

Secretive Energy Bill Passes in Midnight Session / Child Tax Credit / CNBC Lists North Carolina As Second Best State for Business



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Date 2021-07-17 23:55

July 15, 2021

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Secretive Energy Bill Passes in Midnight Session

Peace. A controversial energy bill was rammed through the NC House this week during a midnight legislative session. The ideas behind HB 951 have been debated in back rooms and secret meetings around the General Assembly for most of the year, but the real contents of [HB 951](#) did not become public until this week.

Within 48 hours of the bill's public release, House Republican leaders pushed the bill through on a close vote held after midnight. Notably, the bill passed without a majority of members of the 120 member NC House. 58 voted Yes and 50 voted No. Governor Cooper publicly opposes the bill which now heads to the NC Senate for its consideration.

I opposed the bill for two reasons. First, it will lead to higher electricity bills for citizens and businesses. Second, it falls short in reaching clean energy goals that we must meet to address climate change and create clean energy jobs.

We have to get energy policy right. Everyone needs affordable electricity. Climate change is real and causing more economic and environmental damage every year. Clean energy jobs can really help local communities – they cannot be outsourced and the money stays local.

The secret, back-room negotiations by some special interests and a few legislators will not get the job done. It is evident that no policy will become law unless the process becomes more open and fair and the needs of all North Carolinians are addressed, not just the electricity companies.

You might have heard about the shenanigans that went down at the General Assembly last night. In short, Republicans convened session just after midnight to ram their backroom energy bill through its third reading with little regard for the harm this legislation will cause.

It's business as usual – power over people. Again, this bill puts new burdens on ratepayers and harms our environment-- and not a single Democrat was able to weigh in because it was drafted behind closed doors by a small number of Republican members and special interest. After Governor Cooper vetos this bill, let all the stakeholders sit down and come to a mutual position that will benefit all North Carolinians and Duke Energy.

Child Tax Credit

Many families this week are receiving a welcome surprise. The federal American Recovery Plan passed by Democrats in Congress and signed into law by President Biden includes monthly Child Tax Credit payments to tens of millions of families covering around 60 million children.

In 2021, the Child Tax Credit has been expanded from \$2,000 per child to \$3,000 for each child ages 6 to 17 and to \$3,600 for each child under age 6. It will be up to Congress to decide whether to continue the expanded Child Tax Credit beyond 2021.

If you are eligible you may have received a direct deposit or a mailed check may be on its way.

Visit [this website](#) for information on how to check your eligibility, manage payments, and what to do if you did not file an income tax return last year.

CNBC Lists North Carolina As Second Best State for Business

CNBC has ranked North Carolina as the second best state for business in its annual Top States for Business report. North Carolina received high rankings for its strong economy and workforce. However, the state received low rankings for life, health and inclusion which allowed Virginia to jump us in the rankings.

Expanding Medicaid would provide coverage to more than 500,000 North Carolinians, create new jobs and boost our rural hospitals, at no additional cost to taxpayers. It's good for the health of our state and it's good for business.

Additionally, the CNBC article noted that North Carolina lacks an effective statewide nondiscrimination law to protect citizens and workers against discrimination which hurt its ranking.

Read the [full article HERE](#).

PEACE!



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