

Bill's Seat – A Report from the North Carolina Legislature -

By Representative Bill Faison

Last week the House focused on fixing problems at the SBI Lab, and eliminating unnecessary tests required by the State Board of Education. Additionally, many new bills were introduced. We made progress on legislation while the House Republicans dealt with a scandal they created by meeting in secret with lobbyist for the gambling industry.

A Reliable SBI Lab: We all deserve to be safe within our community. The Sheriff's office catches criminals. The District Attorney's Office prosecutes criminals. Both rely on the SBI Lab to help them do their job. Recently the work of the SBI Lab came into question. It was discovered that the Lab was not always making true reports. A Special Bi-Partisan Legislative Study Committee investigated the failings of the SBI Lab and came up with a plan to fix the problems. Last week the plan was presented to the House. I voted for the plan and it passed.

Most Standardized Test Ended: The State Board of Education has been requiring many more tests than required by the Federal Government. The idea behind the tests is good. It is to test course knowledge and compare kids in different schools. The only problem, it does not work. Teachers find themselves teaching kids to take the test rather than teaching course knowledge. Ultimately, the test measures only how well the child has learned to take the test. It is like teaching a child to memorize Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, testing the child's ability to repeat the Address, and if the child is successful concluding that the child knows American history from 1850-1865. These tests interfere with the child's education. I sponsored a bill to eliminate most end of grade test. Last week the bill came before the House and passed.

Republicans Hold Secret Meeting with Gambling Lobbyist: Last week the Republican majority met behind closed doors with gambling industry lobbyists. The press and public were excluded from the meeting. A newly elected Republican House Member who had gambling machines in his Sanford business is said to have chaired the meeting. This secret meeting was widely criticized as the wrong way to run government.

High Speed Internet: I sponsored two bills last week to help advance High Speed Internet. I introduced a bill to prolong the work of E-NC, an organization housed in the Rural Center that works to spread high speed

internet in rural areas. Additionally, I sponsored a bill giving counties the same legal authority to offer internet services as cities. This should help you by allowing the counties to do what private providers might choose not to do, give you high speed internet.

See the Bill 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 H27, H48, H91, and H101. I would really like to know what you think. Please contact me at Bill.Faison@ncleg.net to share your thoughts.