



FROM THE CENTER OUT

November-December 1986

HUNDREDS ATTEND FORUMS ON POLICIES AFFECTING THE ELDERLY IN N.C.

A series of forums on policies affecting the elderly in North Carolina, sponsored by the N.C. Center and The Ford Foundation, drew 437 participants. The forums -- held in Asheville, Charlotte, Lumberton, and Raleigh from October 14th through 24th -- addressed issues such as services for older adults, health care, work and retirement, funding systems, and whether services to the elderly should be based on age or need. Local planning committees worked with the Center to shape each seminar to address issues affecting the elderly in that particular area.

Seventy-three people served as keynote speakers, panel members, or resource persons. Keynote speakers came from North Carolina, Washington, DC, Boston, MA, and Johns Island, SC. Eight newspapers, three radio stations, and two television stations covered the forums.

Among the state policymakers making presentations were:

Phil Kirk, N.C. Secretary of Human Resources,
Elaine Stoops, director of the Division of Aging,
Barbara Matula, director of the Division of Medical Assistance,
John Tanner, of the Division of Social Services, and
John Young, who staffs the legislature's aging committees and study commissions.

Among the state and local elected officials participating were:

Sen. Helen Marvin of Gaston County,
Rep. Gordon Greenwood of Buncombe County,
Rep. Sidney Locks of Robeson County,
Rep. Aaron Fussell of Wake County,
former Rep. Louise Brennan of Mecklenburg County,
Commissioner Robert Roberts of Bladen County,
Commissioner Carla DuPuy of Mecklenburg County,
Commissioner Fran Waser of Transylvania County, and
Mayor Candace Tongue of Wendell.

Among the local service providers participating were:

Joette Coburn of the Henderson County Dept. of Social Services,
Barbara Barghothi, director of aging programs for the Region D Council of Governments,
Rita Arundell, director of the senior centers for Charlotte/Mecklenburg County,
Jacqueline Glenn, home health program chief for the Mecklenburg County Health Dept.,
Katie Meshaw, director of the Bladen County Senior Center,
Betty Rising, director of aging programs for the Lumber River Council of Government,
Ann Johnson, director of the Durham Coordinating Council for Senior Citizens, and
David Moser, director of the aging unit for the Triangle J Council of Governments.

Echoing a message voiced by many of the conference speakers, John T. Denning, president of the 23-million-member American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and a resident of Clinton, cited eye-opening statistics about the dramatically expanding elderly population. Speaking in Raleigh, Denning said, "The population of those 65 and over in North Carolina increased over 45% from 1970 to 1980. This state also had one of the highest gains in the country in life expectancy."

Featured at the Lumberton forum was another national authority on the elderly, Eric Kingson of Boston College. "All generations have a common stake in family efforts and programs that respond to the needs of people of all ages," said Kingson.

Both experts and elderly citizens agreed that this country is likely to be facing a time of rapidly expanding needs but declining resources. As Congressional staffer Melanie Modlin put it at the Raleigh forum, "We know the budget pie is probably going to continue shrinking, and at the same time, our elderly population is expanding." Modlin pointed out that one of the largest gaps in government programs is any kind of coverage for a catastrophic illness.

Misconceptions about the elderly abound. Contrary to popular belief, most older adults are not frail, helplessly dependent beings in poor health who must live in institutions or in the custody of their children. Current research paints quite a different picture. For instance:

- °Only 5 percent of elderly live in nursing or rest homes.
- °95 percent still live in the community, with three-quarters of them still owning their own homes.
- °70 percent of older adults describe their health as good to excellent.
- °In the past 20 years, the income of the elderly has increased faster than the income of the non-elderly.

But even improvements such as these do not make functioning in a world structured around youth simple for most older Americans. According to Rita Arundell, executive director of the Charlotte/Mecklenburg Senior Center and a speaker at the Charlotte forum, policymakers need to look at existing policies that are outdated and do not meet the needs of all senior citizens.

Take jobs, for instance. "The people who come to us for job assistance are between ages 55 to 82, and 50 percent of them do not qualify for help because they are not low income," said Arundell. When it comes to health care, she continued, "Some citizens may not be on the poverty level but still need Medicaid." The Charlotte forum also featured extensive discussion of the shortage of nursing home beds there.

Comments by speakers and those attending will be included in reports compiled by The Ford Foundation, which is sponsoring these forums and other projects throughout the United States on social welfare policies.

Forum coordinator and North Carolina Insight Editor Bill Finger said, "These forums were an attempt to bring together policymakers and older citizens. What we set out to do, we have done. Now the policymakers must follow up on some of the problems identified by the older adults." Addressing the Lumberton conference, Rep. Sidney Locks (D-Robeson) assured the audience, "This information will not fall on deaf ears." Copies of the special Insight issue on elderly policy (September 1985) have been reprinted and are available for \$6.00 each plus \$1.00 postage and handling.

CENTER RESEARCH ON IRBs GAINS ATTENTION

The latest issue of North Carolina Insight featured an evaluation of the state's use of industrial revenue bonds (IRBs) by Editor Bill Finger. Finger questioned whether IRBs have met the stated goals of attracting new industrial plants to North Carolina, creating new jobs, raising wages, and assisting economically depressed areas in the state. The news media gave extensive attention to this research -- 33 articles in 27 newspapers. N.C. Association of Afternoon Newspapers columnist Paul O'Connor wrote an October 6th column, and Greensboro News & Record editorial writer Dave DuBuisson asked, "Does industry need this subsidy?" DuBuisson wrote, "The Center does not advocate an end to private purpose bonds, though I think its research could easily support that view. The report does note that the new federal tax law will change the rules of the game dramatically." The newspaper of the N.C. Association of County Commissioners, County Lines, also contained an article on the IRB research. Meanwhile, Associate Editor Jack Betts' evaluation of the various state consumer protection programs was featured nationally in State Policy Reports.

USE THE CENTER IN YOUR GIFT-GIVING

If you're looking for ideas for Christmas gifts, look no further than P.O. Box 430, Raleigh 27602. For \$24, you can give that public-spirited friend (or budding politico) 4 issues of Insight magazine, 6 newsletters, and an invitation to our annual policy seminar. We'll even send a card to your designee. Call Trish Eaker at (919) 832-2839 for details.

THE CHANGING FACES IN THE LEGISLATURE

In our June/July/August newsletter, we listed legislators in the 1985-86 General Assembly who would not be returning in 1987. That list was based on the May primary and June run-off results and legislators' decisions not to run for re-election. Now that the November 4th elections have come and gone, we can complete the list of incumbents who will not return in the 1987-88 General Assembly due to a loss in the general election:

| <u>1985-86 Senate Incumbents</u> | <u>District</u> | <u>Lost general election to:</u> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Franklin E. Williams (R-New Hanover) | 7 | Frank Block (D-New Hanover) |
| 2. Wendell H. Sawyer (R-Guilford) | 32 | Mary P. Seymour (D-Guilford) |
| <u>1985-86 House Incumbents</u> | | |
| 1. Stephen W. Wood (R-Guilford) | 28 | Mary Jarrell (D-Guilford) |
| 2. Joe R. Hudson (D-Union) | 34 | Bobby H. Barbee Sr. (R-Stanly) |
| 3. Gene Wilson (R-Watauga) | 40 | Wade F. Wilmouth (D-Watauga) |
| (Wilson replaced Rep. James Cole, who moved his residence to Burlington.) | | |
| 4. Marshall Hall (R-Stokes) | 40 | Judy Hunt (D-Watauga) |

Former state Rep. Austin M. Allran (R-Catawba) moved up to the state Senate, representing District 26. Two members of the 1985-86 General Assembly won election to Congress. Former state Rep. H. Martin Lancaster (D-Wayne) will fill the Congressional seat from the 3rd District, while former state Sen. T. Cass Ballenger (R-Catawba) was elected to the 10th District Congressional seat.

STAFF UPDATES

The N.C. Center is pleased to announce the addition of three new staff members and one promotion within the staff. Please join us in welcoming Patricia Elizabeth Eaker as Development Coordinator; Lori Harris as Researcher/Writer; Marianne Kersey, promoted to Researcher/Writer; and Sharon Moore as Administrative Secretary.

A native of Winchester, VA, Trish Eaker received her B.A. in art history and English literature from Smith College and her M.S. in broadcast journalism from Columbia University. For the past 10 years, Trish has procured funding for a diverse group of nonprofit organizations and was most recently director of development for the N.C. Cultural Preservation Foundation and Historic Hope Foundation. Trish replaces Elizabeth Fentress, who resigned to become the director of development at the N.C. Bar Association.

Lori Harris, a Greensboro native, received her B.A. in public policy analysis from UNC-CH and her Masters in public policy at the University of Michigan, where she was administrative assistant for the Institute of Public Policy Studies and program coordinator for the Career Planning and Placement Center. An Alfred P. Sloan Fellow, Lori is also a former Center intern and former intern with the City of Greensboro.

Long Island native Marianne Kersey is also no stranger to the Center since she served as Administrative Secretary for the Center for the past year. She has a B.A. in history from Holy Cross College and an M.S. in applied history and social science from Carnegie-Mellon University. A Rockefeller Fellow, she worked as a consultant for the N.Y. State Dept. of Environmental Conservation and as a lobbying assistant in Washington, D.C.

Lori and Marianne replace long-time Center researchers Lacy Maddox and Jim Bryan. Jim entered Wake Forest University Law School this fall, while Lacy resigned to devote more time to her printing business and to a study of the state's tax structure for the League of Women Voters of N.C.

Extensive travel is one common experience many Center staffers share, and Sharon Moore is no exception. Before settling in North Carolina in 1984, the Michigan native lived in Pennsylvania, Saudi Arabia, and Texas. In Houston, Sharon worked as a control systems technologist and a material technologist for Bechtel Petroleum Company. Prior to joining the Center, Sharon was a secretary for the state and federal lobbyists in the public affairs department of Carolina Power and Light Company.

FOUNDATION GRANTS AND CORPORATE CONTRIBUTIONS

Foundations, corporations, and individuals have demonstrated their support for the Center this fall through generous contributions. We extend our special thanks to new corporate contributor Jefferson-Pilot Corporation, which donated stock worth \$1026 to the Center in October. We also welcome new corporate member United Guaranty Corporation.

Just as important as the new contributors are those corporations who renewed their support for the Center this year. Our sincere appreciation to the following:

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|--------|
| Philip Morris USA | \$2000 | Hardee's Food Systems, Inc. | \$ 500 |
| AT&T | 1000 | Nucor Corporation | 500 |
| Carolina Telephone & Telegraph Co. | 1000 | Peoples Bank & Trust Company | 300 |
| Southern Bell | 1000 | Harper Companies International | 100 |
| Universal Leaf Tobacco Company | 1000 | | |

We'd also like to acknowledge our gratitude to The New York Times Company Foundation for its \$5000 contribution. The New York Times owns four newspapers in North Carolina in Hendersonville, Lenoir, Lexington, and Wilmington. And last, but certainly not least, we thank Board member Virginia Foxx for her gracious gift of \$250.

The Center is most appreciative of all of these recent gifts and of the assistance of Board members Dan Blue, Virginia Foxx, Karen Gottovi, Mary Hopper, Hawk Johnson, Betty Chafin Rash, Jerry Shinn, McNeill Smith, Bob Spearman, and Frances Walker in these fundraising efforts.

A WARM WELCOME TO THESE NEW MEMBERS

September
Ann Weeks

Robeson County Clergy
Linda Rudisill
Southern Legislative Conference
Emily Wilson

October
Sheila Bumgarner
Center for Improving Mountain Living
Paul Davis
Juanita Dixon
Fayetteville Technical Institute
Helen F. Ladd
Fred L. Preyer

November
Ann McColl Bryan
Elsie Cunningham
East Carolina Univ. School of Social Work
Mary L. Hopper
David Nash

WHY DON'T YOU MAKE A SPECIAL YEAR-END CONTRIBUTION?

You made an important decision when you became a Center member. You chose to become involved in an informed way about the complex issues facing our state. That is why we ask you, only once a year, to make a special year-end contribution to the Center above and beyond your membership dues. The letter coming to you soon is not a membership renewal but a request to help us keep our funding sources diverse and help us ensure we do not become overly reliant on any one source of financial support. More than 60 of our members made such a contribution last year, and it was one of the highlights of our year.

With your help, our research on state government programs and public policy questions can continue to speak with a truly independent voice -- with the respect you helped us earn. So please, reaffirm your commitment to the Center and make a special year-end contribution now. Your tax deductible donation goes a long way at the Center, and it doesn't travel far from home.

* * * * *

N.C. Center for Public Policy Research
P. O. Box 430
Raleigh, NC 27602

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Raleigh, NC 27611
Permit No. 1121