



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

# LEGISLATIVE *Update*

Aug. 21, 2015

## House and Senate still at odds over raises

Legislators are so close, and yet still so far away from a state budget it seems.

House and Senate leaders decided on [a bottom-line spending amount for the budget — \\$21.735 billion — at a breakfast meeting with Gov. Pat McCrory at his mansion on Tuesday](#). The amount represents a 3.1-percent increase in spending and is \$265 million more than the Senate's sparse proposal, but still roughly \$420 million less than the House's plan.

State employee raises have turned into the hot topic of the debate as a compromise nears. [There's no time to waste for SEANC members: WE NEED YOU TO CONTACT YOUR SENATOR TODAY](#). The Senate, after all gave no pay increases to state employees and retirees in its budget, while the House gave 2 percent increases to actives and retirees and 40 hours of bankable leave to active employees.

The Senate seemed adamant it would hold the line on increases, but employees and retirees had strong advocates in the House, including chief negotiator Rep. Nelson Dollar and House Speaker Tim Moore.

With a surplus of over \$400 million this year, it's hard to imagine that legislators would consider not giving raises and COLAs.

The Senate budget also slashes thousands of teacher assistant positions over two years and puts that money into hiring more teachers to reduce class size. Without a deal in place, schools will start Monday without knowing whether or not funding would be in place for the assistants, who also didn't know if they'd have a job at all in a month.

The fate of administrative jobs in the Department of Transportation is still on the line as well.

The way it works at the legislature is the squeakiest wheel at the end of session gets the grease. For SEANC, that means no pay raise and no retiree COLA if the House and Senate don't hear from members. [SEANC Executive Director Mitch Leonard sent a message to members Tuesday](#) urging them to contact their legislators, and many did. [We still need you to call, email or come down, though](#). House committee members have been told to be willing to meet with their Senate counterparts over the weekend. We expect a deal could be reached in the coming week. As soon as we know the details, we will alert members.

**Contact your legislators**

Now is the time for you to [contact your lawmakers](#). 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. We need all hands on deck. Help your legislators 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](mailto:tbooe@seanc.org) or call 800-222-2758.

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](#).