

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

By Representative Bill Faison

Last week I sponsored a number of bills.

Cancer Prevention: Many good folks in our community work very hard to raise money for cancer research and treatment. Many work through Relay for Life. I personally support their efforts. Additionally, this past week I sponsored legislation to allow anyone due a State income tax refund to designate any portion go to the Cancer Prevention and Control Branch of the Division of Public Health for breast and cervical cancer detection.

State Tax Deductions on the Chopping Block: These are really tough times. Too many people are out of work. Almost everyone has to be very careful with their money and wisely use all they have. Federal and State tax deductions are very important and save money. Last week a bill came before the Finance Committee to take away approximately \$400 million in State tax deductions from people in our community and across our state. All of the Republicans and some of the Democrats voted for the bill as a way of dealing with the budget deficit. I think we need to find another way. You deserve all of the tax breaks you are due from both the Federal and State governments. I voted to protect your tax deductions.

Republicans Hold More Secret Meetings with Lobbyist and Others: Last week it came out that Republican legislators had another secret meeting with Insurance Executives, company lobbyist and others trying to rewrite laws to take away protections you now have. This news came on the heels of their secret meeting with gambling promoters but did not draw the same statewide press coverage. Secret strategy meetings with wealthy corporate powers trying to take away private citizen's rights are just plain wrong and no way to run government. The press and public should have full access to all such meetings and the ability to report and expose what goes on.

Education: The local school boards in our District have asked me to support legislation giving them control over the school calendar so they can set the dates when school starts and ends. Their ability to do this was taken away a number of years ago as a way to be sure kids are available to work in the tourist industry all summer and to travel with their families. This has certainly benefited some kids and businesses. However it has been a problem for local school boards trying to meet children's educational needs.

I have voted for similar bills in the past but the legislation was blocked by the Senate. I have again sponsored legislation to give local control back to our school boards.

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 H160, H124, and H175. I would really like to know what you think. Please contact me at Bill.Faison@ncleg.net to share your thoughts.