



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



An update from the North Carolina House

May 09, 2011

Raleigh, North Carolina – On Tuesday, we went into session at 9:00 a.m. to begin debate on the budget bill (HB200). Almost 50 amendments were heard during the day and we were finally able to vote on the bill by 8:00 p.m. that evening. After a long day of amendments and debate, the budget passed by a margin of 72 – 47 on its second reading with bipartisan support. We began debate again Wednesday afternoon on the budget and it passed a third reading by a margin of 72 -47. As I continue to say, the budget is still a work in progress and must now go to the Senate for them to debate the provisions of the budget provided by the House. As the budget moves to the Senate for consideration, it will again see much change before coming back to the House for the appointment of a conference committee to work out the differences between the two chambers. If you are not happy with what the House has set forth in its budget, I would encourage you to contact Senate members to encourage them to seek any changes you would like to see in the budget.

One piece of the budget of concern was the reallocation of the distribution of lottery funds. I began receiving phone calls from commissioners and county managers in all three counties regarding the proposed cuts to lottery monies being distributed for capital improvements. The problem with these cuts is that many counties have incurred school construction debt with repayment being dependent on the receipt of these lottery funds. I addressed these concerns with House leadership and again during debate on the House floor and we were able to get the funding put back into the budget for capital improvements. We were able to restore an additional \$43.5 million during the Tuesday floor debate, bringing the total monies to \$98.7 million in county lottery funds for capital improvements.

The budget that was passed is one that is fiscally responsible and economically sustainable. This budget contains one of the largest tax cuts in North Carolina history and pumps over a billion dollars back into the private sector. It reduces state spending in a common-sense way and responsibly shrinks the scope of government. Further, I see this budget as the first step toward putting North Carolina's economic house in order. It reverses the trend of government expansion and over-taxation that led to the state's current budget crisis. It is a budget borne out of tough decisions and historic transparency and I am proud of its passage this week.

The crossover deadline for this year was extended this week from May 12th until June 9th. This measure ensures that we still have plenty of time to have meaningful debate in our committee meetings on legislation as well as debate on the House floor. The final week prior to the crossover deadline is always a very hectic week with everyone trying to get bills passed in a hurry so this extension allows that process to be much more organized during the coming weeks so that we have more opportunities to review bills and make certain we are able to pass legislation that has undergone prudent examination.

Governor Perdue signed HB 270, Amend Conditions of Probation, into law this week. This is a bill I sponsored which simply clarifies regular and special conditions of probation and repeals the tolling status of offenders under probation supervision. I sponsored this bill at the request of the Department of Correction officials who indicated these changes needed to be made for the department.

Governor Perdue recently appointed me to serve on the Governor's Gang Task Force. This task force is made up of 20 members from across North Carolina and its purpose is to develop a comprehensive plan to ensure a well-coordinated, statewide enforcement program as it relates to gangs in our state. The program should increase the flow of gang-related information among various law enforcement agencies, correctional institutions and the judicial system. Further, the task force is charged with the responsibility to investigate and identify current and emerging gang issues; investigate and identify policy changes to better prevent, mitigate and address gang activity; recommend legislative and executive action necessary to implement a comprehensive, coordinated plan and to make identified policy changes. The task force shall report its progress, findings and recommendations to the Governor every six months or more frequently if warranted. It is an honor and privilege to be appointed to serve on this committee.

Finally, I would like to say Happy Mother's Day to each of you in my district who is celebrating the honor of being a mother this week. I have always been honored to credit my parents for the person I am today and especially my mother with her love and caring ways that were bestowed upon me as I was growing up. I appreciate that she is still there for me today and that I am able to tell her how much I appreciate all she has done for me in the years of my life. Thank you Mom!

I anticipate that since we have passed our budget, we will now get back to a vigorous committee schedule and again begin moving bills through committee and onto the House floor for votes. Please stop by my office for a visit if you are in the Raleigh area and I will make every effort to spend a few minutes with you. While I enjoy all of the work I do here in Raleigh for you, I especially enjoy getting to see my constituents at the legislative complex!

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