

# ALERTS

## North Carolina Legislative Report - September 14, 2012

September 2 - 14, 2012

### *On the Floor*

The North Carolina General Assembly completed the short legislative session on July 3 and has adjourned sine die until January 30, 2013. The MVA Public Affairs Legislative Report on North Carolina will be distributed bi-weekly while the North Carolina Legislature is not in session.

While session is over, the General Assembly will continue to have various interim committee meetings throughout the year.

### *Committee Highlights*

#### Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee

The Education Oversight Committee met for several hours this week to discuss a wide range of topics. Legislators were briefed on the status of the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement between the NC Community College System and the University of North Carolina system that allows for easy transfer of credits from community colleges to UNC system schools.

#### Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services

State legislators took another look at state contracts designed to catch fraud and create savings in the Medicaid program, questioning whether the state would see a return on its investment. Members of the Legislative Oversight Committee for Health and Human Services on Tuesday repeatedly expressed frustration about the lack of details coming from the executive branch about why contracts given to IBM, SAS and Public Consulting Group weren't more iron-clad in guaranteeing savings.

## *In The News*

### **Billboard Law** (September 13, 2012)

A new North Carolina law that allows the state to override local tree-protection ordinances has resulted in the loss of several hundred trees that covered at least 50 acres near billboards in Charlotte, according to the city's arborist. How the legislation is implemented is still being determined by the state Department of Transportation. The process involves a public comment period that ends Friday.

### **Gubernatorial Race** (September 8, 2012)

Republican Pat McCrory and Democrat Walter Dalton were both courting the votes of state employees in the race for governor during the State Employees Association of North Carolina's annual convention. On Friday, McCrory gave a speech at the Greensboro event that touched a number of points he has been focusing on, including the need to pay off the state's \$2.8 billion unemployment insurance debt to the federal government, a desire to help the private sector create jobs through lower taxes and relaxed regulations, and his complaints about Gov. Beverly Perdue's administration.

### **Helping Dalton** (September 11, 2012)

Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, the chair of the Democratic Governor's Association, is expected to campaign for Democratic gubernatorial candidate Walter Dalton on Sept. 20. O'Malley, who is regarded as a possible presidential candidate in 2016, will attend fundraisers for Dalton in Winston-Salem and Raleigh and will hold public events in both areas.

### **Education Plan** (September 7, 2012)

Republican gubernatorial candidate Pat McCrory says he would work to increase the value of a North Carolina college diploma in part by helping students better determine whether a four- or two-year degree best matches their skills. The former Charlotte mayor released Friday his higher education platform. It builds on previously unveiled ideas in which he's said there should be two pathways to get a high school degree - an academic route and a vocational route.

### **Dalton Proposals** (September 11, 2012)

Democratic gubernatorial candidate Walter Dalton on Monday unveiled an extensive economic and job-creation plan that he characterized as being far more detailed than the proposals put forward by Republican rival Pat McCrory. The plan, which includes 29 separate provisions, covers everything from tax breaks to worker training proposals.

### **Roanoke Theater** (September 12, 2012)

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A beleaguered facility once known as the Randy Parton Theatre has entered yet another phase, this time as opening as the home of a 24-hour internet sweepstakes and entertainment venue. The Royal Palace Theatre opened its doors to the public for the first time on Wednesday. Less than a month after Roanoke Rapids leased the 1,500 seat theater to Arkansas-based HSV Entertainment, a full line-up of entertainment has been announced and crews have worked around the clock to open this Vegas-style attraction on Interstate 95.

### **7th District** (September 12, 2012)

Two new television ads hit the airwaves in the 7th U.S. House District this week, with one calling Democratic incumbent Mike McIntyre a conservative and the other criticizing Republican David Rouzer's ties to lobbyists. One ad by McIntyre's campaign features Kay Carroll, a Smithfield pharmacist. In the ad, Carroll calls McIntyre "a strong conservative." Those are the words Rouzer emphasized to win the Republican primary earlier this year.

### **NRCC Ads** (September 10, 2012)

Democratic U.S. Reps. Mike McIntyre and Larry Kissell are both the targets of new television ads by the National Republican Congressional Committee. The ad targeting McIntyre, who opposes Republican David Rouzer for the 7th District seat, accuses McIntyre of "spending billions of taxpayer dollars to create jobs in foreign countries like China."

### **Obama Campaign** (September 10, 2012)

Democrats say they aren't planning to end efforts to win North Carolina's 15 electoral votes, dismissing a suggestion by the top pollster for Republican Mitt Romney that President Barack Obama's campaign is planning to pull out of the state. The suggestion comes as some national polls showed the president with a bounce after the Democratic National Convention, and a poll by Democratic-leaning Public Policy Polling found Obama to have a one point edge over Romney in North Carolina.

### **PPP Poll** (September 10, 2012)

There was no post-convention bump for President Barack Obama in North Carolina, according to a new poll. The survey by Public Policy Polling, a Democratic-leaning firm, found Obama leading Republican Mitt Romney 49 percent to 48 percent. Obama did receive a light bump in job approval numbers, putting him at 50 percent for the first time since April.

### **Poll Position** (September 7, 2012)

Republican Pat McCrory has a 16-point lead over Democrat Walter Dalton in the race for governor, according to a new poll released by the conservative Civitas Institute. The poll of 500 registered voters found McCrory leading Dalton 55 percent to 39 percent, with Libertarian Barbara Howe garnering the support of 4 percent. Civitas released only a few poll questions and no numbers about the sample or methodology of the automated poll, which was conducted Sept. 4-6.

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**Asia Trip** (September 11, 2012)

Gov. Beverly Perdue and state Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco are leading a delegation to the 35th annual Southeast U.S./Japan joint meeting in Tokyo, according to Perdue's office. While there, Perdue and commerce officials will meet with export clients and businesses seeking new investments. After he leaves Japan, Crisco will take a two-day business recruitment trip to China. "I look forward to reinvigorating some of our standing partnerships, and to forging new opportunities this week," Perdue said in a statement.

**Stevens Resigns** (September 11, 2012)

Hours after state Sen. Richard Stevens announced his resignation, a major Raleigh lobbying firm announced he is joining as a strategic consultant.

Stevens, a high-ranking Republican budget writer this year, resigned effective Friday. The announcement was made Monday with Senate leader Phil Berger referring to Stevens' departure as a retirement.

A few hours later on Monday, Raleigh law firm Smith Anderson announced that Stevens was joining its practice. He will advise clients on economic development, state and local regulatory issues, government contracting and state policy issues.

**DNC Impact** (September 12, 2012)

Tourism officials in Charlotte have hired an outside group to measure the economic impact of the Democratic National Convention. The Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority usually makes visitor spending projections for large events. But those estimates have been questioned, so officials have hired Tourism Economics of Pennsylvania to conduct the study. "We chose this route to ensure we provide the most comprehensive, credible and clear data," CRVA spokeswoman.

**DNC Impact** (September 7, 2012)

Charlotte leaders say they hope national exposure from the Democratic National Convention last week will pay dividends in the future. For most of the week, Charlotte's Uptown business district was teeming with convention-goers. The city estimated that 35,000 people attended the event, including delegates and journalists. "I've never seen anything like it in Charlotte," said Mayor Anthony Foxx.

**Mineral Rights** (September 11, 2012)

Homebuilder D.R. Horton plans to transfer the mineral rights beneath hundreds of new homes it sold in North Carolina to the homebuyers who now own the properties. State Justice Department spokeswoman Noelle Talley said the Texas-based developer notified the state last week it would hand over drilling rights it stripped from new home deeds and quietly transferred to a subsidiary, DRH Energy.

**Progress Rates** (September 7, 2012)

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Progress Energy officials plan to file a request for a rate increase early next month, the first such request the company has made in a quarter century. In a letter to the state's Utilities Commission, Progress officials said they expect to file their request on or about Oct. 5. Details of the size of the request increase won't be known until the filing is made.

### **K12 Investigation** (September 12, 2012)

A for-profit education company behind a North Carolina lawsuit seeking approval for an online charter school is under investigation in Florida for allegedly falsifying student records. The Florida Department of Education is investigating K12 over evidence the Virginia-based company violated state law by using uncertified teachers and then attempting to cover it up by asking certified teachers to sign the class rosters.

### **Obama Offices** (September 12, 2012)

President Barack Obama's re-election campaign has opened its 52nd local office in the state in Hillsborough. The new office furthers the disparity between Obama's operation in the state and that of Republican Mitt Romney. Romney's campaign has 24 offices across the state so far, Republican officials said, still below the 40 John McCain established in his 2008 losing effort.

## *Legislative Calendar*

### **Mon, September 17, 2012**

- Unintentional Death Committee of Child Fatality Task Force
  - 10:00 AM

### **Tue, September 18, 2012**

- Program Evaluation Oversight Comm., Jt. Leg.
  - 10:00 AM

### **Wed, September 19, 2012**

- Subcommittee on Surplus Property of State-Owned Assets, House Select Committee on
  - 10:00 AM

### **Sat, September 22, 2012**

- NC Council on Developmental Disabilities
  - 2:30 PM

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### Mon, September 24, 2012

- Child Fatality Task Force
  - 10:00 AM

### Tue, September 25, 2012

- Wetland and Stream Mitigation (LRC)(2011)
  - 10:00 AM

### Thu, September 27, 2012

- Career and Technical Education Committee (LRC)(2011)
  - 10:00 AM