

Bill's Seat – A Report from the North Carolina Legislature - July 11, 2010

By Representative Bill Faison

The Legislature adjourned Saturday morning at 5:33 a.m. after an all night Session. For reasons I have never understood, the last day of the Legislature is frequently an “all nighter”. The Legislature worked late into the evening several days last week and still had more to do. We took a break Friday night about 10:30 p.m. and came back into Session just after midnight Saturday morning to finish work on the bills to be considered this Session. The next Session of the Legislature opens noon Wednesday, January 26, 2011.

Jobs: Promoting more and better jobs has been a focus of this Legislative Session. The State has the highest unemployment rates since the Great Depression. One way to promote jobs is through economic incentives. The idea is to encourage job creation through the State's tax policy. If businesses will do things that create new jobs then they may get some tax breaks. Moreover, the Department of Commerce is very active both recruiting companies to bring new jobs to the State and encouraging existing companies to expand and hire. A bill intended to keep N.C. competitive with other states for corporate relocation came up. I voted for the bill and it passed.

Internet cafés providing access to sweepstakes prizes also provide approximately 10,000 jobs in the State including jobs in our District. Some folks strongly oppose this as a form of gambling. Others say that how people chose to spend their money is up to them. The industry asked the Legislature to regulate and tax which could lead to just as much money for education as the Lottery. The opponents wanted an all out ban. The bill to ban came to the floor for a vote. There was an effort to send the bill back to committee which would have avoided the ban and saved the jobs. This motion failed by 5 votes. The bill then came on for a vote and passed.

Seniors: Taking care of our seniors is important. Retirement communities have realized that many people want to stay in their homes while enjoying some of the benefits provided by retirement communities. I voted for and the

House passed a bill permitting continuing care retirement communities to arrange for home care services without providing lodging.

Protecting our Community: DNA is a valuable tool for finding the guilty and freeing the innocent. The House passed a bill allowing law enforcement to collect DNA from people who are arrested. The DNA information will help identify someone who commits a crime and it will help avoid convicting an innocent person for a crime they could not have committed.

See the Bills 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 bills are S1171, H80, S354 and H1403. I would really like to know what you think. Please contact me at Bill.Faison@ncleg.net to share your thoughts.