



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF NORTH CAROLINA**

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Legislative Update for June 1, 2009

HB 907 - PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FUND CHANGES - An act to amend the judicial public campaign law by allowing the acceptance of qualifying contributions in the same form as other contributions; by providing that no matching funds will be triggered by communications that support or oppose all candidates; and by making more flexible the word limitations in the Voter's Guide.

Reps. Goodwin; Fisher, Glazier, and Harrison

S-5/19/09-Referred to Judiciary I (made crossover)

HB 908 - ELECTION ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENTS - An Act to provide for equal treatment of political and commercial expression around a voting place; to clarify that seventeen year-olds may register at early voting sites under the same conditions they may register elsewhere; to prohibit the awarding of attorneys' fees against the State Board of Elections in election protest cases; and to complete the burden of proof provisions in the candidate-challenge statute.

Reps. Goodwin; Fisher, Glazier, Harrison, and Insko

Latest Action-S-5/5/09-Re-referred to Judiciary I (made crossover)

HB 1260 - VOTER PREREGISTRATION AND EDUCATION - An Act to provide for preregistration of qualified individuals who are sixteen or seventeen years of age and to expand instruction on the importance of voting in the high school social studies curriculum and to encourage local boards of education to promote registration and preregistration of students.

Reps. Bryant; Cotham; Burr; Burris-Floyd

S-5/19/09-Referred to Education/Higher Education (made crossover)

SB 716 - 2009 OMNIBUS CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAW CHANGES - An Act to amend the campaign finance laws. The provisions of this Article apply to primaries and elections for North Carolina offices and to North Carolina referenda and do not apply to primaries and elections for federal offices or offices in other States or to non-North Carolina referenda.

Rep. Clodfelter

H-5/14/09-Referred to Election Law and Campaign Finance Reform, if favorable, Judiciary I (made crossover)

SB 718 - 2009 OMNIBUS ELECTION LAW CHANGES - An Act to amend the election laws.

A county board of elections may demand and use as a one-stop site under this section any facility that it may demand and use under G.S. 163-129 as an election day voting place except for buildings supported or maintained in whole or in part by or through tax revenues that are utilized primarily for public safety or emergency services purposes. Every individual staffing any of those sites shall be a member or full-time employee of the county board of elections or an

employee of the county board of elections whom the board has given training equivalent to that given a full-time employee.

Rep. Clodfelter

H-5/14/09-Referred to Election Law and Campaign Finance Reform, if favorable, Judiciary I (made crossover)

SB 960 - ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY RE: STIMULUS FUNDS - AN act to ensure accountability in the use of federal stimulus funds by local governments and nonprofit entities.

Reps. Nesbitt; Davis, Preston

S-3/26/09-Referred to Appropriations/Base Budget (Appropriations bills are eligible)

BUDGET UPDATE

The House Appropriations Subcommittees released parts of their budget recommendations this week. The House responds to the \$4.6 billion shortfall with dramatic cuts in basic programs, with Public Education and Health & Human Services being big targets for the largest cuts.

The full Appropriations Committee will most likely have their version of the budget completed on or around June 16th. Once that passes the House, negotiations begin between the House and Senate. Of course, Governor Perdue will have the option to veto.

ACTION NEEDED ON THE NC BUDGET - *from our Coalition partners at Together NC*

Current budget proposals would devastate North Carolina 's economy, communities, and families.

Times are tough right now. The economy is down, unemployment is sky high, and hundreds of thousands of families are struggling. In past recessions, North Carolinians have always looked to state and local governments to provide essential services to families in need, to stabilize the economy and to promote development. Now, however, an unprecedented budget crisis-a budget shortfall of close to \$5 billion next year-threatens state government's ability to provide even the most basic of services.

To address the shortfall, the North Carolina House of Representatives is considering a plan based almost entirely on massive cuts to the budget that would devastate North Carolina 's families and communities. Unlike the Senate, the House does not include new revenues in their plan that would help limit the extent of harmful cuts. Some of the cuts under consideration in the House are:

Deep and damaging cuts to K-12 education including:

- Reduce the school calendar by 5 days in 2009-2010 and 10 days in 2010-2011,
- Dramatically larger class sizes, and
- As many as 10,000 layoffs of teachers, teacher assistants and other vital school personnel.

The complete elimination of a number of basic human services for some of our most vulnerable citizens, including:

- The elimination of basic in-home services to individuals with mental retardation and serious developmental disabilities that keep them from being institutionalized, and
- The elimination of dental care, prescription drugs (and even artificial limbs!) for low-income families and seniors enrolled in the state Medicaid health insurance program.

Dangerous reductions to the criminal justice system, including:

- The closure of multiple prisons in an already dangerously overcrowded system, and
- Huge cuts to sentencing services programs that help monitor criminal offenders and prevent them from falling back into a life of crime.

Together, these cuts will literally set North Carolina back by decades. In many instances, a quarter-century of progress (in education, human services, criminal justice and several other vital areas like the environment, higher education and transportation) could be swept away almost overnight.

Perhaps even worse, according to economists, such a huge and rapid decline in public spending threatens to make the recession even deeper and harder to escape.

So, what do we do? The answer is clear: State lawmakers must find the courage to raise additional revenue.

<http://capwiz.com/ncjustice/issues/alert/?alertid=13416646&queueid=3406513701>

It won't be easy or fun, but ultimately, there are ways to close loopholes and reform our tax system so that we narrow the budget gap while having only a modest impact on the taxes paid by most households and businesses.

What can you do to help?

Time is short. Under the state Constitution, lawmakers need to complete work on the budget by June 30. They need to hear from you today.

Email your legislators and Governor Perdue and tell them to say "NO" to devastating budget cuts and "YES" to a balanced solution for the state budget that enacts smart cuts and raises new revenue. If we pull together, we can get through this budget crisis. Let's get to work!

TOGETHER NC PRESS CONFERENCE

Attend Together NC press conference Tuesday, June 2, 10:30 a.m. outside of the Legislative Building, Jones Street, Raleigh.

- Join Action for Children NC, the Covenant and Together NC at the legislative building and Sound the Alarm on the Budget.
- Attend a local Together NC Town Hall Meeting and make your voice heard.
- Learn more at <http://www.togetherNC.org>

Register for Voter-Owned Election Lobby Day: Tuesday, June 17th at 9:30am at the Legislative Building. Please visit <http://www.ncvce.org/index.php?page=LobbyDay2009> for more information and to register.

For additional information on The League of Women Voters of North Carolina and our policies and partners, please visit www.lwvnc.org.

The Legislative Update is compiled by Erin Connelly, Project Coordinator for the North Carolina League of Women Voters. If you wish to subscribe or unsubscribe, please email Patty Dale at daleph55@gmail.com.

LWV is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.