



Legislative Update

May 22, 2008

Please read and forward to your colleagues and networks!

2008 General Assembly Gets Underway; Joint House and Senate Budget Proposed

In the first two weeks of the 2008 General Assembly session, the Alliance saw three bills introduced in both the House and Senate addressing the secondhand smoke issue, but also saw the unveiling of a joint House and Senate budget proposal which failed to include funding for the implementation of child nutrition standards – an effort that will address childhood obesity by ensuring that healthier foods are served in the state's elementary school cafeterias.

NC Alliance for Health 2008 Policy Priorities

2008 Secondhand Smoke Incremental Priorities:

- Require all vehicles owned and operated by the state be 100% smoke-free and clarify local governments have authority to make vehicles owned and operated by local governments 100% smoke-free; ***S1681 /H2252 have been introduced by Sen. William Purcell and Rep. Jennifer Weiss on behalf of the Justus-Warren Heart and Stroke Task Force;***
go to <http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2007/Bills/Senate/HTML/S1681v1.html> for a copy of the bills.
- Establish a 100% tobacco-free perimeter around all state government buildings and grant authority to local governments to implement and enforce 100% tobacco-free perimeters around local government buildings; ***S1686 / H2253 have been introduced by Sen. William Purcell and Rep. Jennifer Weiss on behalf of the Justus-Warren Heart and Stroke Task Force;***
go to <http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2007/Bills/Senate/HTML/S1686v2.html> for a copy of the bills.
- Grant community colleges the clear authority to prohibit smoking on the grounds of community college campuses; ***S1669 / H2254 have been introduced by Sen. William Purcell and Rep. Jennifer Weiss on behalf of the Justus-Warren Heart and Stroke Task Force;***
go to <http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2007/Bills/Senate/HTML/S1669v1.html> for a copy of the bills.

All Senate bills have been referred to the Senate Health Committee. All House bills have been referred to the House Health Committee, with subsequent consideration by the House Judiciary 1 Committee.

- **Support an increase in North Carolina's cigarette excise tax BY at least 75 cents.**

All indications are that the House or Senate are not interested in including the Governor's proposed 20 cent increase in the state's cigarette tax in the House or Senate proposed budgets -- there is very little interest in **any** type of tax increase this election year. The Alliance will keep working this issue and keep you posted . . .

2008 Obesity Prevention Policy Priorities:

- Establish statewide "quality" physical education standards in NC's Basic Education Program; ***Bills expected to be introduced soon.***

- Fund baseline childhood obesity data collection; **Rep. Glazier (D- Cumberland) has indicated his interest in introducing a bill this session to fund this data collection effort**, we expect a bill to be introduced soon; and,
- Implement and fully fund Child Nutrition Standards for Kindergarten – 5th grade; **the proposed House and Senate Joint Education Budget failed to include this initiative in the proposed budget. See alert below – PLEASE TAKE ACTION.**

Joint House & Senate Education Budget Proposal Fails to Fund Child Nutrition Standards

As mentioned above, the House and Senate Joint Education Budget proposal fails to include a \$20 million request to fund the implementation of state child nutrition standards established in 2005. For a copy of the bill filed this year to fund child nutrition programs (H2226/S1898), go to:

<http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2007/Bills/House/HTML/H2226v1.html>

Background

In 2005, legislators recognized the dangers of offering high-fat foods via the Child Nutrition Program and the General Assembly ultimately established new child nutrition standards. However, pilot programs conducted in counties across the state showed that providing healthy food choices costs significantly more. In 2007, legislators hesitated to mandate the child nutrition standards statewide due to the fear it would cost. The fight for funding for the Child Nutrition Program continues this legislative session with the initial House budget proposal failing to include any additional funds for this important program.

For additional information and talking points about the Child Nutrition Program and the important role it plays in the lives of NC's school children, go to the Alliance's website at:

http://www.rtpnet.org/alliance/pdfs/NC_ChildNutrition_Facts.pdf

http://www.rtpnet.org/alliance/pdfs/NCSchoolLunch_CostComparison.pdf

Tell Your Legislators Kids Need a Healthy School Lunch

Subject Line: Fund Child Nutrition Programs

Sample Message:

Dear (Name of Legislator),

Please support the \$20 million budget request for the Child Nutrition Program to pay for healthier foods in elementary schools.

In 2005, the state mandated that school cafeterias serve healthy foods to our state's school children. Many schools systems have begun to phase in the new nutrition standards only to find that providing healthier food choices costs significantly more. Now 87 of 115 school district's nutrition programs find themselves operating in the red.

The state needs to help pay for the healthy standards it created. If the state does not provide additional funds to the Child Nutrition Program, many local child nutrition programs will go bankrupt resulting in many children having no option for a healthy school meal. For many children, the only meal they get is the one they receive at school.

As a state legislator, you have a crucial role to play in ensuring our children have access to healthy foods while in public school. If the General Assembly truly places education and children's readiness to learn as a high priority, then the state must pay for the nutrition standards it created. Please fund the Child Nutrition Program.

Sincerely,
Your Name

How to Contact Your Legislators

House and Senate members listed below need to hear from you on the need to fund the Child Nutrition Program. Double click on the legislator's name to retrieve their direct phone number or email address.

House Speaker Joe Hackney (D-Chatham, Orange): 919-733-3451; joe@ncleg.net

House Appropriations Committee Chairs:

Senior Chairman	Rep. Mickey Michaux - Durham
Chairman	Rep. Alma Adams - Guilford
Chairman	Rep. Martha Alexander - Mecklenburg
Chairman	Rep. Jim Crawford - Granville
Chairman	Rep. Phil Haire - Jackson
Chairman	Rep. Maggie Jeffus - Guilford
Chairman	Rep. Joe Tolson - Edgecombe
Chairman	Rep. Doug Yongue - Scotland

House Education Appropriations Subcommittee Chairs:

Chairman	Rep. Rick Glazier - Cumberland
Chairman	Rep. Marian McLawhorn - Pitt
Chairman	Rep. Ray Rapp - Madison
Vice Chairman	Rep. Larry Bell - Sampson
Vice Chairman	Rep. Linda Johnson - Cabarrus
Vice Chairman	Rep. Marvin Lucas - Cumberland

Senate President Pro Temp Marc Basnight (D-Dare): 919-733-6854; Marcb@ncleg.net

Senate Appropriations Committee Chairs:

Co-Chairman	Sen. Charles W. Albertson - Duplin
Co-Chairman	Sen. Charlie S. Dannelly - Mecklenburg
Co-Chairman	Sen. Linda Garrou - Forsyth
	Sen. Kay R. Hagan - Guilford
	Sen. David W. Hoyle - Gaston
	Sen. Robert Pittenger - Mecklenburg
	Sen. Tony Rand - Cumberland
	Sen. Richard Stevens - Wake
	Sen. A. B Swindell - Nash

Senate Education Appropriations Subcommittee Chairs:

- Senior Chairman [Sen. Vernon Malone](#) – Wake
- Chairman [Sen. Joe Sam Queen](#) - Haywood
- Members [Sen. Martin L. Nesbitt, Jr.](#) - Buncombe
- [Sen. Jean Preston](#) - Carteret
- [Sen. Jerry W. Tillman](#) - Randolph

E-MAIL:

To email your personal representative, go to this link for your member’s email address:

<http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/gascripts/members/reports/room-phone.pl?Chamber=House&viewType=normal>

To email your senator, go to this link for your senator’s email address:

<http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/gascripts/members/reports/room-phone.pl?Chamber=Senate&viewType=normal>

If you are not sure of the name of your representative or senator, check the General Assembly’s website at:

http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/GIS/Representation/Who_Represents_Me/Who_Represents_Me.html

CALL:

To call your Representative or Senator, please call 919-733-4111 and ask for the legislator by name to be transferred.

**For additional information about the Alliance, please contact
Alliance Executive Director Pam Seamans at pamseamans@nc.rr.com;
or Alliance Program Director Charlotte Ranz at crazn@mindspring.com.**

What *MORE* can you do to promote the secondhand smoke issue?

Have your organization, its board members, staff and volunteers sign the Alliance’s secondhand smoke resolution to demonstrate your support for making NC’s worksites and public places smoke-free. Access the resolution by going to the Alliance’s website at:

<http://www.ncallianceforhealth.org/resolution.html>

Also available on our website are fact sheets, talking points and other resources on secondhand smoke and the cigarette tax.

**For additional information, go to
www.ncallianceforhealth.org
for talking points and other resources.**

Call 919-463-8328
or e-mail ncalliance@heart.org for more information