



Mail



Calendar



Contacts



Email Settings



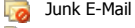
Deleted Items



Drafts



Inbox (4)

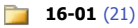


Junk E-Mail

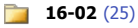


Sent Items

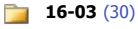
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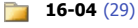
16-01 (21)



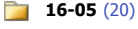
16-02 (25)



16-03 (30)



16-04 (29)



16-05 (20)

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## Fwd: Newsletter from Senator Joel Ford

Joel Ford [joeldford@gmail.com]

**Sent:** Tuesday, May 17, 2016 8:34 PM

**To:** [Steve Johnston](#)

**Subject:** Newsletter from Senator Joel Ford



Vol. 2, Ed. 16

May 17, 2016



### Committees

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[Appropriations/Base Budget](#)

[Appropriations on Dept. of Transportation](#)

[Commerce](#)

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[Rules and Operations of the Senate](#)

[Transportation](#)

Greetings Constituents and Friends,

The General Assembly convened in Raleigh on April 25<sup>th</sup> for the start of the 2016 Legislative Short session. The main focus will be to approve the state budget for the 2016-17 fiscal year, which begins on July 1st. While members of the Senate and the House continue to work on prioritizing spending, Governor Pat McCrory released his proposed budget to the General Assembly on April 27th. The Governor's budget makes modest attempts to increase funding in critical areas such as education; however, it falls short of much needed restorative funding commitments to our schools. With major cuts in per pupil spending and teacher pay, North Carolina has fallen behind in student success as a result. The Governor's proposed spending plan largely keeps North Carolina at recession-level rates. It also ignores the overwhelming need to provide substantive pay increases to state employees and cost-of-living adjustments to state retirees.

I believe it is important to help move our economy forward by continuing to advocate for responsible increases to funding for schools, teacher salaries, state employees, the state highway patrol and other critical programs over the course of the short session. I remain fully committed to helping build our state's business climate to create more good paying jobs for North Carolinians.

Please kindly forward this newsletter 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/](http://www.ncleg.net/), to track information on committee meetings, bill status, legislative updates, etc. The North Carolina state government website, [www.ncgov.com](http://www.ncgov.com), is helpful for in-depth information regarding our state resources.

### \*\*\*LEGISLATIVE UPDATE/INFO\*\*\*

**SB 725/SL 2016-4, Unemployment Insurance Technical Changes-** This Act offers technical changes and corrections to the state's current unemployment insurance law as recommended by the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Unemployment Insurance. It also calls for the Unemployment Commission to pursue outside counsel in unemployment court proceedings in order to maintain a more unbiased role in the process. This bill became law on 5-11-16.

**SB 726, IRC Update-** SB 726 calls for updates to the state's Internal Revenue Code. While these changes are largely housekeeping efforts, there is concern over the continued inclusion of taxing

mortgage debt that's been forgiven by the bank. I offered an amendment that would provide a waiver for the tax burden on forgiven mortgage debt at the state level, noting that it would reflect the federal government's stance on this practice. I believe this is a responsible and practical way to utilize the state's projected budget surplus. The proposed amendment was rejected by the Senate Finance Committee, and the bill currently is up for conference committee discussion.

**SB 729/SL 2016-5, Various Changes to Revenue Laws-** This Act offers revisions to the state's current revenue laws, including technical changes to business revenue laws, reporting royalty incomes and shared interest expenses for tax purposes. The bill passed unanimously and became law on 5-11-16.

**SB 828, Small Business Incentive Act** - I recently filed legislation to amend current statutes by exempting retail sales and use tax on certain tangible personal property. This would include personal property other than automobiles exceeding \$100,000 not used principally for business, and watercraft, if certain criteria are met.

**SB 829, Small Business Tax Incentive-** I filed this bill to exclude small businesses from the dollar limitations and add-back requirements applied to Section 179 expenses of the IRC. Exclusions would apply to small businesses engaged in production of goods and/or delivery of services with less than \$2 million in gross annual sales.

**Nominations:** The Senate confirmed the following nominations:

- 1) Linda Combs: NC State Controller
- 2) Lyons Gray: NC Utilities Commission
- 3) Chris Loutit: NC Industrial Commission
- 4) Anne Faircloth, Faylene Whitaker and James Lambeth: NC Board of Agriculture

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**\*\*\*DISTRICT/RELATED NEWS\*\*\***

**Waste-to-Energy Project Tour** - I had the opportunity to tour Blue Sphere, 600 Johnson Rd. in Charlotte, a state of the art waste-to-energy facility, which produces clean energy directly from food waste. Blue Sphere and its construction partner, AUSTEP, shared unique insights on how this innovative technology is another important step towards enhancing North Carolina's clean energy economy-reducing waste while providing electricity to the grid.

**JE Dunn Construction Co.-** Congratulations to JE Dunn on the grand opening of its new office/building space located at 1616 Camden Rd., Suite 400, Charlotte, NC 28203!

**HOAs Visits** - In an effort to meet with local homeowner groups in District 38 and provide legislative updates, I was pleased to have the opportunity to meet with the following HOAs:

- April 12<sup>th</sup> - Madison Park HOA
- April 28<sup>th</sup> - Clanton Park Community HOA
- May 12<sup>th</sup> - Bahama-Havana Park Community HOA

**Auction Promotes African-American Scholarship Fund-** It was an honor to participate in a dinner for the recipients of an auction sponsored by the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Duke Energy Advocates for African-Americans Carolina Scholarship Fundraising Gala. The Gala celebrates the accomplishments of scholarship recipients in the Carolinas who are fulfilling their potential through strong academic performance. Since 1996, more than \$872,000 has been raised and has funded over 70 scholarships for students.

**International Paper Hiring** - If you desire to be a part of the International Paper team, a global leader in packaging, paper and pulp, consider applying at: <http://www.internationalpaper.com/careers>. International Paper manufacturers corrugated products in Charlotte with five facilities statewide. Its North Carolina workforce consists of 1400 employees with average pay being \$20 per hour. The average yearly salary with overtime is \$50k with healthcare and pension plans. Working conditions include no climate control, noisy, and long hours.

**Wire Technicians Still Needed** - AT&T continues to recruit wire technicians for immediate openings in its North Carolina company locations in Charlotte, Raleigh, Greensboro, and Greenville. Candidates must have strong communication skills, a valid state driver's license, pre-employment screening qualifications among other skills. Please apply via the website, [www.att.jobs](http://www.att.jobs), and search by state or position title.

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**\*\*\*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 2015-16 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**  
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