



# NORTH CAROLINA GROUND WATER ASSOCIATION

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

FEBRUARY 12, 2007



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## INTRODUCTION

We are into the third week of the General Assembly and almost 170 bills have been filed so far. Since there are no committee meetings being held yet, legislators are participating in meetings from the legislative staff regarding the status of the budget, including information on corrections, mental health, and Medicaid. There will be meetings this week on public education and the retirement system. These updates are to give legislators an idea of the issues and problems that they will face in meeting the demands that are requested and the limitations on the money that is available. The House continues to work on establishing their leadership and setting their committees and we expect that those appointments will be made this week. The Senate announced their committees and the chairpersons of those committees as follows:

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Chairman/Co-Chairman</u>
Agriculture/Environmental/Natural Resources	Senator Albertson
Appropriations/Base Budget	Senator Dalton Senator Garrou Senator Hagan
Appropriations Subcommittee on Department of Transportation	Senator Jenkins
Appropriations Subcommittee on Education/Higher Education	Senator Boseman Senator Stevens Senator Swindell
Appropriations on Education/Public Instruction	Senator Lucas Senator Malone Senator Queen
Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government and Information Technology	Senator Cowell Senator Dorsett



Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services	Senator Berger Senator Purcell
Appropriations Subcommittee on Justice and Public Safety	Senator Kinnaird Senator Snow
Appropriations Subcommittee on Natural and Economic Resources	Senator Weinstein
Commerce, Small Business and Entrepreneurship	Senator Soles
Education/Higher Education	Senator Swindell Senator Boseman Senator Stevens
Education/Public Instruction	Senator Lucas Senator Malone Senator Queen
Finance	Senator Clodfelter Senator Hoyle Senator Kerr
Finance Subcommittee on Capital and Infrastructure Financing	Senator Clodfelter
Health Care	Senator Bingham Senator Purcell
Information Technology	Senator Cowell Senator Dorsett
Judiciary I (Civil)	Senator Nesbitt
Judiciary II (Criminal)	Senator Hartsell
Mental Health & Youth Services	Senator Atwater Senator Kinnaird
Pensions, Retirement and Aging	Senator Dalton Senator Garrou Senator Hagan
Rules and Operations of the Senate	Senator Rand

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State and Local Government	Senator East Senator Graham
Transportation	Senator Shaw
Ways and Means	Senator Dannelly

There are several issues that are receiving attention from a variety of legislators. Many similar bills have been filed to generate more funds for counties to build schools, including raising sales taxes or creating local option sales taxes. We expect many more bills to be filed that will create new funding sources while counties struggle to find ways to build the schools needed in their areas. In addition, there are many bills being filed to either limit or prohibit annexation, both on a local basis and statewide.

The House and Senate adjourned last Thursday and will reconvene tonight at 7:00 p.m.

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If you would like a copy of any of the legislation introduced or considered by this year's General Assembly, you may receive one copy of as many bills as you are interested in, free of charge, by calling the General Assembly's Printed Bills office at 919/733-5648. They will need to know if it is a House bill or Senate bill and the bill number. (For example, Senate Bill 8). Copies are also available on the General Assembly's World Wide Web site: <http://www.ncleg.net>.

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**BILLS OF INTEREST**

HOUSE BILL 69, Emissions Inspections Every Two Years, would require the safety and emissions inspections to occur every two years instead of every year. **Introduced by Representative Gulley.**

HOUSE BILL 73, Improve State Construction Process, would streamline the Capital Facilities program by directing the State Building Commission to review the program for measures that would reduce delays and increase accountability in the process. **Introduced by Representatives Owens, Justice, and Michaux.**

HOUSE BILL 82, Resource Conservation and Development Council Funds, would provide \$500,000 to the State's Resource Conservation and Development Councils, which would provide money for start up projects including water quality, waste management, and ecotourism. **Introduced by Representatives Spear, McLawhorn, and E. Warren.**

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HOUSE BILL 99, Taxpayer Cost Recovery, would provide reimbursement of expenses to a taxpayer who wins an administrative appeal or a lawsuit against the Tax Review Board or a court in a dispute regarding tax payments. **Introduced by Representative Blust.**

HOUSE BILL 127, Clean Water Act of 2007, would authorize general obligation bonds, if approved in a voter referendum, to address the statewide critical infrastructure needs by providing funds for grants and loans for wastewater and drinking water projects. The grants would go to clean water projects including public water systems. **Introduced by Representatives Owens, Wainwright, and Daughtridge.**

HOUSE BILL 130, Change School Entrance Age, would require that a child who reaches the age of five on or before June 16<sup>th</sup> be eligible to enroll in public school. Currently, the law provides that a child must reach the age of five on or before October 16<sup>th</sup> to be eligible. **Introduced by Representative Tucker.**

HOUSE BILL 144, Reenact Long-Term Care Tax Credit, would reenact the long-term care insurance tax credit and would increase the credit from 15% to 20% and increase the maximum credit from \$350 to \$500 for each insurance contract for which a credit is claimed. **Introduced by Representative Tarleton.**

HOUSE BILL 146, Three-Fifths Vote to Levy Taxes, would allow a referendum during the November 2008 election to amend the Constitution of North Carolina to require a three-fifths vote of the General Assembly to levy any state taxes. **Introduced by Representative Blust.**

SENATE BILL 92, Dangerous Dogs/Liability Insurance, would require owners of dangerous dogs to acquire liability insurance of at least \$100,000. Failure to obtain the insurance would be a Class 1 misdemeanor. **Introduced by Senator Bingham.**

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