



LEGISLATIVE *Update*

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General Assembly Halts Privatization of Inmate Health Care ***Victory for working families, taxpayers and public safety***

SEANC wishes to express its gratitude to every General Assembly member who unanimously voted on May 23-24 to halt the privatization of inmate health care, without a legislative act, during the 2011-2013 biennium as part of a Medicaid fix bill. The bill is headed for Gov. Beverly Perdue's desk and she is expected to sign it.

The move comes after SEANC requested lawmakers stop a unilateral action by the Department of Public Safety (DPS), who is conducting a search for a company to privatize inmate health care. If DPS had succeeded in their plan, almost 2,500 state employees would have lost their jobs.

SEANC members prioritized opposing privatizing as the [No. 1 policy platform objective](#) for our organization. SEANC lobbyists have been at the General Assembly talking with legislators and making sure that every elected official received our [68-page scathing report detailing the pitfalls of privatizing inmate health care](#).

After lobbying and reading SEANC's report, ["Privatizing State Prison Health Care: A Prescription for Making Taxpayers Sick,"](#) legislators understood the importance of slowing down the privatization train. The report detailed cautionary tales from 33 states and the District of Columbia who have learned hard lessons about the danger in privatizing inmate health care, including pay-to-play campaign contributions, unsafe prisons and lawsuits. However, the most important reason cited by lawmakers was to prevent wasting taxpayers' money.

SEANC has been fighting this privatization effort for months, holding forums with correctional personnel across the state and talking to legislative leaders about the dangers of privatizing these jobs.

In particular, SEANC would like to thank [Sen. Tom Apodaca \(R-Henderson\)](#) and [Rep. Nelson Dollar \(R-Wake\)](#) who made the wise decision to invest in this core public service and the people who provide these health care services.

On May 24, SEANC Executive Director [Dana Cope was interviewed by the Associated Press](#) about the perils of privatizing inmate health care, saying, "It's certainly not good for the taxpayers, and it's not good for the prison systems and it's not good for our employees."

Next week, the N.C. House is expected to take up its version of the state budget.