



Legislative Update & ACTION ALERT!

June 19, 2007

Please read and forward to your colleagues and networks!

HB 24 Approved by Senate Committee; Senate Floor Vote Expected by Week's End Call Your Senator TODAY!

HB 24, sponsored by Reps. Jennifer Weiss (D-Wake) and Rick Glazier (D-Cumberland), was approved today by the Senate Commerce, Small business, & Entrepreneurship Committee. 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.

Senator Eddie Goodall (R-Union) introduced an amendment to allow smoking in property owned by the state but leased by other tenants. After some debate, the amendment was voted down by a close voice vote.

HB 24 is expected to come up for a vote on the Senate floor AS EARLY AS TOMORROW. Please take a moment to call or email your Senator before 3 p.m. Wednesday. Urge their support of HB 24 and remind them of the important public health impact of this legislation.

HB 24 Talking Points:

Support HB 24. 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

- 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.

To see the full text of this bill, go to:

<http://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2007/Bills/House/HTML/H24v3.html>

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>

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Budget Conferees Put Child Nutrition & NC Quitline Funding at Risk

House and Senate budget conferees continue to work to resolve the differences between the two chambers' budget proposals (HB 1473).

The Alliance has learned from several sources that Senate conferees are holding firm to their stance that Child Nutrition funding be held to the Senate appropriated amount of \$800,000 in non-recurring funds. The House budget had funded Child Nutrition services at \$7.5 million in non-recurring funds. Many students depend upon Child Nutrition programs as their only source of nutritious meals throughout the day. Prior to 1996, the NC General Assembly appropriated over \$20 million annually to the state's Child Nutrition program. Last year, only the required \$7.2 million state match was allocated to fund the program. To allocate only \$800,000 in state funds to child nutrition services this year would result in the discontinuation of services to many needy children.

The Alliance has also heard that conferees want to see the NC Quitline funded at just \$500,000 in non-recurring funds. The House budget had funded the Quitline at \$1million in non-recurring funds while the Senate budget did not include funding for the Quitline. The NC Quitline serves thousands of North Carolina callers per year with services to help them quit smoking.

Help the Alliance support Child Nutrition and NC Quitline funding by contacting key Senate Conference Committee members to ask that:

- Child Nutrition programs receive the full \$7.5 million appropriated by the House; and,
- the NC Quitline receive the \$1 million appropriated by the House.

Please contact these key Senate Conference Committee members:

Sen. Linda Garrou	Forsyth	lindag@ncleg.net	(919) 733-5620
Sen. Kay Hagan	Guilford	kayh@ncleg.net	(919) 733-5856
Sen. Walter Dalton	Rutherford	walterd@ncleg.net	(919) 715-3038
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Sen. Tony Foriest	Alamance	tonyf@ncleg.net	(919) 301-1446
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Sen. Joe Sam Queen	Haywood	joeq@ncleg.net	(919) 733-3460
Sen. Richard Stevens	Wake	Richards@ncleg.net	(919) 733-5653
Sen. A.B. Swindell	Nash	abs@ncleg.net	(919) 715-3030
Sen. Jerry Tillman	Randolph	jerryt@ncleg.net	(919) 733-5870

The Alliance will continue to advocate for increased Child Nutrition and NC Quitline funding during the conference process. It is unclear how much longer the Budget Conference Committee will meet to resolve their differences. Once there is consensus, the final budget bill will be voted on by each chamber (at which point no further changes/amendments can be made) and then sent to the Governor for his signature.

If you have further questions about these budget items or other healthy weight policy initiatives, please contact Elizabeth Outten at eaoutten@gmail.com or (919) 602-6648.

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.