



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FROM  
**REP. DENNIS RIDDELL**



**NC House**

**District 64 – Alamance County**

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**Thank You Veterans for our Freedom!**

**Budget Summary**

Now that the dust has settled following the legislative session. Here is a review of the most important (and contentious) piece of legislation passed this year: our biennial State Budget. More legislative reviews to follow.

**Total Spending FY 2015-16: \$21.735 Billion**  
**Total Spending FY 2016-17: \$21.921 Billion**

**Justice and Public Safety**

- 3 % salary increase for all sworn members of the Highway Patrol
- Increases starting salary for Highway Patrol from \$35,000 to \$36,050



**Not enough chiefs and ‘two’ many Indians.**  
L to R Chief Smythe, Rep. Riddell, Chief Parrish, Chief Caldwell, Sen. Gunn, and Chief Prichard.

- Increased pay for Correctional Officers
- Additional funding for court modernization
- Clerks of Court and Magistrates will receive step increase raises in salary

**Education**

**K-12**

- Authorizes **\$8.5 billion** in K-12 spending this school year which amounts to 56% of the state budget
- **Increased K-12 funding by 5.0%** = \$410 million over last year’s spending



Swearing in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes of the first Sylvan Elementary House of Representatives. Wonderful teachers, young people and staff.

- All teachers and state employees will receive a **\$750 bonus** this year
- Complete funding for all Teaching Assistants
- Full Funding of Driver’s Education
- Puts \$1.5 million over the biennium into Principal Preparation programs
- Increased funding for Textbooks & Digital Learning Resources
- **Starting teachers (0-4 yrs) salary increased as promised** from \$33,000 to \$35,000.

- All teachers eligible for salary step increases will receive them
- Increased funding for the Disability Opportunity Scholarships and the Opportunity Scholarships

### Community Colleges

- Allocates **\$1.05 billion** in total funding for 2015-16
- Provides \$7.5 million to the 58 Community Colleges for state of the art equipment purchases



Enjoyed a nice visit with ACC Trustee Douglas Fincannon, ACC President Dr. Algie Gatewood, Rep. Riddell and ACC Trustee and former State Rep. for District 64 Chairman of our County Commissioners Dan Ingle.

- For the first time the budget provides **year round funding** for Community College classes
- \$10 million in 2015-16 for salary increases with local flexibility in allocating these funds

### UNC System

- Total university funding will be **\$2.6 billion** in 2015-16 (an increase of \$99 million)- NC is 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation for state support for university students

### Transportation

- **Eliminates the money transfer from the Highway Fund to the General Fund**
- Puts forward **\$440 million** in **additional road funding**
- Puts \$70 million into the modernization of our ports
- Continued funding towards the modernization of the DMV

- Increased funding for capital construction projects thru the Strategic Transportation Initiative



Celebrating the re-opening of the Gibsonville Caboose after a very nice makeover.

### Health and Human Services

- Increased support for community mental health services
- Increases market rates for Child Care Subsidy
- Continues funding for CCNC program
- **Restores reductions for seniors services** in the Home and Community Care Block Grants
- Provides funding to improve the State Medical Examiner system

### Agriculture and Natural Resources

- Provides support for dredging of the coastal inlets to keep our vital waterways open for business and recreation
- Additional funding support for Oyster industry
- **\$1 million for Military Buffers** through the Farmland Preservation program.
- \$1.3 million reduction department-wide DENR administrative cut

### General Government

- Created a new Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs to serve our veterans and protect our military presence here in NC
- Provided additional funds for VIVA (voter ID) education and outreach programs



As a Chairman of the General Government Appropriations Committee I presented a portion of that budget on the House floor during the debate on the budget.

- Enacted **budget transparency measures** to ensure that state spending is open, transparent and responsible
- Aligned state agency budgets to actual expenditures to track the use of taxpayer dollars

### Tax Reform Package

- Cuts personal tax rate to below 5.5% in 2017
- Increases standard deduction in 2016
- Restored unlimited Medical Expense deduction for all citizens
- Protects reduction in corporate income tax rates if income triggers are met in 2016



Topping Ceremony at Buckner Companies in Graham celebrating their new apprenticeship program.

- Begins phasing in Single Sales Factor - this is an important part of making NC more attractive for business growth
- Eliminated one form of corporate welfare by not extending the Solar Tax Credits

### Savings and Rainy Day Funds

- Placed **\$600 million** into our state's Savings Reserve and Repairs and Renovation Funds
- Added **\$186 million** to the Medicaid Contingency Reserve to provide for any increases in this rapidly growing program
- Sets aside **\$225 million** over the next two years in a Medicaid Transformation Reserve to help offset anticipated changes to Medicaid costs as our Medicaid Reform Plan unfolds

### From the Inbox - constituent questions

**Question:** Did State Government spending increase over last year?

**Answer:** State Government spending did increase from last year's budget but was within our responsible self-imposed Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) limits once again.

**Question:** Was this a bad budget for education as has been reported?

**Answer:** Only if you can convince yourself that a 5% increase (\$410 million) in K-12 education spending over last year is bad.

### In Loving Memory- Thank You Howard



### The World Needs More Sharp Pencils - *Dennis*

