

Bill's Seat – A Report from the North Carolina Legislature - April 26, 2009

By Representative Bill Faison

This past week I met with the Orange County Commissioners. They asked for the meeting to review their Legislative Agenda. I took the opportunity to talk with them about the property revaluation.

The Orange County Commissioners Reevaluate Property: We are in the midst of the worst recession since the Great Depression. General Motors and Chrysler are on the verge of bankruptcy. Stocks have lost so much value that some people started referring to their 401K retirement account as a 201K account. As stock values continued to fall, these same people started calling it their 101K account. For many people in our county their home and land is their biggest investment and an important part of their retirement plans. Very little property is being sold and things are certainly not worth what they once were. People are worried about their jobs, their retirement and their future. In the midst of this crisis the Commissioners have caused property to be re-evaluated up, and not just a little up. Many people have seen tax valuations go up dramatically, while at the same time the real estate market has bottomed out.

Citizens Organize Meetings to Protest the Tax Increase: People are hurting. This re-evaluation added both an insult and an injury to the burden our people were already carrying. We have the highest tax rate for the surrounding five (5) counties without any better services. People in our county organized tax protests. Some of the people asked me to talk to the County Commissioners about the problem and I did.

I Asked the Commissioners to Roll Back the Tax Re-Evaluation: I looked them in the eye and respectfully asked them to relieve our folks' burden and roll back the tax re-evaluation. However the commissioners present (two were missing) did not seem at all interested. They said their lawyer advised that they could not. I pointed out that three other counties had rolled back the re-evaluations to help their folks. They were not interested.

If the Law is the Problem, Let's Fix It: I have sponsored a bill authorizing the County Commissioners to rescind the re-evaluation (H 1530). The bill was introduced last week and has been referred to the Local Government II Committee. If you support rescinding the re-evaluation you may want to email Speaker Hackney at Joe.Hackney@ncleg.net and Representative Insko at Verla.Insko@ncleg.net. I represent 75% of the land area of Orange County which is all of the northern part of the County and the more rural part of the County north of Highway 54. Representative Insko represents most of Chapel Hill and Carrboro. Speaker Hackney has part of Carrboro and White Cross.

See the Bill and Contact Me: You can see the bill discussed here by going to www.ncleg.net and using the "Find Bills by Number" tool. The bill is H1530. I would really like to know what you think. Please contact me at Bill.Faison@ncleg.net to share your thoughts.