



LEGISLATIVE *Update*

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

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July 11, 2014

General Assembly still discussing budget

SEANC members, contact lawmakers now for pay equity!

More than a week into the new fiscal year, the General Assembly has yet to pass a budget, and while the conference committee has been meeting regularly, negotiations are moving slowly. So far, budget conferees have come to a tentative agreement on a several key subjects, including Medicaid, lottery advertising and teacher tenure. They have not, however, come to an agreement on pay raises, including those for teachers and other state employees or retirees.

Currently, the Senate has remained steadfast in its proposal of an \$809 base salary increase for employees and a 0.8-percent cost-of-living adjustment retirees. The House also remained steadfast in its proposal of a \$1,000 base salary increase and five days of bonus paid leave for employees and a 1.44-percent COLA for retirees.

However, the Senate has also proposed an 11-percent salary increase for teachers. SEANC, of course, does not begrudge teachers a meaningful pay raise, but does believe that teachers are not the only ones deserving of such a raise. All state employees work hard for North Carolina, and all state employees deserve the same raise. SEANC also is advocating for at least a 1.9 percent COLA for retirees, which was what was proposed by the governor.

This week, as SEANC lobbyists have advocated in the General Assembly for these meaningful pay raises, SEANC members have responded admirably to the calls for action, calling budget negotiators and expressing their feelings about the budget situation and the need for meaningful pay raises.

Earlier today, SEANC Executive Director Dana Cope sent the following letter to every member of the General Assembly, as well as to the governor's office, asking for equal pay raises for all state employees.



STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION OF NORTH CAROLINA, INC.

Dear Representative/Senator,

We at the State Employees Association of North Carolina have requested a long overdue pay raise for state employees from the General Assembly. And you have included a raise in this year's budget, which is appreciated.

This week, the General Assembly has spent a great deal of time publicly discussing budget priorities. Both chambers have increased their original pay proposal for teachers, but not for state employees. This creates an even bigger disparity between proposed raises for teachers and for other state employees.

State employees never begrudge other public employees a well-deserved pay raise. And we are well aware of the many factors that come into play when making budget decisions, including political polls.

But it is important for you to know how demoralizing and discouraging it is to state employees to see this General Assembly go back to the days of two-tiers of state employees - those who are highly valued and those who are less valued.

Every single person can relate to what teachers do. Because we all, even if we don't have children or grandchildren in school, were in a classroom as students at some point.

Few people have any idea what it is like to walk the halls of a prison, work with the mentally ill or developmentally disabled, or scrape snow or sand from miles of roadway.

In fact, most people don't think about state employees at all until an emergency strikes, such as a snowstorm or a hurricane. Then people remember state employees. It is our members who are called upon to fix the emergency, put the state back together and get North Carolina "up for business" again.

But when things are going right no one thinks about state employees. The fact of the matter is, things "go right" most of the time due to the dedication of these state employees.

I would like to share with you a comment about the budget from one of our members:

I am proud to work for the State of NC. I want the State of NC to be proud of me.

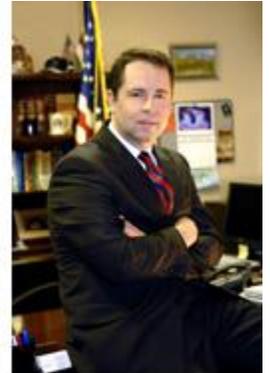
State employees should not have to feel like second-class employees. Do not send a message to them that they are "less" than their fellow state employees who are teachers.

Please pass a budget that provides an equal pay raise for all state employees and teachers - just as they have sacrificed equally for the last six years. Remember that the rising tide must lift all boats and that the cost of food, medicine and housing is the same for every public employee.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dana Cope
SEANC Executive Director



Now, it's your turn to contact lawmakers!

The lead negotiators and their phone numbers are: Rep. Nelson Dollar (919-715-0795), Sen. Harry Brown (919-715-3034), Rep. Linda Johnson (919-733-5861), Sen. Shirley Randleman (919-733-5743, House Speaker Thom Tillis (919-733-3451) and Senate President Pro Tem Phil Berger (919-733-5708). [Click here for contact information for the full conference committee.](#)

Members! Make Your Action Plan Now!

Are you interested in securing a meaningful pay raise and a retiree COLA, as well as advocating for public services? Then make your voice heard by emailing or calling your legislators. Not sure who your legislators are? [Find out here.](#)

Please know if legislators do not hear directly from state employees and retirees, they will believe you are satisfied with whatever the current legislative proposal is regarding your pay raise and retiree COLA. This is a team effort!

Finally, if you hear that your job is in jeopardy due to potential legislative action, please contact [SEANC's Legislative Affairs team](#) as soon as possible. The earlier we know of potential concerns in your workplace, the quicker we can help you.

To follow what's happening in the General Assembly this year and what SEANC is doing to protect state employees and retirees and taxpayer dollars, [subscribe to the SEANC Scoop](#) and read our weekly [Legislative Update](#). [Also, be sure to sign up for our email alerts.](#)

You can also sign up for special Member Action Alert text messages. Just type the word SEANC into the body of a text and send it to the number 787753.

The SEANC Legislative Update is published when the N.C. General Assembly is in session by SEANC's Legislative Affairs Department. You can follow along as news happens by liking SEANC on [Facebook](#), following SEANC on [Twitter](#), watch us on [YouTube](#) or pin with us on [Pinterest](#).

