



LEGISLATIVE *Update*

State Employees Association of North Carolina • www.seanc.org

March 20, 2015

SEANC lobbyists meeting with legislators, advocating for jobs & raises

Lawmakers waiting on updated tax revenues as House puts budget together

Two weeks after Gov. Pat McCrory presented the General Assembly with his \$21.5 billion spending plan for 2015-16, House budget writers are busy crafting their own proposal. More details will begin to take shape as the April 15 tax filing deadline makes the state's revenue picture clearer. Currently a \$270 million revenue shortfall is projected for the current 2014-15 fiscal year, though what impact that might have on next year's budget remains to be seen.

The governor's budget included targeted raises for Highway Patrol troopers, correctional officers (in FY 2016-17) and other hard-to-fill positions, but no across-the-board pay increase or retiree cost-of-living adjustment. SEANC lobbyists will continue to push for a much needed pay raise for all state employees and a cost-of-living increase for all retirees.

What is being discussed in the General Assembly right now are the questionable merits of privatization and the lack of efficiency and savings being provided by private vendors – most notably in the subcommittees looking at the Departments of Health and Human Services, Public Safety and Transportation. Sen. Shirley Randleman (R-Wilkes), SEANC's 2014 Legislator of the Year, was appointed chairwoman of a Program Evaluation Subcommittee that will be addressing private contracts.

"Lawmakers need to question privatization," SEANC Executive Director Mitch Leonard said. "SEANC has long maintained, and even the Department of Public Safety's own report last year on prison maintenance privatization demonstrated that privatization is a waste of taxpayer dollars. Time and time again, studies and practical experience show that state employees can provide higher quality services at a lower cost than private, for-profit businesses."

SEANC supports bill for state retirees to return to work with State Health Plan benefits

SB 6 would put state retirees who return to work for 30 or more hours per week on a nonpermanent basis in the active employee State Health Plan coverage rather than coverage under the high-deductible bronze plan of the Affordable Care Act, as currently required pursuant to a provision in last year's appropriations act. This bill would require state agencies to make the same employer contributions and would be a huge relief to retirees who seek to come back to work without having their health benefits suffer.

The bill was amended this week during a Senate Committee on Pensions & Retirement and Aging meeting and the committee is waiting for a cost estimate of the legislation, known as a fiscal note, before taking further action.

Contact your legislators

Now it is the time for you to [contact your lawmakers](#). It is still early in the budget process. Make your voice heard on the need for all state employees to receive a pay raise and all retirees to receive a cost-of-living increase. Together, we will work to increase your pay and benefits in the General Assembly, but we need all hands on deck. Now is the time for you to sit down with your state senators and representatives and help them put a face to state employees, SEANC and their constituents.

Not sure who your legislators are? [Click here](#). Curious whether they were endorsed by EMPAC? [Click here](#). Want to make note of all of SEANC's legislative priorities before talking to them? [Click here](#).

SEANC staff can also help you schedule meetings with your lawmakers and make sure you have the most up-to-date information possible about SEANC's legislative priorities, so you can have a good and productive conversation. All you have to do is let us know you're coming. Just email tbooe@seanc.org or call 800-222-2758 or 919-810-0272.

Can't make it to Raleigh? No problem. You can call, write or email your legislators – or even schedule your own time to meet with them in your hometown. Again, you can find your lawmakers and their contact information [here](#).