



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FROM  
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**NC House**

**District 64 – Alamance County**

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**Memorial Day 2016**

Our God and soldiers we alike adore  
Ev'n at the brink of danger and not before  
When dangers past and all is righted  
Our God forgotten and our soldiers slighted

-Francis Quarles

Over 1,100,000 American soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, coast guard and merchant marines have died serving our country. That is equal to the total population of Wake County and Alamance County. This Memorial Day we must pause again to honor the memory of those who died defending our freedoms.



Our favorite Congressman Mark Walker attended the Alamance County War Memorial Program today. L to R Brandon, Cong. Walker, Reagan and Kelsie.

If you are at the beach think for a few minutes about Omaha Beach, if you are in the mountains think for a few minutes about Mt.

Suribachi, if you are in town think of the door to door fighting in Fallujah, if you are with family think for a few minutes about those families who have an empty chair around their table today and say a prayer.



Privileged to be back at Bible Baptist Church in Burlington for their annual Memorial Weekend Veterans' Service

We live in a free land because others were willing to put their life on the line to defend and protect our freedoms. Humbly and with an acknowledgement of how feeble it may sound we offer our heartfelt thanks and praise to the memory of those who died in the line of duty.

God Bless our land and please give comfort to the families and friends of our honored dead.

# Budget Update

The House recently passed our revised 2<sup>nd</sup> year budget. Here are some of the highlights:

## Education

\$12.217 billion - 57% of the total General Fund budget of \$22.22 billion for 2016-17.

- \$8.8 billion in K-12 funding
- 3.5-4% increase in teacher pay.
- Continued funding towards the the implementation of the NC Digital Learning Plan



*This amazing group of 1<sup>st</sup> graders from Bradford Academy in Mebane - recited large portions of our NC Constitution for me and absolutely made my day!*

- Increases again the appropriations for Textbook and Digital Resources adding another \$11.7 million
- Provided scholarships for students working to fill hard to staff positions in our public schools
- Expand Special Education Scholarships for children of active duty military
- Targeted \$25 million in funding towards literacy coaches in low performing schools

## Health and Human Services

\$5.06 billion - 23% of spending

- Provides \$30 million to implement the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Mental Health



*Friends from Piedmont Health Services (PHS) stopped by the office to discuss some important health issues and funding concerns.*

- Expanded slots in the NC Community Alternatives Program for Disabled Adults.
- \$8.5 million to local health depts

## Justice and Public Safety

\$2.5 billion - 11% of total spending

- Provides for step increases for State Highway Patrol, magistrates and clerks
- Salary increases for correctional officers

## Agriculture, Natural and Environmental Resources

\$492 million - 2% of total spending

- Restores funding to the tobacco and farmland preservation funds
- Allows 31 counties to eliminate the emissions testing requirements



*Home builders hosted a Raleigh reception.*

## Transportation

State Highway Fund - \$2.0 billion

State Highway Trust Fund - \$1.37 billion

- Eliminates tolling on NC ferry system
- Increases funding for highway maintenance by \$12.9 million
- Appropriates \$6 million to advance DMV modernization initiatives - specifically call center and local office wait times
- Revises DOT bidding process to increase transparency



*HR professionals from Alamance County businesses stopped by to talk about.....HB2 it was a very good meeting.*

## General Gov't

\$379 million -1.7% of total spending

- Provided funds to make the NC Building Code registry fully accessible and searchable on line
- Increased funding for domestic violence shelter grants by \$45,242
- Added 3 new positions for fraud investigations at the Dept of Insurance
- Added one position to the Local Gov't Commission to help local governments at risk of financial failure

## Budget Recap

The House passed our perfect ☺ budget over to the Senate. The Senate is currently working out their budget priorities and will send it back to the House. We will probably vote "not to concur" and then a Conference Committee will be appointed

to iron out the differences. When that is accomplished it will return to both bodies for a final vote. If the budget passes both the full House and Senate it will be sent on to the Governor's desk for Gov. McCrory's approval and signature.



*A good lunch meeting with members of the Alamance County Chamber of Commerce who asked about.....HB2.*

## Other Legislation

- **SB71 Coal Ash Management Update**  
Review and upgrade of our Coal Ash Management Plan. Includes a broader fix to potential fresh water needs around existing coal ash ponds. Also seeks to expand the safe reuse of coal ash to reduce the amount to be stored. It will also bring the Coal Ash Commission into conformity with a recent state Supreme Court ruling. This bill faces a likely veto by Gov. McCrory
- **HB813 Results First Framework**  
This is my bill that seeks to create in NC government an "evidence-based policy making" program based upon the Pew Charitable Trust and MacArthur Foundation model. The bill passed the House and is awaiting its' turn in the Senate. This is a bi-partisan idea that we need here in NC.

It is an honor and privilege to serve you. *Dennis*