

# Bill's Seat – A Report from the North Carolina Legislature - July 5, 2009

By Representative Bill Faison

We still do not have an agreement with the Senate for a Budget. The Senate tax package is just too big and hurts too many people. Moreover, the Senate Budget proposal is also too big. It spends money we do not have and cannot get without raising even more taxes. The Budget passed by the House gets the job done. The Senate should adopt that Budget and we should adjourn the Legislature. The Appropriations Chairs for the House and Senate continue negotiating. Meanwhile, other work goes forward.

**High Speed Broadband Internet Access.** Most of our District does not have access to high speed internet. We have some in Hillsborough, Yanceyville, Efland, Prospect Hill and few other places. But most people do not have access.

**We Need Broadband Access For All:** Our children need access for school work and our adults need access for business and personal use. The Obama Administration recognizes the need for universal broadband access and has set a goal of having broadband to everyone in the U.S.A. by 2014.

**Efforts To Get Broadband For People In Our District:** I am working to get us more and better access. This past year I chaired the House Study Committee on Rural High Speed Internet Access and I currently chair the House Ways & Means // Broadband Access Committee and serve on the Stimulus Oversight Committee. One of the things I learned was that no one had a map showing where broadband is and where it is not. Knowing the answer to the question of where it is and is not is the first step to understanding how widespread the problem is, and beginning to come up with ways to get more broadband to more people. Through pressing legislation that would get us a map, the providers finally agreed to voluntarily provide us with a map, to put it on the internet for everyone to use, and to make it interactive.

**Hard Work Pays Off:** This Thursday we will hold a press conference announcing the Map going live on the internet. You can see how close broadband is to you and how it is distributed across the State.

**The Map Helps Us Get More Stimulus Money For North Carolina:** The timing of our Map is ideal. The Obama Administration requires a current map of where broadband is and is not as a condition for broadband Stimulus money, of which there is about \$7.4 billion. Only about five other states have a map like ours. This gives us a huge advantage when we try to get Stimulus money for broadband projects in our State. Because our District is one of those with very little broadband, we stand to get a greater advantage than others from the Map.

**I Want to Know What You Think.** There is a lot going on right now. I want you to feel free to contact me at [Bill.Faison@ncleg.net](mailto:Bill.Faison@ncleg.net) to share your thoughts.