



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FROM  
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# NC House

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**On Memorial Day it is our Duty to Remember our Fallen Heroes**  
**- God Bless America -**

## Legislature Begins Short Session: Ready for Round 2

The North Carolina General Assembly returned to Raleigh recently to begin the short session of 2014. It was good to see all of my friends from 2013. I get to work with a great group of men and women and on top of that we have excellent leadership.



The Old Capitol and the New(er) Capitol

There have already been issue briefings, meetings with constituents, lobbyists, receptions, training, bill drafting and more. There are several issues that were awaiting the legislature upon our arrival last week.

We will have a busy two months ahead. Here is a short list of the business at hand:

1. **Balance the Budget** - we will do this again **without raising taxes** or increasing state debt. Gov. McCrory submitted a good budget last week that will be our starting point as we move ahead setting spending priorities.
2. **State Employees & Teacher Compensation** - the legislature will deliver on the promise announced this past February to raise the salary of beginning teachers as a first step towards improving the compensation offered to **all** teachers in NC. We also intend to offer an increase to all other state employees and a COLA for retirees. One of my personal goals over the next few weeks is to see the Master's Supplement reinstated. I have already introduced HB 1174 to accomplish that goal.



Presenting a Proclamation in April from Gov. McCrory that recognized the great contribution of Uncle Eli's Quilting Party to NC and Alamance County.

3. **Coal Ash Ponds** - this is an issue that the legislature has been working on during the interim. It is a messy issue that has been around for decades without any constructive action taken. The Governor's recommended plan to put in a place a workable solution was introduced in the Senate last week in order to get some quick action on this important environmental issue.
4. **Regulatory Reform** - we will continue looking for ways to reduce the unnecessary and obsolete regulations that fall upon our business community. Expect legislation to be passed towards that end.



Interim Education Committee Hearing

5. **Common Core** - legislation will be introduced to establish a commission that will determine how education standards will be adopted in NC. Common Core was a non field-tested pig in a poke that we bought into back in 2009-10 because of Race to the Cash (Race to the Top) incentives. We can do better. A good vetting of the issue of Common Core is overdue.
6. **Medicaid Reform** - we have no choice but to tackle the runaway costs of our current dysfunctional state Medicaid program. If we do nothing it will eventually push all other programs into the financial corner as Medicaid costs will continue to consume more and more available revenue. This will be a difficult task as we are locked into a spending "partnership" with the

federal gov't - and guess who is the **junior partner**? The biggest problem with federal partnerships is that they can print money faster than we can match it with revenue! We must, at least, begin the reform process now.



A ride along with Trooper Jeremy Zachary deepened my appreciation for our Highway Patrol officers.

7. **Other Issues** - film incentives, fracking timetables/regulations, tax reform and more. Stay tuned.

### On a Personal Note



On April 30<sup>th</sup> my beloved mother, Pat Riddell passed away. We will all miss her smile, encouraging spirit and so much more about her life. The benefits of a Christian mother are multi-generational and eternal. I would definitely NOT be where I am today without her godly influence in my life. She prayed me away from a lot of trouble when I was younger - and she prayed me towards a great deal of good. Our family has been blessed by the many, many kindnesses and expressions of sympathy we have received in the past few weeks.

*Thank you from all of the Riddells.*