

Bill's Seat – A Report from the North Carolina Legislature - April 3, 2011

By Representative Bill Faison

The Legislature continues voting on new legislation while committees have hearings on new bills. 29 new laws, law changes or resolutions were passed last week. In addition, 113 new bills and resolutions were introduced, and of those I sponsored 12.

Expanding Concealed Carry of Handguns to Little League Games and Restaurant Bars: Over 366,000 North Carolinians have a permit to carry a concealed handgun. Twice as many Floridians have concealed carry permits. Moreover N.C. has concealed carry reciprocal agreements with all of the states in the South/Southeast except Maryland (Al, Ar, Fl, Ga, Ky, La, Ms, SC, Tn, Tx, Va, WV, in addition to 18 states outside of the South/Southeast) so that our concealed carry permits are valid in those states and theirs in N.C. Very few folks with concealed carry permits have lost their license for any reason.

N.C. law does not allow concealed hand guns in State and Municipal parks including places where little league games are played, and in places where alcohol is sold, like bars. A group of Repub Legislators have led the charge to change this. They have gotten a bill through the House to permit concealed handguns in State and Municipal parks even where little league games are played, and in restaurant bars. I support concealed carry for personal protection but I think this is going too far and creates more problems than it solves. I voted against the change.

State Health Plan: State teachers, workers and retirees depend on the State Health Plan to provide medical insurance coverage. Part of the reasons folks take State jobs are the benefits which include the State Health Plan both while they work and after they retire. Up until now folks have NOT been required to contribute to the cost of the plan for their individual coverage, although they have always had the option of purchasing family coverage. The Repubs in the House have just passed a bill to raise the co-pay, raise the deductible and require teachers, workers and retirees pay part of the costs of their health insurance. This will add almost \$2,000 a year to the costs of health care for a family of four. This is the same thing as cutting their compensation package by almost \$2,000 at a time when there is no money for raises. This is not right. I voted against the bill as did all Democrats.

Proposal to Ban License Checks: One of the Repubs has introduced a bill to ban police/sheriffs from setting up license check stations. These stations help protect us and our families from unlicensed and impaired drivers. This bill is going nowhere.

See the Bills and Contact Me: You can see the bills discussed here by going to www.ncleg.net and using the “Find Bills by Number” tool. The bills are H111, S265, and H375. I would really like to know what you think. Please contact me at Bill.Faison@ncleg.net to share your thoughts.