



NORTH CAROLINA CENTER FOR
PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH INC.

NEWS RELEASE

For Release: May 5, 1987

N.C. CENTER RELEASES 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. The Center began publishing directories during the 1977-78 General Assembly. This edition is in a pocket-sized format.

"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.

The effectiveness rankings are the most controversial feature of the guide. At the end of each regular legislative session, the Center surveys the legislators themselves, registered lobbyists, and capital news correspondents and asks them to rank the effectiveness of individual legislators. The Center then publishes the scores. "This was an evaluation of legislators by their peers and by people who saw them working every day," explains Marianne Kersey, the Center's other Researcher/Writer who co-authored the guide. The rankings contained in this edition of Article II were originally released in April 1986.

Also included in the 220-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 trends in how the demographics of the legislature have changed since 1971.

The demographics of the legislature have changed dramatically, say Harris and Kersey. In 1971, there were 68 members who 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.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Number in General Assembly</u>	
	<u>1971</u>	<u>1987</u>
Women	2	24
Blacks	2	16
Republicans	31	46
Persons in the Real Estate Business	7	21
Retirees	11	21
Educators	7	15
(not including retired educators)		

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 being seen 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 at P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, NC 27602 (919) 832-2839. It is a handy reference book for news reporters, lobbyists, and citizens interested in the legislature.

The N.C. Center for Public Policy Research is an independent, nonprofit research and educational organization based in Raleigh. It was formed in 1977 to study state government programs and important public policy questions in North Carolina. The Center receives general operating support from the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation and Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, 100 corporate contributors, and 600 individual members. Past research efforts by the Center include studies of all boards and commissions in state government, for-profit hospitals, and state prison policy.

* * *

For more information, call Lori Ann Harris or Marianne Kersey, N.C. Center for Public Policy Research, at (919) 832-2839.