

# Bill's Seat – A Report from the North Carolina Legislature - March 13, 2011

## By Representative Bill Faison

The Legislature is voting on new proposed legislation while committees have hearings on new bills. Nineteen laws, law changes or resolutions were passed last week. In addition, eighty-four new bills and resolutions were introduced.

**Community College Education:** Community Colleges are helping so many folks train for new jobs. The Welding Program at Piedmont Community College in Yanceyville and the Fire Academy Program at Durham Tech in Hillsborough are examples of practical programs to help folks train for new jobs. Funding education is a problem faced by many folks wanting more education. We need access to educational loan programs. A House Repub from Alamance introduced a bill to allow the Trustees of a community college to deprive students access to the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program. The reason given was fear of defaults jeopardizing other loan programs. The problem with the argument, N.C.'s default rate is so low that no programs are in jeopardy. Only two programs nationwide have ever had enough defaults to activate the penalty and both are beauty colleges. I think this is a bad idea and voted against it. The bill passed.

**More Tax Deductions on the Chopping Block:** Taking away tax deductions and passing new taxes have the same effect. You pay more taxes. The Repub majority in the House passed a bill depriving folks of approximately \$440 million in State tax deductions in 2011. Last week they began moving through the House a bill aimed at taking from the poorest folks Earned Income Tax Credits worth approximately \$52 million. The two bills impose almost \$500 million in additional taxes on North Carolinians over the next year. I am fighting both bills.

**Home Tax:** The Orange County Commissioners put a referendum on the ballot to impose a tax on folks when they sell their homes. The voters resoundingly defeated the referendum. I voted to repeal this tax option, and the House passed the repeal.

**Keeping the Costs of Your Car Insurance Down:** Have you been to traffic court lately? It seems like hundreds of people show up to deal with driving too fast. In addition to fines and costs, you may have to pay insurance premium increases even if your driving record has been good for

the past three years. I sponsored a bill trying and help out folks who have good driving records. It says that if you have a clean record for at least three years and your speeding ticket is not more than 15 mph over, then your insurance premium cannot go up. Folks need all the help they can get. I am trying to help.

**See the Bills and Contact Me:** You can see the bills discussed here by going to [www.ncleg.net](http://www.ncleg.net) and using the “Find Bills by Number” tool. The bills are H7, H93, H92 and H232. I would really like to know what you think. Please contact me at [Bill.Faison@ncleg.net](mailto:Bill.Faison@ncleg.net) to share your thoughts.