that same month, 55 North Carolina counties had unemployment rates higher than the state rate. In 14 counties, the unemployment rate was a full two percentage points higher than the state rate.

In part because the state unemployment rate fails to capture the economic realities in communities across the state, the unemployment rate itself should not be the only indicator used to assess the health of the labor market. Measures like employment to population levels and labor force participation levels are critical to understanding the degree to which jobless workers are finding work and staying engaged in looking for work. Another measure that is helpful to assess the level of job opportunities in counties is the ratio of jobless workers to job openings produced by the state Department of Commerce. In December 2015, 50 of North Carolina's 100 counties reported two or more jobless workers per job opening. This means that even if every jobless worker in those counties found a job there would still be one jobless worker without employment.

In sum, basing the maximum duration of UI payments on the average unemployment rate works against many unemployed persons and their communities—and the goal of moving people to employment. First, conditions vary across the state as evidenced from the data above. So someone could live in an area of unemployment much higher than the state as a whole and would lose unemployment insurance because of it. Second, a declining state unemployment rate at any given time does not necessarily signal an improved labor market overall. The unemployment rate can decline—as it did in 2014— primarily due to people giving up on finding a job (and no longer being counted as unemployed), not an increase in people working. And third, certain groups of jobless workers may find it more difficult to find work

current budget does not include \$113 million of lottery dollars for TAs that were included in the prior year's budget. Accordingly, the actual net increase in state funding for TAs is \$8.8 million rather than the \$138 million that appears in the budget.

Vouchers: Instead of funding our resource starved public schools, the North Carolina legislature provided an additional \$6.8 million on top of nearly \$11 million in state funding allocated to unaccountable private schools since 2013. Although it is often described as a pilot program, these vouchers, while only given to low-income students now, will be open to middle-income families if the blueprint of the other proposed legislation is followed. There is no evidence that student achievement increases by attending a private voucher school. In fact, traditional public school students perform better on proficiency measures in jurisdiction that have had vouchers for the longest period of time.

Higher Education: State funding for North Carolina's public community colleges and 4-year universities has also declined in recent years. Building a skilled and educated will increasingly determine whether the state can successfully attract and retain quality jobs. However, significant cuts in state funding for higher education threatens the state's competitive position among state and hikes in the cost of a college education serves as a barrier to opportunity for many families and students across the state.

- Tuition at community colleges has increased by 81 percent since 2009.
- State funding per student at 4-year public universities nearly 16 percent below peak 2008 level
- Average tuition and mandatory fees at 4-year public universities up 43 percent since 2008.
- High-quality faculty within UNC System has been lured to other states in recent years, taking competitive research funding along with this.

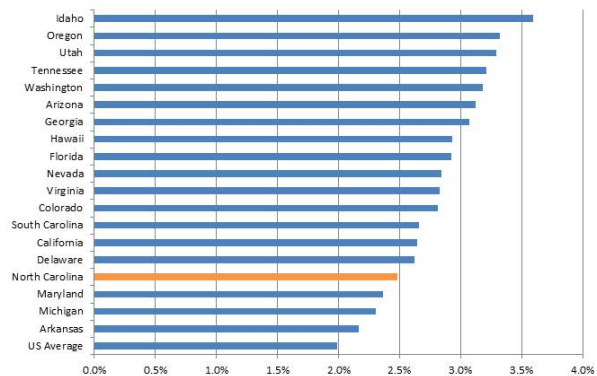
Prosperity Watch Issue 60, No. 3: North Carolina is not a job growth leader

There's nothing in North Carolina's economic record of late that should inspire adulation or contentment. The worst of the recession may be past, but our recovery is hardly the envy of the nation.



North Carolina's Economic Mediocrity

Employment Growth by State (March 2015 – March 2016)



Source: Analysis of Current Employment Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics
@ncbudgetandtax @ncjustice

As can be seen above, 15 states created jobs at a faster clip than North Carolina over the last year. Employment in our state increased by 2.5% over the last 12 months, which is good enough to slightly outpace the national average, but not enough to land us among the national leaders.

The reality is that North Carolina is not leading at creating broadly shared prosperity. Reducing taxes, slashing state spending, decimating unemployment insurance, were all supposed to make North Carolina into an economic juggernaut. What we got instead is economic mediocrity. Wages remain below the national average, unemployment is above the national rate, and entire regions of the state have missed out on most of the growth that has happened over the last few

quickly due to the need for skill upgrades and their age, for example.

A set maximum number of weeks at a level sufficient to cover the duration on unemployment insurance of the average jobless workers is a better policy. Most states provide UI payments for a maximum of 26 weeks. It is clear that North Carolina's average duration has been responsive to economic conditions. When jobs are available—as they were in the 1990s—jobless workers will move to employment quicker than when they are not. This suggests that artificial thresholds don't make it more likely people will go back to work. Instead, they undermine the ability of the system to help families get by until work is available.

Rep. Carla Cunningham: House Committee Assignments 2015-2016 Session

Standing or Select Committee	Status
Aging	Member
Banking	Member
Children, Youth, and Families	Member
Education - Community Colleges	Member
Finance	Member
Public Utilities	Vice-Chairman
Regulatory Reform	Member

Non-Standing Committee	Status
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services	Advisory Member

[Select Committee Assignments](#)

**Chair of Democratic House Caucus
(Women's Issues Work Group)**

**Counsel of State Government
(Vice-Chair of the Health Public Policy)**

**Joint Legislative Women's Caucus
(1st Vice Chair)**

years.

North Carolina, in fact, ranks behind states like California whose leaders are choosing policies that seek to include more people in the economy and ensure revenue is adequate to support the foundations of opportunity. When North Carolina was cutting taxes, California was stabilizing their finances by asking their most fortunate residents to kick in a bit more. While the chart above only captures each states' economic growth over the last year, California has actually outperformed North Carolina since 2013, when the first round of major tax cuts were passed here. This is yet more evidence that cutting taxes is no surefire way to boost economic growth.

Modest growth in North Carolina is even more concerning given how much ground North Carolina had to make up in the wake of the recession. Manufacturing states like North Carolina tend to suffer the most dramatically when a market failure like the Great Recession temporarily zaps demands for goods, leaving a larger deficit to overcome when the economy stabilizes. As a result, employment in has grown in North Carolina by 3.4% since the end of 2007, less than the national 3.9% rate of growth.

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Please feel free to contact my Legislative Assistant Ms. Sherrie Burnette at 919-733-5807 (cunninghamla@ncleg.net) or me at 704-509-2939 (carla.cunningham@ncleg.net) if you have any questions. We are here to serve you.

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