



FROM THE CENTER OUT

March-April-May 1987

CENTER PUBLISHES GUIDE TO LEGISLATURE

You can't tell the players without a program, but with the latest edition of the state's premier guide to the N.C. General Assembly, you can find out who's who and what's what in the Tar Heel Legislature. Entitled Article II: A Guide to the 1987-88 N.C. Legislature, the book contains pictures, biographical information, committee assignments, and voting records on all 170 members of the state House and Senate. This is the sixth edition of the guide, which the Center began publishing during the 1977-78 General Assembly.

"We publish the guide to provide information to the voters of North Carolina about their elected representatives," says Lori Ann Harris, a Researcher/Writer for the Center who co-authored the guide. "We think it is the best of the directories available because it is the only one which contains votes on 15 selected bills, a record of how many bills each legislator sponsored and got enacted, and past rankings of legislators' effectiveness, if they have served in prior sessions," adds Harris. Also included in the 222-page guide are:

- House and Senate district maps,
- business and home addresses,
- party affiliation, district number, and counties represented,
- number of terms served,
- seat numbers,
- occupation and education,
- committee assignments,
- bills introduced,
- past effectiveness rankings (1977-85), and
- a new section on demographics in the legislature and trends since 1971.

"The demographics of the legislature have changed dramatically," says Marianne Kersey, the Center's other Researcher/Writer who co-authored the guide. In 1971, 68 members were lawyers. This session, there are only 44. In the 16 intervening years, the legislature has changed so that it now contains more women, blacks, Republicans, persons in the real estate business, retirees, and educators.

Category	Number in General Assembly	
	1971	1987
Women	2	24
Blacks	2	16
Republicans	31	46
Persons in the Real Estate Business	7	21
Retirees	11	21
Educators	7	15

Legislative turnover rates, traditionally stable, nose-dived this year. The turnover ratio had been about the same -- 36 percent -- every session since 1971. "However," says Kersey, "the turnover ratio for the 1987 General Assembly is down to 12 percent in the Senate and 21 percent in the House, so we'll just have to see whether this trend in favor of incumbents is a long-term trend. A decline in legislative turnover rates is also taking place nationally."

In addition to information on the legislators, the guide also contains rankings by the legislators, lobbyists, and capital news correspondents of the 20 most influential lobbyists. Historically, former legislators who turn to lobbying as part of their law practices have been rated among the most influential.

The guide is available for \$13.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling from the N.C. Center, P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, NC 27602, or call Sharon Moore at (919) 832-2839.

PRISON ISSUE OF INSIGHT GETS WIDESPREAD NEWS COVERAGE

The latest issue of North Carolina Insight, the Center's quarterly magazine, received widespread news coverage across the state as the public's attention focused on the state's corrections problems. The 108-page theme issue on state prison policies was designed to assist the General Assembly in sifting through the prisons dilemma and making tough decisions on a host of issues ranging from new prison construction to fair sentencing to expanding alternatives to incarceration.

The recent emergency actions by the N.C. General Assembly to keep the federal courts from taking over the N.C. prison system are only the first steps toward addressing long-term prison problems, the Center said in a March 30 news release announcing publication of the issue.

"The cap of 18,000 on the prison population and the new \$15 million appropriation to relieve overcrowding -- legislative actions taken earlier this month -- were important and dramatic," said Bill Finger, editor of Insight. "But they were taken in a crisis atmosphere with little real discussion. Can the legislature now move beyond emergency responses and tackle the broader, systemic issues? The legislature and the Martin administration need to link their emergency prison building program with a longer-term view of examining the location of punishment. Is it better to punish certain offenders in state prisons or county jails? Is it better to punish certain types of offenders behind bars or in community-based punishment programs? These are the crucial questions ahead," says Finger.

"This issue of Insight delineates thoroughly all the programs of the state's punishment system and identifies the missing links," said Stephanie Bass, executive director of the N.C. Center on Crime and Punishment, a nonprofit organization working to improve the state criminal justice system. "Insight makes us all conscious of two key words -- 'comprehensive' and 'leadership.' We've just bought time with the emergency actions. Now, there is an imperative to act."

At last count, that issue of Insight was cited in 22 newspaper articles, five editorials or columns, and in at least six radio stories and three television news broadcasts. Among the major newspapers covering the issue and citing the Center's research were The Charlotte Observer, the Greensboro News & Record, the Winston-Salem Journal, and The Durham Morning Herald, as well as the nationally circulated Comparative State Politics Newsletter. "Prison problems need more effort, study says," blazed the headline in the Greensboro paper; "Lawmakers must look at total prison picture," announced the Forest City Courier in its coverage.

That's not all. The Durham Morning Herald noted editorially, "The N.C. Center for Public Policy [Research] wisely advises that solutions like releasing all nonviolent offenders are too simplistic -- and dangerous." The Winston-Salem Journal commented, "An agenda of sorts was laid out" by the Center. And Greensboro News & Record Editorial Page Editor John Alexander wrote about the issue in his Sunday column headlined, "It's time to clean up prison mess." Alexander noted that prison reform was politically unpopular, but goaded the state's leaders to take action. "What's needed now is the political leadership to sort through the various alternatives and devise a program of genuine prison reform," Alexander wrote. "If Gov. Jim Martin and Lt. Gov. Bob Jordan really want the voters' endorsement in 1988, solving the state's prison mess would be a splendid way to earn it."

NEW CENTER BOARD MEMBERS

The Center is pleased to welcome four new members to the Board of Directors. Elected to the Board for a three-year term are **James Bell** of Greensboro, **William H. Edmondson** of Durham, **Pat Nedwidek** of Cary, and **Edward O'Neil** of Chapel Hill. Bell is Director of Public Affairs for Burlington Industries, and Edmondson is Vice President of Government Affairs for Glaxo, Inc. Nedwidek is immediate past President of the League of Women Voters of Wake County, while O'Neil serves as Assistant Dean in the Office of Institutional Development at UNC-CH's Dental School.

CORPORATE SUPPORT FOR THE CENTER CONTINUES TO GROW

The Center achieved a new milestone this spring in its continuing effort to broaden its base of support. After three years of vigorous effort, the Center has attracted more than 100 North Carolina corporations and businesses as active financial supporters of the Center's work. The Center's Board of Directors has been particularly helpful in expanding this base, and so have many of the Center's members.

Special thanks go to these new supporters of the Center:

Barnhill Contracting Company	\$1000	Cone Mills Corporation	\$100
Brendle's, Inc.	500	Datis Corporation	100
<u>Greensboro News & Record</u>	500	Durham Herald Company	100
Central Carolina Bank	100	Glen Raven Mills	100

And the Center's continuing thanks go to those corporations who renewed their support for the Center. They include the following:

<u>The Charlotte Observer</u>	\$2000	Astro, Inc.	\$250
R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company	1500	Fayetteville Publishing Co.	250
First Union Corporation	1000	Barclays American Corporation	150
General Electric	1000	Northern Telecom	150
Unifi, Inc.	1000	Carolina Asphalt Pavement Association	100
Arthur Andersen & Company	500	Firstcorp, Inc.	100
Burroughs Wellcome Company	500	N.C. Health Care Facilities Association	100
Piedmont Airlines	500		

A WARM WELCOME TO THESE NEW MEMBERS

James Bryan	Martha W. Lowrance
Brad Crone	David W. McNeill
Robert M. Duell	Moore & Van Allen
ECU School of Social Work and Allied Health	Jane H. Mosely
Lois Marie Eure	N.C. Office of Administrative Hearings
Charles D. Evans	N.C. State University, D. H. Hill Library
Ann Fowler	Rep. Beverly M. Perdue
E. Pat Hall	Margaret B. Prizer
James Jerome Hartzell	Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratory
Johnston Technical College	Donna B. Slawson
John Kime	William R. Stevenson
	Mark S. Stinneford

UPCOMING INSIGHT EXAMINES MERIT SELECTION OF JUDGES, PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

The June 1987 issue of North Carolina Insight offers readers a solid line-up of articles -- including a feature package by Associate Editor Jack Betts on the movement to reform the way the state chooses its trial and appellate judges. This package explores the history of the "merit selection" movement in the United States and in North Carolina, explains how it would work and how other states choose their judges, and examines the issues in a pro-con debate that outlines the advantages and disadvantages of merit selection.

The June issue also includes a guide to the use of the state's Public Records Law, a story on the decline of radio journalism in North Carolina, a comparison of the competing economic development plans of Gov. Jim Martin and Lt. Gov. Bob Jordan, a look at three key trends that have shaped the N.C. General Assembly since 1971, and a recap of Insight Editor Bill Finger's recent presentation to the Aging Committee of the N.C. House of Representatives.

CREDIT INSURANCE BILL INTRODUCED

Partly as a result of the Center's study of credit insurance published in the November 1985 issue of Insight, the legislature is moving to reduce credit insurance rates and make it optional for consumers who take out loans on autos, appliances, furniture, and a host of other items. Sponsored by Rep. Ray Fletcher (D-Burke) and backed by House Speaker Liston Ramsey and Insurance Commissioner Jim Long, the bill (HB 1022) will lower rates by about 12.5 percent across the board. At an April 29 press conference announcing the agreement, Commissioner Long paid tribute to the Center, telling reporters, "There was an excellent study done in the fall of 1985 on this by Insight magazine, and I commend it to your attention."

CENTER TO CELEBRATE 10TH ANNIVERSARY ON SEPTEMBER 25

Write it down on your social calendar now: The long-awaited 10th Anniversary Celebration of the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research will be held in Raleigh on Friday, Sept. 25, 1987. As a Center member, you'll be receiving an invitation to the gala affair later, but here's a quick glimpse at the agenda: an afternoon seminar on Friday, followed by a banquet that evening at a Raleigh hotel, complete with speakers and honorees. The afternoon speakers will give their hopes and views on what directions North Carolina should pursue in the next 10 years. Center members are invited to attend and meet with Center Board members and Center staffers -- past and present -- and with other members of the general public. The cost of tickets for the banquet hasn't yet been determined, but the Center plans to charge only for the actual cost of the event in order to encourage all members to attend. Please plan to join us September 25.

INS AND OUTS IN STATE GOVERNMENT AND ELSEWHERE

Ins: William A. Dunn of Roanoke Rapids to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce.... William T. Graham of Winston-Salem as Commissioner of Banks, succeeding James S. Currie, whose term expired in March....Howard H. Haworth of Hickory, the former Secretary of Commerce, William Meekins of Elizabeth City, and Patricia H. Neal of Durham, as members of the State Board of Education....Sam Taylor as Director of Public Information for the N.C. Department of Commerce, up from Assistant Director.

Outs: Kevin T. Kennelly, Deputy Secretary of Commerce, to take a post with a private company in Charlotte....Former state Sen. Ben T. Tison III of Charlotte, nominated to be Commissioner of Banks, failed to win legislative confirmation.

Others: Smith W. Bagley of Winston-Salem and Washington, D.C. to be Finance Vice Chairman of the National Democratic Party....Marc Finlayson, reporter with the UNC Center for Public Television, to become lobbyist and Director of Governmental Relations for the N.C. Textile Manufacturers Association....Thomas A. Husted of Utah to be Executive Director of the N.C. Association of Educators, succeeding the late K. Z. Chavis....Former state Sen. Wilma Woodard, to work as a lobbyist with former state Sen. Sam Johnson of Raleigh.

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