



FROM THE CENTER OUT

September-October 1985 Newsletter

LATEST ISSUE OF INSIGHT EXAMINES STATE'S POLICIES TOWARD THE ELDERLY

They call it "The Graying of America." Today, one in nine Americans is over 65. In just 45 years, one in five persons will be over 65 -- a whopping 20 percent of the population. And by 2030, there will be three retired persons for every one working person in America. What does this mean for North Carolina?

Volume 8, No. 1 of North Carolina Insight provides an overview of the questions at stake. This issue is the result of six months of research by Insight editors Bill Finger and Jack Betts into such questions as: Who makes policy that affects the everyday lives of older persons? What should these policies be? And what kinds of programs and services exist for the elderly in North Carolina?

In its analysis of demographics of the elderly, the Center found that those over 65 in North Carolina are generally better off financially than ever before, in line with a general economic improvement for the aged across the country. But the Center also found that single elderly females and elderly blacks in North Carolina still lag far behind other elders in income, living conditions, and health care.

To help close that gap, the state cooperates with federal and local governments to offer and administer a wide range of programs for the elderly. In a 23-page article, the Center details for the first time just what state services are available for older North Carolinians. For example, Insight points out that some \$21.1 million in programs for the elderly are administered in North Carolina by the state Division of Aging under provisions of the federal Older Americans Act. But an even larger amount--\$23.6 million--is funneled through county departments of social services.

In a group of essays tagged "Conflict or Consensus," Insight examines three major policy questions that will affect older citizens of the state in the future:

- Should federal policymakers encourage older workers to retire after 65, or to continue working and making economic contributions? Because of the huge impact of Social Security, federal policy is now heavily weighted towards encouraging the elderly to retire.
- Should the elderly person's right to government services be based solely on age or, in a time of massive federal deficits and dwindling resources, should such benefits be based on need? Medicare and Social Security benefits, for example, go automatically to persons reaching a certain age, whereas Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) have an additional requirement that the recipients have limited incomes.
- Should North Carolina, already one of the most attractive places in the U.S. for out-of-state retirees, attempt to recruit more elderly Americans to North Carolina through tax breaks--or will the elderly become a burden on state and local resources? North Carolina now offers four tax breaks designed to benefit the elderly. These tax breaks represent \$41.1 million in foregone revenues annually.

The other major section of the issue deals with what types of health care are available and what will be available in the future. The Center found that a broad-based continuum of care--from health care in the home to long-term care in nursing facilities to hospital care--exists to serve those elders with health problems. But the Center also found that the type of reimbursement system--not what's best for the patient--often determines where elderly patients are placed within that continuum.

ON "TOOTING OF HORNS" AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO GRANTSEEKING IN NORTH CAROLINA

We want to share with you these comments received recently on Grantseeking in North Carolina:

"It is the most useable book of its kind that I have run across in almost 25 years of fundraising in several areas of the U.S."

Peggy Brown, North Carolina Nature Conservancy

"...it is about the most complete statewide guide I have ever seen..."

Carol Hooper, The Council on Foundations

"...clearly organized, cleanly printed, attractively packaged between maroon and gold covers, an awesome 637 pages..."

The Foundation News

The response from nonprofit organizations and others seeking sources of funding has also been gratifying. We still have copies available at \$35 each, plus \$2.50 postage and handling. Checks should be made payable to: North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research at P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, NC 27602.

CENTER RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDATIONS REAP REWARDS

It is appropriate here to thank YOU for your membership support which enables the Center's work and recommendations to have an impact on state policy. Together, we have accomplished the following for the citizens of North Carolina:

Revisions to the Administrative Procedure Act (APA)

The final APA bill passed by the legislature incorporated many of the suggestions made by the Center in its special report released in May entitled "Assessing the Administrative Procedure Act." For example, a new State Register will be established to make agency rules more open and available to the public. And, the legislative leadership agreed to ask the N.C. Supreme Court for an advisory opinion about the constitutionality (separation of powers) of a legislative Administrative Rules Review Committee.

Civil Rights Law Passed to Protect Handicapped Citizens

In October 1983, the Center released a special double issue of North Carolina Insight magazine concerning services to handicapped citizens in North Carolina. The Center noted that N.C. was one of only 10 states in the country without a civil rights law protecting handicapped citizens against discrimination. On April 30, the Center was asked to present its research to a Senate subcommittee reviewing proposed legislation prohibiting discrimination against handicapped people in the areas of employment, public services, public accommodations, and public transportation. And, on July 3, 1985, the General Assembly enacted this legislation.

Boards, Commissions, and Councils in the Executive Branch

Gov. James G. Martin and the chairmen of the Senate and House Base Budget Committees moved to implement some of the recommendations in our report issued earlier this year. In meetings between executive and legislative leaders, a list was developed of boards which would be recommended for termination by the General Assembly. All boards on this list had been targeted in our report as inactive, ineffective, or duplicative. A bill to abolish 43 boards was passed 44-0 by the Senate but arrived too late in the session to be considered by the House. It can be considered in the 1986 short session. In addition, Governor Martin abolished (in an executive order) 11 other boards targeted by the report.

On another front, a group of citizens concerned about constitutional guarantees of separation of powers between branches of government filed suit against the Advisory Budget Commission and numerous other state boards. The Center's report had questioned the constitutionality of this commission and other boards in the executive branch that have legislative members. As a result of these actions, the Speaker of the House and the Lieutenant Governor agreed to ask the N.C. Supreme Court for an advisory opinion on these constitutional questions.

Oil Recycling Plant

The very first issue of North Carolina Insight in 1978 questioned the state's involvement in and expenditures for an oil re-refining facility. The plant has cost \$2.5 million since 1980. Just as the Center's 1980 evaluation of the judiciary finally bore fruit in the 1983 decision by the N.C. Bar Association to conduct judicial evaluations, this piece of older research re-entered the public arena as the oil facility's losses mounted. The 1983 General Assembly urged the Department of Administration to sell the facility, and the department did so in October 1985--for \$65,000.

NOVEMBER INSIGHT: PRIVATIZATION, CREDIT INSURANCE, AND STRANGE LAWS

November's Insight will contain two important, comprehensive articles. The topics are Public-Private Partnerships and Credit Insurance. Rounding out the magazine will be "Strange Laws in N.C.," a humorous review of laws that should be repealed. This "spoonful of sugar" will make you conversant about laws such as those prohibiting dogs from harassing squirrels on the Capitol grounds and banning the sale of cottonseed at night.

Recent budget constraints and the "private-is-better" philosophy of the Reagan administration have prompted a vigorous debate over whether the public sector can deliver services to citizens as well as the private sector. This article examines these types of arrangements in North Carolina--from refuse collection and water systems to downtown revitalization and historic preservation. The article also examines the movement toward for-profit hospitals and prisons.

A three-part article--authored by Insight editor Bill Finger, State Rep. Harry Payne (D-New Hanover), and Duke University professor Joel Huber--will deal with the subject of credit insurance. Currently, consumers pay credit insurance to a merchant, and state law sets maximum rates that merchants may charge consumers.

WE URGE YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BOARD NOMINATION PROCESS

One of your benefits of membership in the Center is the opportunity to nominate persons who would make good additions to our governing Board of Directors. So once again, we are asking you to submit names of persons who would be willing to work hard, attend quarterly meetings, and assist us with fundraising. The Center's Board is responsible for the overall policy and direction of the Center's work and also suggests ideas for topics to be examined in Insight and in research reports. Depending upon their backgrounds and areas of expertise, Board members are also asked to review drafts of articles and major reports for accuracy and clarity. The Board is balanced by race, sex, geographic location in North Carolina, and political affiliation. If you would like to be considered, or if you want to nominate individuals who fit these qualifications and would be willing to serve a three-year term, please submit the name(s) and background information to Board Chair Thad L. Beyle, Nominating Committee Chair Frances Walker, or Center Director Ran Coble, c/o N.C. Center for Public Policy Research. P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, NC 27602. Nominations must be received by **November 8th**.

ARE YOU TRYING TO GET YOUR MESSAGE ACROSS?

North Carolina Insight would like to help. The magazine is now accepting advertising. Last month, four advertisers demonstrated that they believe advertising in our magazine puts them in touch with North Carolina's legislators, state and local policymakers, the business community, and citizens interested in state government. Thanks to Duke University Press (Durham), Focus Group (Chapel Hill), Holiday Inn (Hillsborough Street/Raleigh), and the Wolfe Group (Winston-Salem) for selecting us to carry their message. We'd like to do the same for you. For information regarding rates, ad design, and schedules, please contact Insight Associate Editor Jack Betts or Development Coordinator Liz Fentress at (919)832-2839.

WE WELCOME NEW STAFF MEMBER MARIANNE KERSEY

We want to welcome Marianne Maxwell Kersey to the Center's staff as Secretary/ Receptionist. A native of Long Island, NY, she replaces Wyounda Haynes, who moved to New York City. Marianne received her undergraduate degree in history from the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA, and her M.S. in Applied History and Social Science from Carnegie-Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA. Marianne's research and writing skills, membership experience garnered from an internship in Washington, DC with a political lobbying organization, and word processing skills make her a most welcome addition to our staff.

PUBLICATIONS YOU MAY FIND TO BE OF INTEREST

Operational Audits on the N.C. Departments of Justice and Insurance. Copies available upon request at no charge from Gwen Canady, Auditor's Office, Legislative Office Building, 300 N. Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC 27611, (919)733-3217.

"Judicial Retention Elections: Do Bar Association Polls Increase Voter Awareness?" Write author William K. Hall, Associate Professor and Chairman of the Department of Political Science at Bradley University, Peoria, IL 61606.

Our sister center in California has published one of the best books available on the workings of the press in covering public affairs and government -- Reporting: An Inside View, by Lou Cannon. Available for \$5.25 from the California Journal, 1714 Capitol Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95814, (916) 444-2840.

TRANSITIONS IN STATE GOVERNMENT

William E. Austin, as the new director of the Division of Soil and Water Conservation in NRCD...Roger W. Bone, former legislator, as the new legislative liaison for the community college system...Roy Carden resigned as the Dept. of NRCD's director of public relations... William C. Deal as the new assistant secretary for administration in Transportation...Scott P. Peace as chairman of the new Small Business Development Council...Maj. Gen. Charles E. Scott as the new adjutant general of the N.C. National Guard...Former state Senator Roger D. Sharpe, of Burke County, as new state director for People for the American Way...The N.C. Department of Justice underwent the following reorganization: (1) Criminal Div. headed by Jim Coman; (2) Civil Div. headed by William Melvin; (3) Administrative Div. headed by William O'Connell; and (4) Trade and Commerce Div. headed by Jean Benoy. The senior deputies report to chief deputy attorney general Andrew Vanore Jr., who in turn answers to attorney general Lacy Thornburg.

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