



Representative W. David Guice
North Carolina House of Representatives
District 113



Legislative Update Twenty
August 2, 2009

Brevard, North Carolina – Greetings from Raleigh! There are many things happening as we try to wrap up this long and interesting session. I want to update you on several issues of interest this week.

We continue to hear that a budget compromise has been reached and that it will be presented on the floor of the House this week for discussion and debate. As the leadership continues to leave all Republicans and many Democrats out of the process I cannot give you any further information. I do want to renew my pledge to you that I will not support a budget that includes tax increases and unnecessary cuts to programs that work for the people of North Carolina. I will provide more information this week to you as it becomes available during the week.

Senate Bill 920 passed the North Carolina House this week and was presented to Governor Perdue for her signature. This legislation seeks to reform the North Carolina probation system to allow probation officers more tools to work with offenders. Some of the reforms include: allowing probation officers to view the juvenile records of certain offenders and the legislation makes warrantless searches and drug screening regular conditions of supervised probation. In addition, if a law enforcement officer has reasonable suspicion the offender's vehicle can also be searched. I am hopeful that these reforms will help give our officers in the field the necessary tools to do their jobs safer and more effectively as they work each day to ensure that the people of North Carolina are safe. This bill was extremely important to me as I am a retired veteran of the North Carolina Department of Correction with over 30 years of experience. Senate Bill 920 received bipartisan support and I am proud to say that I supported this legislation and worked hard to see it pass the North Carolina House.

As a former Chairman of the SAFE Board of Directors, a domestic violence shelter in Transylvania County and as a retired member of the North Carolina criminal justice system I am proud to say that Senate Bill 1062 has passed the House and Senate and now awaits Governor Perdue's signature. This legislation strengthens domestic violence protection orders to provide for the protection of pets. In many domestic violence cases the abuser will threaten violence on a family pet in order to gain control over the victim. Often times, the abuser will follow through with this violence toward the pet, even to the extent of killing the animal. The law does in fact protect the pets of domestic violence victims, but it also protects the people involved. I believe that anytime we can strengthen our laws to protect those involved with a domestic violence situation we should do that. I am proud to say that I supported this legislation and spoke about it on the floor of the House.

In an effort to make it easier for law enforcement officers to identify vehicles, House Bill 67 passed both the House and Senate and has now been sent to Governor Perdue for her signature. This legislation states that the state name, year sticker or month sticker on a license plate may not be covered or obstructed by a license plate frame. This law, once signed by the Governor, will become effective on December 1, 2009. Between December 1, 2009 and November 30, 2010 drivers violating this law will receive a warning only. After December 1, 2010 drivers can be subject to a Class 2 misdemeanor for continuing to cover or obstruct the vital information displayed on a license plate. I understand how important it is to have all of the information possible

available to you as a law enforcement officer and so I think it is a good thing that this legislation has passed the General Assembly.

You know that I believe strongly in ethics and transparency in government. I am proud to report that House Bill 1452 has passed the North Carolina House and the North Carolina Senate. It now heads to Governor Perdue's desk for her signature. This legislation requires all local government entities, to include county commissions and local school boards, to develop ethics policies for their governing boards. In addition, the governing boards must participate in educational training regarding ethics for local governments and local government officials. I believe this is extremely important as we work to reduce the corruption in government. This must take place at all levels of government, to include the local level.

Thank you once again for giving me this opportunity to represent you in Raleigh. Together we can make a difference in the future of North Carolina, but I need your help. Please keep the questions, comments, concerns and observations coming my way. It is always great to hear and receive your input and feedback on the many issues facing North Carolina. I continue to update my website and I ask that you continue to visit www.davidguice.com as I try to give you as much information as possible about the happenings of the North Carolina General Assembly. By having this dialogue we can reach common solutions to the common problems we face each day. My goal is to always be a voice, not simply a vote, for you in Raleigh. Remember if you are in Raleigh please stop by the office for a visit.

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Legislative Update Twenty-One
August 9, 2009

Brevard, North Carolina – Greetings from Raleigh! This past week was certainly busy as we wrapped up budget discussions and other pieces of legislation for the year. We are nearing the end of our session and plan to finish things up this week. I want to take this opportunity to talk with you about the budget and other issues that will impact you directly in District 113.

The Conference Committee report on Senate Bill 202, the Appropriations Act of 2009, was presented this past week on the floor of the North Carolina House of Representatives. As I have stated before the entire process for writing the North Carolina budget is flawed. Everyone is not allowed at the table for these discussions, every voice is not heard, thorough debate on the tough and important issues facing our state is not allowed and priorities for spending are not established. I believe that we must find a better way to conduct business in Raleigh. I am proud to report to you, the citizens of District 113, that I stood and spoke in opposition to this legislation on Wednesday, August 5. Below is an excerpt of what I said on the floor of the House. For the complete remarks and audio clip please visit my website, www.davidguice.com.

One thing that I have learned during my time in the North Carolina General Assembly is that there is a tremendous and deep disconnect between what takes place in this building and what is happening on the main streets of North Carolina. I know that many of us agree that small businesses are the strong foundation of our statewide economy, so I would like to use an example of a small business in my home district to illustrate a point. A small business owner recently told me that his business has dropped off 61% over the last two years. As part of this budget proposal it has been recommended that corporate income taxes be raised. I would like someone to explain to me how that is going to help stimulate his business and small businesses like his all across North Carolina. How is that going to help our struggling economy and our people who are struggling daily to make ends meet? By the way, the people of North Carolina are not stupid. They understand that a surcharge is a tax increase. So, let's call it what it is.

It is not just small business owners who have shared their thoughts and concerns with me. I have heard from teachers, school board and county government officials, leaders of municipalities, those that are unemployed and those that are currently employed but afraid they will soon lose their jobs – truly everyone from all walks of life. They are letting me know how they are hurting, how frustrated they are with the lack of progress to address these issues and how they truly see no light at the end of the tunnel. In fact, just today I heard from a clergyman in my district who told me that he has observed a decrease in building permits, a local business has gone through another round of layoffs and people are genuinely fearful for the future. He also mentioned how requests for food and other assistance have increased at his church.

It is imperative that we give a better effort and listen more to the people of our great state. As long as I am a member of this legislative body and as long as there is breath left in me I will fight for a more inclusive and transparent budget process. I will fight for a process that truly defines priorities and then establishes needs based on those priorities. I am determined to ensure that no matter how loud the noise may get within these walls, it never drowns out the voice of the people.

There are many aspects of this budget that cause me great pause. I want to share just a few of those with you this week and I encourage you to do your own research, get involved and take a stand against these out of control policies. This budget legislation requires local school systems to cut nearly \$225 million out of their budgets next year. These cuts will come in the form of discretionary cuts and must be made by the local school systems, as they were given no guidance from budget writers in Raleigh. Some will say this decision was made in the spirit of local control, when in fact it was a decision made to pass the buck to local school systems and take the heat off of members of the General Assembly and Governor Perdue. I am disappointed that the General Assembly leadership did not truly set priorities for education and work to move our schools further into the future.

Several actions included in this budget negatively impact county governments. For example, the corporate income tax that has historically been dedicated to school construction (also known as the ADM fund) has been taken away for the next two years. This equates to approximately \$125 million. Also, counties will face, on a permanent basis, the loss of the \$18 per day reimbursement for housing misdemeanor inmates. This cut to county governments equals around \$10 million annually. In 2010, the state will take around two-thirds of all counties' beer and wine revenues, which equals approximately \$7.7 million. This list of budgetary reductions and hits around the state truly goes on and on.

As I am sure you have heard there are tax increases built into this budget. The leadership of the General Assembly refers to these increases as surcharges, but I think we all know what they truly are – tax increases on the working families of North Carolina. For a single individual making between \$60,000 and \$150,000 annually there will be a 2% income tax increase and a 3% increase for those making over \$150,000 per year. In the case of those individuals that are married and file their income taxes jointly there is now a 2% increase for those that make between \$100,000 and \$250,000 per year and a 3% increase for those making over \$250,000 annually. Additionally, the statewide sales tax has been increased by one penny which equates to a 20% increase in the sales tax. The corporate income tax rate has been increased by 3%. While tax increases do generate revenue, I believe that we can all agree they do not stimulate growth and expansion during tough economic times. I do not believe that kicking the people of North Carolina while they are down will help the problem.

I have just given you some snapshots of the budget just passed by the North Carolina General Assembly and signed by Governor Perdue. As I said earlier, I strongly encourage you to do your own research, truly learn how this budget will impact your daily lives and get involved in making a difference. I am humbled to be your representative, truly your voice, in Raleigh. I know that by working together we can make a difference for the future of North Carolina. I am still planning to hold town hall meetings throughout the district once the session concludes so please continue to look for those announcements through your local media outlets and on my website. Your input is always appreciated so please keep your questions, comments and thoughts coming.

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District 113



Legislative Update Twenty-Two
August 16, 2009

Brevard, North Carolina – Greetings from Raleigh! The 2009 session of the North Carolina General Assembly has officially come to a close. The Senate adjourned prior to the House, but we finished up our work on Tuesday of this past week. As I have said many times before, this has certainly been an interesting experience and I am honored to be given this amazing responsibility to represent you, the people, of District 113.

This session we worked to deal with a major budget shortfall, while trying to preserve important programs and services. While a finalized budget did pass the General Assembly, we still face extraordinary issues in North Carolina. We must continue to strengthen our schools, support law enforcement and public safety, lift up small businesses and reduce the overall size of state government. It is within our grasp to make positive and lasting changes for all people throughout North Carolina. These positive changes must be made by working together to reduce inefficiencies in state government and ensure that our government once again works for the people. These are not Republican and Democrat issues; these are truly issues that impact all people throughout our great state.

I know that we have great work ahead of us and it will certainly be challenging; however, I am encouraged by the positive feedback I continue to receive from citizens throughout District 113 and all across North Carolina. We have an opportunity to truly make that positive difference in our region and state. I want to hear from you. I believe that many elected officials fail their constituents by not listening. In the coming weeks and months I plan to hold town hall meetings in each county throughout District 113 and work to reach every corner of our district so that I can listen to your concerns and your feedback. I will post these concerns and this feedback on my website, www.davidguice.com, and keep everyone throughout the district in the loop through these weekly updates. Additionally, in the near future you will be able to visit my website and post questions or comments about issues facing us throughout North Carolina. We are truly in this together and when we realize that, our possibilities are limitless.

I am humbled to be your representative, truly your voice, in Raleigh. I know that by working together we can make a difference for the future of North Carolina. Next week I will have the dates, times and locations available for my first round of town hall meetings throughout the district. Your input is always appreciated so please keep your questions, comments and thoughts coming.

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Legislative Update Twenty-Three
August 23, 2009

Brevard, North Carolina – Greetings from Brevard! Yes, that is right. I am back in Brevard and District 113 as the North Carolina General Assembly has officially wrapped up the session for the year. We will not officially reconvene until May of 2010. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time in Raleigh; however, it is great to be back home in the district so that I can talk with people, get even more of your input on these important issues, listen to your thoughts and take care of a few things around the house. I want to update you this week on what has been going on since session ended.

During the earlier portion of last week I participated with many of my colleagues in the Southern Legislative Conference, which took place in Winston-Salem. This was a great opportunity to join with members of state delegations from throughout the south and talk about the important issues facing us, not only in North Carolina but throughout the country. There were two key things I learned after talking with fellow legislators from other states. First, our problems here in North Carolina are definitely not uncommon. The problems that unite us are far greater than those problems which divide us. Additionally, it is very clear to me that we have great work ahead of us in North Carolina. We have great opportunities before us to truly make a difference for the people of our great state, but we must be willing to act and act boldly to accomplish these things.

I have been able to make it around to most of the district since returning home last week. I enjoy getting out around the three counties and talking with friends, community leaders and all of those that work each day to make our area so great. It is my goal to get out and talk with you – the citizens of District 113 as much as possible in the coming days, weeks and months. It is going to take communication and a willingness to work together if we are ever going to move North Carolina forward as we move into the future. I know that some of you might be wondering when I will be holding my town halls. They are coming up soon. I'm still trying to finalize the best dates, times and locations in each county. As soon as that information is available I will pass it along to you.

Each day when I speak to someone from the district or from around the state I am reminded of how important the tasks ahead of us are and how truly important this work is to our future. We owe it to the future generations of North Carolinians to give everything we do our best efforts. I know that so many of you are on this journey with me and we must work hard to grow the number of people working to that end. Only by working together can we truly make that lasting difference. Please keep your input, your feedback, your questions and concerns coming my way. Now that I am back home I look forward to running into a lot of you while I am out and about around the district. Also, please continue to visit my website, www.davidguice.com, for regular updates.

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Legislative Update Twenty-Four
August 30, 2009

Brevard, North Carolina – Greetings from Brevard! I have remained very busy since the legislative session concluded. It is my plan to stay busy over the coming days, weeks and months listening and talking with you, the people, of District 113. There are still many important issues facing us on a daily basis and I want to make sure that we are talking and communicating as much as possible to reach resolutions on these issues.

We have just finished one of the most difficult legislative sessions in recent history. Our state, like many others nationwide, faced drastic budget shortfalls and the need to take bold steps to secure the future of North Carolina. Those bold steps were not taken and opportunities to make a lasting difference in the lives of the people of North Carolina were missed. The current legislative agenda does not strengthen the future for our children, our grandchildren and all of those that will come after us. Countless students do not graduate from high school, unemployment rates remain high, government operates inefficiently and throughout many corners of our great state there is a sense of darkness and despair. My friends, despite this darkness and despair there is great hope on the horizon and this hope can be found in the people of North Carolina. Each of us has the opportunity to change the course of history. We can do better – we must do better. We can no longer be satisfied with the status quo. In order to secure a bright future for all North Carolinians there must be less talk and more action coupled with a more sincere effort to listen. Indeed, bold actions are required because the people of North Carolina deserve better.

In this spirit I want to let you know about the first of several town hall meetings that I will be conducting throughout the district over the coming weeks. On Tuesday, September 8, 2009 in the Rogow Room of the Transylvania County Public Library I will kick off my series of district-wide meetings. The evening will begin at 7pm and light refreshments will be served. It is my goal that this meeting will be an opportunity for us to have an open and honest conversation about the issues facing our county, our district and our state. I plan to give you an update on the budget process, key pieces of legislation that passed this year and there will be plenty of time for questions and answers.

It is imperative that we set priorities throughout the legislative process, fight for the people of North Carolina in all that we do and truly find a new way to conduct business in Raleigh. Our government must become more responsive and responsible to all people in every corner of North Carolina. We must create and sustain an environment that is friendly to job creation and expansion. In order to bring new jobs to North Carolina and support those companies already in place we must once and for all have meaningful education reform, tackle our cumbersome tax system, end the cycle of poverty that grips and plagues so many throughout our state and eliminate government waste. In addition, we must all be willing to work harder than anyone else to attract these jobs to North Carolina. For at the end of the day – the people of North Carolina deserve better from their government.

As long as there is breathe left in me I will fight for a legislative process that is more inclusive and puts the needs of our people first. I cannot do this alone – I need your help. I need your feedback, your time and your talents. In order for us to truly secure a brighter and stronger future for all people throughout North Carolina we must work together to that end.

We owe it to the future generations of North Carolinians to give everything we do our best efforts. I know that so many of you are on this journey with me and we must work hard to grow the number of people working to that end. Please keep your input, your feedback, your questions and concerns coming my way. I look forward to seeing you on September 8 at the Transylvania County town hall meeting. I will continue to pass along information about others throughout the district as I finalize the details. Also, please continue to visit my website, www.davidguice.com, for regular updates.

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