

Bill's Seat – A Report from the North Carolina Legislature – June 5, 2011

By Representative Bill Faison

The Budget passed shortly after midnight this past Friday. 5 Democrats joined with the Republicans to pass a veto proof Budget. I voted against the Budget because it failed to do enough for education, it cut too many jobs, and it raised \$100 million in new taxes.

Education: The Budget cuts \$924 million out of public education. K-12 is cut by 5.8%. Community Colleges are cut by 10.7%. Our University system is cut by 12%. Average teacher salaries are cut. Dropout prevention is massively cut. School secretaries, janitors, substitute teachers among others are cut by more than \$59 million (15%). Guidance counselors, social workers and media specialists are cut by more than \$22 million. Moreover, important items are cut as follows: textbooks over \$92 million, instructional supplies over \$41 million, mentoring over \$9 million, school technology by \$10 million, Moore-at-Four by over \$81 million, Teacher Academy over \$4.7 million, and the Center for Advancement of Teaching \$3 million. State aid for community colleges is cut by over \$50 million, Health Sciences classes cut over \$16 million and technical education over \$5 million while tuition and fees are increased. I support our kids, education and our teachers. This Budget hurts our kids, their education and our teachers.

Jobs: Approximately 15,000 people will lose their job in this Budget. None of them had to lose a job. We have the ability to keep them employed. A temporary one cent sales tax expires at the end of June. The painless power of that penny keeps our friends and neighbors employed. I have talked with folks all across our District who tell me that they don't notice the penny and that they think it is better to keep folks employed. Moreover, they think the sales tax is the best tax because they decide whether to pay it or not, and everyone helps pay the tax. The Republican leadership said they would cut out the sales tax and no matter how many people get hurt, that is exactly what they are doing.

Taxes: The Republican leadership came in pledging not to raise taxes. Almost immediately they broke their promise by denying North Carolinians the full State benefit of the congressional tax cuts, imposing an additional \$440 million in taxes on us for 2011. They followed this with \$100 million in new fees (just another form of State taxes). They could have kept their promise, not created millions of dollars in new taxes, continued the one cent

sales tax and kept 15,000 people employed. Some things do not make sense to me. This is one of them. I believe in saving jobs, not cutting them. I voted against this Budget.

Contact Me: You can see the bill discussed here by going to www.ncleg.net and using the “Find Bills by Number” tool. The bill is H200. I would really like to know what you think. Please contact me at Bill.Faison@ncleg.net to share your thoughts.