

## REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY W. MOORE'S END OF SESSION 2015-2016 - July 6, 2016

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Mecklenburg County



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### REPRESENTATIVE RODNEY W. MOORE'S END OF SESSION 2015-2016

#### RALEIGH REPORT

Rep. Rodney Moore, a native of Wilmington, NC, represents NC House District 99 in Mecklenburg County. Currently he is assigned to serve as Vice Chair of the House Finance and Vice Chair of the Commerce and Job Development committees. He also serves on the House Banking, Education-Universities, Public Utilities, Regulatory Reform and Transportation committees. In addition to his public service with the NCGA, Rep. Moore has served as Vice Chairman of the Charlotte Housing Authority Board of Commissioners and serves on the Board of Directors of the Urban League of Central Carolinas.

#### IN THE NEWS

##### [Proposed HB2 Changes Uncertain](#)

In the face of a national firestorm, North Carolina lawmakers are considering revisions to House Bill 2, though critics blasted one proposal Tuesday as "just another slap in the face to all North Carolinians." Gay rights advocates were reacting to a draft of a bill that would change HB2, the law that ignited a storm of criticism that resulted in lost investments, celebrity boycotts and the potential loss of national sporting events. The law nullified a Charlotte ordinance that would have extended nondiscrimination protection to LGBT residents and allowed transgender individuals to use the bathroom of their gender identity.

##### [Legislature approves limited changes to HB2](#)

The legislature approved limited changes to House Bill 2 late Friday night, restoring residents' right to bring claims of discrimination in state courts.

Gov. Pat McCrory had been seeking the action for months. HB2, best known for requiring transgender people in government facilities to use bathrooms matching the gender on their birth certificates, also blocked a path that North Carolinians had to file state-court discrimination claims.

Though lawmakers' action Friday restores that path, it comes with a statute of limitations shorter than before — one year instead of three years.

"As we said from the beginning, there was never an intent to limit the right of anybody to seek redress in state court," House Speaker Tim Moore told reporters.

##### [Legislators Take Another Swing at Coal Ash](#)

The new language would also mandate that Duke, where needed, repair and maintain dams at sites where they keep coal ash from reaching streams, rivers, and lakes. It also requires that Duke Energy identify sites where some of the coal ash could be recycled as raw material to make cement. Environmentalists and some legislators on both sides of the aisle have expressed support of all of those provisions. But the bill would also simplify the steps that Duke Energy must take to have impoundments at some sites designated as posing low risks to people's health or the environment. Low-risk designations could allow the utility to skip digging up waste on some properties, allowing Duke instead to cap it, possibly in unlined pits where it was originally stored.

##### [Members Confirmed for State Board of Education](#)

The Senate and House held an unusual joint session on Thursday to confirm J. Todd Chasteen of Watauga County and Amy Bannister White of Wake County. All but one of the 158 legislators voting agreed to confirm the appointments. Chasteen is the corporate counsel for the Boone-based

Christian relief agency Samaritan's Purse which is led by the Rev. Franklin Graham. White is a former Wake County school board member who now works to improve after-school programs in several of the county's elementary schools.

### [Effort to Revamp Clean Water Ways Alarms Environmentalists](#)

... It's the kind of warning signal that worries riverkeepers, who are concerned that efforts in the state legislature to repeal water protections will leave North Carolina vulnerable to the massive fish kills of the 1980s and 1990s that prompted the safeguards. Some Republican legislators, developers and upstream communities want to throw out those safeguards and start all over with new rules. They are frustrated at the minimal improvements seen so far and the potentially exorbitant costs of fully implementing protections put in place before Republicans took over the General Assembly in 2011.

### [Senate Plan Would Lock GOP Tax Policy into State Constitution](#)

Who will be penalized if the attempt succeeds? Not the high-end earners basking in the certainty that from 2020 onward, their income tax rate will be capped at 5.5 percent – no matter what situations or emergencies the state may face. That's a lower top rate than prevailed a few short years ago, when additional income tax revenue, along with spending cuts, proved essential to balancing the recession-wracked state budget. No, the pain will be felt mainly by people with modest incomes. Their income tax savings will be minimal, even with the higher standard deduction that's on track for approval. But as the legislature looks for other revenue sources to meet costs that even small-government conservatives can't ignore, these ordinary folks will end up paying more in sales taxes – taxes that amount to mere nuisances for the wealthy but a real burden to people already struggling to pay for necessities.

### [NCGA Should Follow its Heart and Abolish Local Government](#)

So there. The words have finally been uttered. The evidence that they really want to run their cities, counties and schools is overwhelming, so why pretend? The latest bit of proof comes courtesy of state Sen. Norman Sanderson, R-Pamlico. Fearful that some communities might be too lenient on the state's efforts to restrict and regulate refugees and immigrants, Sanderson and the Senate Judiciary II Committee concocted legislation that threatens cities with loss of road repair aid and school district funding cuts if they don't strictly adhere to state immigration laws. Sanderson says that some communities – most notably Greensboro – are ignoring legislation passed in 2015 that banned state and local agencies from recognizing consular documents and prevents police and other government agencies from accepting IDs issued by foreign governments.

### [How the House Derailed Apodaca's Plan for Asheville Districts](#)

In a stunning defeat, the North Carolina House voted down a bill that would have made changes to the Asheville city council.

Senate Bill 897 was introduced by Republican Senator Tom Apodaca of Henderson County over the strong objection of the entire city council and all other state lawmakers representing Buncombe County. It would split Asheville into six districts drawn by the General Assembly for the purpose of electing council members. But the bill failed by a vote of 48-58.

How could that have happened? Most expected a bill pushed by Senator Apodaca, who's considered one of the most powerful lawmakers in the General Assembly to sail to passage in a Republican-dominated legislature. Consider the legislature already successfully changed elections in Buncombe County, Wake County, and Greensboro (though the Wake County maps were thrown out by a federal appeals court on Friday and Greensboro's map was stayed by a court as well and its fate is not yet determined). Well, for half of the hour and 20 minute long debate, it appeared certain to pass. In fact, every Democratic Representative of Buncombe County in the House offered an amendment to modify the bill, and each was unsuccessful. First was Rep. Susan Fisher.

## **LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY**

### **Budget**

- The House took its final vote on the \$22.34 billion state budget on Friday. The measure now goes to Governor Pat McCrory.

### **Education**

Achievement School Districts

- HB 1080, which would put five low-performing district elementary schools under charter school administration, was approved by the House and Senate last week and sent to the governor.

### **Adjournment**

- The General Assembly adjourned sine die Friday, July 1, which concluded the 2016 short legislative session. The General Assembly will convene for the next long legislative session on January 11, 2017.

*Please remember that you can listen to committee meetings and press conferences on the General Assembly's website at [www.ncleg.net](http://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.*

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Ariel Smith, Corresponding Secretary

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