



2015 Legislative Victories

Human Resources Act

SEANC was able to negotiate changes and amend parts of HB 495. House Bill 495 cedes authority from the General Assembly to the State Human Resources Commission, allowing it to create policies with the effect of law with regard to priority and salary rights of separated employees.

- SEANC had serious problems with the bill since it was changed in a House committee in May from a simple technical corrections bill to include changes to due process, hiring and reduction-in-force rights procedures and political hirings provisions.
- SEANC lobbyists pressed House members not to concur with the bill. The House voted unanimously not to concur with the Senate's version of the bill, sending it to conference committee. The bill passed in a form much less harmful to state employees on the last day of session.
- Without SEANC fighting House Bill 495, the State Human Resources Commission, and effectively the Governor, could make a policy stating that a certain group of employees no longer had RIF rights. Then the department could "reclassify or eliminate" those positions and the state employees affected would have no priority when applying for another job in state government.

Privatization and Job Loss

Preventing privatization saves the state and taxpayers money and avoids additional safety hazards.

SEANC's lobbying efforts:

- Prevented privatization of the N.C. Ferry System
- Enlisted friendly legislators to squash any discussion of privatizing prison maintenance
- Stopped massive job cuts in the Department of Transportation — up to 800 positions were in jeopardy due to required reductions and attempts to privatize which would have significantly reduced needed public services (Budget Bill)
 - ▶ Originally, lawmakers requested that DOT just make a 10-percent cut of the whole agency by the end of the 2015 year. Without SEANC's lobbying efforts, this may have happened instead of studying the request first.
 - ▶ The final budget included 50 identified jobs being cut, 21 jobs left up to to the agency to cut and cut applicable vacant jobs.

SEANC Operations

SEANC's efforts resulted in:

- SEANC worked to ensure that no legislation was filed that would take away state employees' right to have SEANC dues conveniently deducted from their paychecks

Results by the Numbers

- House bills reviewed by SEANC: 944
- Senate bills reviewed by SEANC: 722
- Committee meetings covered: 564

Pay

SEANC fought tirelessly for significant pay level increases for all active and retired state employees. (Initially, Governor McCrory and the Senate did not include any pay increases for state employees).

SEANC's efforts resulted in:

- a \$750 one-time bonus
- Custody-level pay increases for correctional officers to be implemented over the next two years
- Preservation of longevity pay for most state employees

State Health Plan

SEANC's efforts resulted in:

- Maintaining State Health Plan funding for active employees at the current level
- Keeping retirees returning to work 30 hours or less on the State Health Plan
- Maintaining health benefits for retirees, even though the Senate budget originally cut all retiree health benefits for those hired on or after Jan. 1, 2016

Retirement System

SEANC's efforts resulted in:

- Fully funding the retirement system for the fifth year in a row by contributing 9.15 percent to the Retirement System
- Maintaining the defined benefit retirement plan even though it had been talked about in committee to change new employees to a defined contribution retirement plan
- Increasing retiree health care benefits from \$762 million to \$778 million (\$16 million increase for maintaining retiree health care benefits)

And it continues...

- The General Assembly is still holding meetings and there are still major privatization efforts happening
- The effort to privatize the UNC Student Store is ongoing and SEANC is meeting with university officials and some key legislators as well as media outlets to hopefully deter the privatization of these jobs

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