

Bill's Seat – A Report from the North Carolina Legislature - May 17, 2009

By Representative Bill Faison

Crossover was this past week. Bills that did not pass the House by the end of business on last Thursday (other than bills that spend or raise money) were dead for the 2009-2010 Session. There is always a big push the week of crossover. We considered 228 bills. There was very little debate on local bills and non-controversial statewide bills. However, some statewide bills did draw both debate and amendments. We worked long days and late into the night, with only a brief breaks for dinner, until we got the work done.

Education: The School Boards of both Caswell and Orange Counties asked that control of the school calendar be returned to them. They wanted the ability to coordinate local school calendars to the community college calendar for high school kids taking community college courses, and to coordinate winter graduation with the state university semester system for early graduates. A statewide bill to do this survived the committee process. I voted for the bill and it passed the House.

The Caswell School Board asked that kids be relieved of the Graduation Project. The Orange County School Board did not take an official position but indicated a general disenchantment with the project. The belief is that the Graduation Project takes a lot of time without providing much benefit. I sponsored, voted for and the House passed a bill eliminating this project.

The Orange County School Board asked that both Orange High and Cedar Ridge High be designated Technology High Schools. The purpose of the designation is to help the Board in its efforts to raise private funds to make advanced technology available to the students. I introduced the legislation; got it through the committee system and it passed the House and has moved to the Senate.

Health: Community cancer assistance and awareness is important. I sponsored, voted for and the House passed a bill providing breast cancer patients assistance in identifying and gaining access to available health care, financial and legal assistance, transportation, and psychological support. I

also sponsored, voted for and the House passed a bill designating June “Cancer Awareness Month”. Being aware and vigilant about cancer can lead to early detection and treatment, which can lead to a better outcome.

Child Safety: I sponsored, voted for and the House passed a bill intended to prevent young children, less than nine years old, from being left alone in a car, or left in a car without someone at least fourteen or older to look after them. It is just not safe for very young children to be alone in a car without supervision.

See the Bills 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 H593, H223, H757, H1020, H1251 and H827. I would really like to know what you think. Please contact me at Bill.Faison@ncleg.net to share your thoughts.