



**Legislative Update
&
ACTION ALERT!**

April 20, 2007

Please read and forward to your colleagues and networks!

Floor Vote on HB 259 Still Expected Next Tues;

HB 24 to be Heard by Senate Cmte Tuesday

**Physical Activity and Nutrition (PAN) Appropriations Bills
Update**

HB 259 is still expected to be debated on the House floor this coming Tuesday, April 24. Thanks to all of you who have made contact with your House member this week. We have heard from many legislators that they are receiving supporting calls and emails. *Please keep up the contacts with House members* – it is imperative that we demonstrate the broad public support for making restaurants and most bars, as well as all state government buildings smoke-free. This bill also restores local control so that local governments may regulate smoking. This bill will protect a large majority of NC workers from the dangers of secondhand smoke! For additional information on HB 259 and how to contact your House member, please see the previous Alliance Legislative Alert on our website at: <http://www.rtpnet.org/alliance/pdfs/4.17.07LegUpdate.pdf>

HB 24 to be Heard by Senate Committee Tuesday

We learned this week that HB 24, sponsored by Reps. Jennifer Weiss (D-Wake) and Rick Glazier (D-Cumberland) is scheduled to be heard by the Senate Commerce, Small business, & Entrepreneurship Committee **this Tuesday, April 24 at 11:00 a.m.** HB 24 will make all state government buildings smoke-free and provide an option to local governments to make local government buildings and transportation systems smoke-free. As you may recall, HB 24 was approved by the House on March 7 by a vote of 107 to 4.

Please contact Senators on this committee before 10 a.m. Tuesday and let them know about the important public health impact of this legislation.

Senate Commerce, Small Business, & Entrepreneurship Committee members:
(double click on the name of your senator to go retrieve their phone number or email address)

Chairman	Sen. R. C. Soles, Jr. – Brunswick, Pender, Columbus
Vice Chairman	Sen. David W. Hoyle – Gaston
Vice Chairman	Sen. Tony Rand – Bladen & Cumberland
Members	Sen. Tom Apodaca – Buncombe, Henderson, Polk Sen. Doug Berger – Franklin, Granville, Vance, Warren Sen. Philip E. Berger – Guilford, Rockingham Sen. Harris Blake – Harnett, Moore Sen. Julia Boseman – New Hanover Sen. Walter H. Dalton – Cleveland, Rutherford Sen. Katie G. Dorsett – Guilford Sen. Tony Foriest – Alamance, Caswell Sen. James Forrester – Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln Sen. Linda Garrou , - Forsyth Sen. W. Edward (Eddie) Goodall – Mecklenburg, Union Sen. Steve Goss – Alexander, Ashe, Watauga, Wilkes Sen. Malcolm Graham – Mecklenburg Sen. Kay R. Hagan – Guilford Sen. Neal Hunt – Wake Sen. Jim Jacumin – Burke, Caldwell Sen. John H. Kerr III , - Greene, Pitt, Wayne Sen. Vernon Malone – Wake Sen. Martin L. Nesbitt, Jr. – Buncombe Sen. Robert Pittenger - Mecklenburg Sen. William R. Purcell – Anson, Richmond, Scotland, Stanly Sen. Larry Shaw – Cumberland Sen. Richard Stevens – Wake

HB 24 Talking Points:

Making all state government buildings smoke-free is a logical next step after making the General Assembly buildings smoke-free. It is time to protect *all* state workers.

Secondhand Smoke is Harmful to Health

- According to the US Surgeon General, *there is NO safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.*
- Secondhand smoke has been shown to increase nonsmokers' risk of heart disease, stroke, and cancer.^{1 2 [i]}
- *As little as thirty minutes of exposure can trigger a heart attack* in someone with heart disease or risk factors for heart disease.² The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) warns, "...all patients at risk of coronary heart disease or with known coronary artery disease should be advised to avoid all indoor environments that permit smoking."^[ii]

Local Communities Deserve the Right to Decide How to Regulate Smoking in Their Communities

- Since 1993, local communities in North Carolina have been restricted from passing their own ordinances and rules to protect their communities from exposure to secondhand smoke.
- Local elected officials understand best the unique characteristics and needs of their communities and should have the flexibility to decide whether their communities need additional regulation of smoking.

- HB 24 will give local governments the authority to adopt and enforce smoking policies in local government buildings and local transportation systems.

The Public Supports Smoke-Free Policies for ALL Workers

- According to a September 2006 Elon poll, 86 percent of respondents said that they agree or strongly agree that employees in North Carolina should be able to work in a smoke-free environment.

For a full set of talking points about the dangers of secondhand smoke and HB 24 (along with source citations), go to the Alliance website at: <http://www.ncallianceforhealth.org/pdfs/HB24TalkingPoints3-07.pdf>

Physical Activity and Nutrition (PAN) Appropriations Bills Update

The Alliance membership, via recommendations from the Alliance Physical Activity and Nutrition Committee, has voted to support the following appropriations requests related to physical activity and nutrition. Here is an update on the status of these appropriations bills:

HB 23/SB 25 would provide funds for the expansion of the Statewide Health Promotion Program. These bills request \$4.3 million over the next 2 fiscal years for Statewide Health Promotion programs in each county health department. This proposal would capitalize on the strength of existing resources and fully fund one FTE public health professional in each county. In addition, it would provide resources to implement proven strategies to reduce the chronic disease risk factors. Funds would be distributed to health promotion programs in local health departments throughout the state to work with community partners in creating policy changes and environmental supports addressing at least one of the three major chronic disease risk factors—physical activity, poor diet, and tobacco use.

The bill was heard in the House Health and Human Services (HHS) Appropriations Subcommittee on April 12 and was included in the subcommittee's draft budget at \$2 million. The HHS Appropriations Subcommittee met behind closed doors Thursday to draft its final version of the budget. Once subcommittee budgets are finalized, they will move to the full House Appropriations Committee for consideration. The Alliance will continue to work with the full Appropriations Committee to keep funds for Statewide Health Promotion in the budget proposal.

HB 227/SB 682 would provide needed funding to Child Nutrition Programs around the state. The bill requests \$15 million in funding for each of the next 2 fiscal years to the Department of Public Instruction to enable child nutrition programs in elementary schools to implement the newly adopted standards for nutrition programs set by the State Board of Education last year. The State Board of Education would distribute the funds among the local school administrative units.

The Alliance is working with the School Nutritionists Association to support this funding request. The bill is currently in the House Education Appropriations Subcommittee and has been included in its preliminary budget at \$5 million. If budget projections expand, there could be an additional \$5 million added to the initial \$5 million for this program.

HB 25/SB 26 would provide funds for Healthy Carolinians partnerships across the state. These bills request \$1 million for each of the next 2 fiscal years for local Healthy Carolinian partnerships or HC Coordinator salaries and/or programs for community health improvement. Healthy Carolinians partnerships often exist outside of the local health department, such as in the local hospital or as independent 501c3 organizations. The Division of Public Health within

DHHS would distribute the funds to all counties to support the work of the Governor's Task Force for Healthy Carolinians.

The bill was heard by the House HHS Appropriations Subcommittee on April 12 and was included in the subcommittee's draft budget at \$1 million. We will continue to follow this bill and support Healthy Carolinians' efforts.

HB 618/SB 671 (Funds for Eat Smart ...Move More initiative)

These bills would provide \$3 million for each of the next 2 fiscal years to the Division of Public Health within DHHS for community grants to counties participating in the Eat Smart Move More (ESMM) initiative. The bill was heard in the House HHS Appropriations Subcommittee on April 12 and was not included in the subcommittee's draft budget. Bill sponsor Rep. Lucy Allen said she would continue to discuss including ESMM in the HHS Appropriations Subcommittee budget with the full Appropriations Committee chairs. She asked that the Alliance and its partners check in with the House Appropriations Cmte chairs as well. The Alliance will continue to support the NC Chapter of the American Planning Association as they push to have this funding included in the budget.

HB 1167 provides funding for cancer prevention and treatment. This bill provides \$1.5 million in funding for each of the next 2 fiscal years for the NC Quitline, \$2.5 million for uninsured cancer patients in FY 2007-2008 and \$5 million in FY 2008-2009, and \$375,000 for each of the next 2 fiscal years to public education programs aimed at cancer prevention and smoking cessation. The House HHS Appropriations Subcommittee draft budget includes a total of \$5 million for the programs for each of the next 2 fiscal years.

Talking points for the above appropriations requests will be available on the Alliance website next week.

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.rtpnet.org/alliance/resolution.html>

The website is now capable to taking signatures directly on-line. Also available on our website are fact sheets, talking points and other resources on secondhand smoke and the cigarette tax.

For additional information about secondhand smoke issues or NC's cigarette tax, access the Alliance website at www.ncallianceforhealth.org for talking points and other resources.

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

^[1] California Air Resources Board, Sacramento, CA. January 25, 2006. <http://www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/ets/factsheetets.pdf>
^[2] Pechacek, TF and Babb, S *How acute and reversible are the cardiovascular risks of secondhand smoke?* BMJ. 2004 Apr 24;328(7446):980-3.