

# Bill's Seat – A Report from the North Carolina Legislature – April 10, 2011

By Representative Bill Faison

The Legislature continues voting on new legislation while committees have hearings on new bills. 30 new laws, law changes or resolutions were passed last week. In addition, 286 new bills and resolutions were introduced, and of those I sponsored 11.

**Education; Choosing Charter Schools over Public Schools:** The new Repubs came in on a platform of more jobs, less taxes and less government. I have not seen a bill to promote jobs. They have passed a bill that actually increases your State taxes for 2011, and so far the amount of government remains the same. Now they have gone after education.

A Repub bill was introduced to dramatically increase the number of charter schools. It would add up to 50 new charter schools a year. There are two very clear concerns about increasing the number of charter schools. First, each charter school takes money away from public schools. The education money follows the student. The charters get the same money per student but do not have to provide transportation beyond three miles or food service, both of which are provided by public schools. Second is a concern more charters will lead to segregated schools. The Repubs passed the bill although every educational group in the State opposed the bill. I voted against the bill.

**Protecting Your Health:** Your health and that of your family is important. Healthcare providers should be folks you can trust. Two bills to help protect you and your family passed the house. I sponsored a bill to keep sex offenders from becoming EMS personnel. A bill originated in the Senate to increase penalties for fake doctors who treat people. A well known case of a fake doctor occurred in a Fayetteville ER and another at Chapel Hill. I voted for both.

**An Attempt to Cut Your Worker's Compensation Benefits:** Employers are required to provide almost no benefits to employees. Worker's compensation insurance provides minimal worker's benefits. If you are hurt on the job, then you are entitled to medical benefits and some lost wage benefits. If you are permanently disabled then you may be due some additional payment. The N.C. Chamber of Commerce wants to cut your worker's compensation benefits. Last week they paid an insurance company consultant who makes over \$470,000 a year to fly from

Massachusetts and testify. He provided a glossy printout of his research. I reviewed his research. It showed that N.C. businesses pay only average worker's compensation insurance premiums for which N.C. workers receive above average payouts of benefits. He admitted this when I questioned him. So where is the problem? The bill has now been filed.

**See the Bills and Contact Me:** You can see the bills discussed here by going to [www.ncleg.net](http://www.ncleg.net) and using the "Find Bills by Number" tool. The bills are S8, H59, S31 and H709. I would really like to know what you think. Please contact me at [Bill.Faison@ncleg.net](mailto:Bill.Faison@ncleg.net) to share your thoughts.