



# LEGISLATIVE *Update*

State Employees Association of North Carolina • [www.seanc.org](http://www.seanc.org)

P.O. Drawer 27727 • Raleigh, NC 27611 • 888-732-6242/919-833-1616 (Press 1)

March 9, 2011  
Volume 28, Issue 8

## **Health Exchange Tilts To Insurance Companies SEANC wants Blue Cross, Insurance Companies Off Board**

Yesterday at the General Assembly, the House Health and Human Services Committee heard testimony on House Bill 115, the North Carolina Health Benefit Exchange Act.

Sponsored by Rep. Jerry Dockham (R-Davidson), the health exchange bill is a result of last year's federal health care act which ensures that every state will have a health care marketplace or health benefit exchange set by 2014 to help consumers buy health care insurance. Part of the exchange includes a governing board. Currently HB 115 tilts in favor of insurance companies who would hold a larger number of seats on the governing board than virtually any state in the country.

SEANC is opposed to health insurance executives dominating the health exchange board and the resulting effects on the public. State employees know better than any group about what happens when insurance companies are driving policy. While insurance executives make millions of dollars, rates for consumers go up and the amount of health care provided by the plan suffers.

The State Health Plan's (SHP) no-bid contract with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina cannot even be reviewed by the public and is a prime example of what happens when insurance companies are allowed to drive policy. For years, legislators have been unable to tell reporters what profit Blue Cross made on the SHP while state employees and retirees had to deal with diminished benefits and higher costs.

For these reasons, SEANC is closely following HB 115. Rep. Dockham has expressed a willingness to talk with all parties involved and has slowed the bill down so that stakeholders can weigh in on what the bill means for North Carolina.

SEANC is encouraged by Rep. Dockham's willingness to work with everyone and we will keep our membership updated on this important legislation.