



FROM THE CENTER OUT

March - April - May 1988

THE POLITICS AND POLICY THAT GOVERN OUR LAND

The most recent issue of North Carolina Insight, a special double issue released in March, is a hot item. The Center had sold more than 100 extra copies by the second day after its release. The issue, entitled "Resources at Risk: Environmental Policy in North Carolina," contains new research on two issues in particular -- local landfills and the effects of the Hardison Amendments on state environmental policy. With respect to landfills, the Center's key research finding was that 12 county landfills have less than two years of life remaining and at least 35 of the state's 119 landfills have less than five years to go. After that, counties and cities face difficulty in finding the money to purchase land for new landfills and operating them under new state standards that require expensive clay or plastic liners and leachate collection systems.

The Center identified two approaches that reduce the amount of municipal waste -- incineration in New Hanover County and recycling in Mecklenburg County. Regardless of what alternative local governments choose to reduce the volume of solid waste, however, the Center notes that additional landfills will still be needed. To help counties and cities deal with their solid waste problems, the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research made five recommendations, including the following three:

First, the N.C. General Assembly should create a statewide revolving loan fund to help cities and counties open landfills and replace those that will soon be filled beyond capacity. Second, the state should expand funding of the model "Pollution Prevention Pays" program, which prevents, reduces, or recycles wastes before they become pollutants. Third, the General Assembly should set up a study commission to examine whether a beverage container deposit law would (a) significantly reduce solid waste and thereby address local landfill problems, or (b) harm the growing container recycling industry in North Carolina.

Citing specific instances where state environmental policy has been impaired or delayed, the Center also called for repeal of the Hardison Amendments, three laws that say North Carolina's environmental regulations can be no more stringent than federal regulations. In the 1980s, the federal Environmental Protection Agency has come under increasing fire for failing to clean up the environment. Both Gov. Jim Martin and Lt. Gov. Bob Jordan say the Hardison Amendments could actually discourage economic development in North Carolina, and that the amendments should be repealed.

Since this issue had generated more heat than light in the past, the Center decided to conduct research on whether the Hardison Amendments had actually affected environmental policy or were likely to do so in the future. The Center's research uncovered six instances in which the amendments have affected or will affect state environmental policy and policymaking, including the following three:

1. In 1975, North Carolina had one of the nation's stronger air pollution programs. But after the 1975 General Assembly adopted the Hardison Amendment on air quality, the state's standards were lowered to allow higher overall levels of industrial ambient air emissions.

2. Former Secretary of Natural Resources and Community Development (NRCD) Joe Grimsley told the Center the Hardison Amendments played a role in preventing the state from adopting a ban on biocides, which state officials feared would contaminate the state's surface waters.

3. The Hardison Amendment on air quality says the state cannot adopt standards where the federal government has none unless the Environmental Management Commission first considers "an assessment of the economic impact of the proposed standards." So far, the EPA has not adopted its own toxic air standards. Thus, the state of North Carolina is at least temporarily handcuffed, limited to controlling only the four pollutants that EPA does regulate, while it waits for the money to finish the economic assessment and adopt its own standards.

RANKINGS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ALL N.C. LEGISLATORS

As many of you know, the Center has compiled and published rankings of the effectiveness of all 170 legislators in the N.C. General Assembly since 1978. At the end of the regular legislative session in odd-numbered years, we ask the legislators themselves, registered lobbyists, and capital news correspondents to rank each legislator in terms of his or her effectiveness during the past session. The new rankings on members of the 1987 General Assembly were released on April 12th. The 1987-88 ratings mark the sixth time the Center has undertaken such an effort. The response rate to this most recent survey was the highest ever, with an overall response rate of 57%, which is far above standards of statistical reliability.

The effectiveness ranking is but one part of the Center's biennial publication, Article II: A Guide to the 1987-88 N.C. Legislature. Article II contains biographical and voting information on each legislator. Also included are business and home addresses, party affiliation, district numbers, counties represented, number of terms, occupation and education, committee appointments, number of bills sponsored and number ratified, individual votes on 15 of the most important bills in the past session, and past effectiveness rankings. Copies of Article II and the supplement containing the new effectiveness rankings are available from the Center for \$18.30 a set. Write the Center at P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, NC 27602.

COMING UP

The June issue of North Carolina Insight will take a close look at the rent-to-own industry. Rent-to-own operators say they're performing a service by providing televisions, furniture, appliances, and the like to consumers who otherwise couldn't afford them, but consumer advocates argue that those consumers pay far more in interest and rental charges than they do on other kinds of loan or rental transactions. Do other states allow rent-to-own charges like those permitted in North Carolina, or do they treat them like other interest rate regulation? Anne Jackson, Raleigh writer and former reporter for The New York Times regional newspapers, will examine these questions and others.

David Perkins, a freelance writer in Raleigh, has also handed in his homework on school bus safety for the next issue. His report will feature research on North Carolina's record in school bus safety, giving particular attention to whether 16- and 17-year-old drivers have higher accident rates. Other articles will examine the long ballot in N.C., as well as how citizens can find out how their legislators voted. Coming soon in a mailbox near you.

LONG-TERM RESEARCH AGENDA ADOPTED

Many thanks to the more than a dozen members who submitted comments to us regarding the Center's future research agenda and priorities. Your comments are valued by the Center staff and were reviewed by the Board. At their March meeting, the Board approved joining with the UNC Center for Public Television in producing an hour-long special on the for-profit hospital movement. From there, we'll go to campaign finance and then to a four-part study on higher education in North Carolina. Poverty in N.C. and state-level issues in health care will be the focus of future magazine theme issues.

PUBLIC SCHOOL FORUM'S SCHOOL FINANCE STUDY

In an effort to provide a "yardstick" against which policymakers can measure local school support, the Public School Forum of N.C. recently conducted a study of community support for the state's 140 school systems. Using property values, per capita income, taxation rates, and actual total expenditures for schools, the study evaluates local support for schools in the context of wealth and actual effort. A detailed report of the study's findings is available from the Forum, 117 Glenwood Ave., Raleigh, NC 27603, or call (919) 832-1584.

WHO OWNS NORTH CAROLINA, a guide to N.C.'s largest landowners, was recently released by the Institute of Southern Studies. County-by-county lists identify more than 8,000 individuals, companies, public agencies, estates, and joint owners with 300 acres or more, their hometowns, number of parcels and acreage owned, and township

where property is located. The book contains statistics for comparing counties on 25 economic, social, and political variables. The 420-page book is available for \$65 to companies and \$30 to nonprofits and individuals from the Institute at P.O. Box 531, Durham, NC 27702, or call (919) 688-8167.

FELONY SENTENCING IN NORTH CAROLINA, 1976-1986

This report by the Institute of Government measures the effects of the determinate sentencing law, known as the Fair Sentencing Act (FSA). Contact Stevens Clarke at (919) 966-4399, or write the Institute of Government, Knapp Bldg., 059A, UNC-CH, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.

ELECTION LAWS IN NORTH CAROLINA: AN ANALYSIS

The League of Women Voters of N.C. has released a 32-page analysis of election laws and the voting process. The guide is designed for citizens and for local Boards of Elections in training registration and voting personnel. Send \$2.75 to the League at 215 N. Dawson St., Raleigh, NC 27603, or call (919) 839-5532.

A WARM WELCOME AND THANKS TO THESE NEW CENTER MEMBERS:

Agricultural Resources Center	N.C. Dept. of Natural Resources and Community Development
Donald Beeson & Alice S. Glover	Kathy Neal
Herbert H. Browne	James A. Norton
Kelly Chambers	Dawn L. Parks
John Corne	R. Alfred Patrick
John Dornan	Claude E. Pope
Fayetteville Technical Community College	Geraldine Ritter
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Ruth R. Klemmer	Vance-Granville Community College
Pat McCain	James Van Hecke
Methodist College Library	Tom Warshauer
N.C. Dept. of Commerce	

OUR THANKS TO OUR CORPORATE CONTRIBUTORS

The Center wishes to acknowledge and thank these new corporate members:

ARA Services, Inc.	\$100
Atlantic States Bankcard Association	100
Brady Trane Service, Inc.	100
Bristol-Myers Corporation	100
Cape Industries	100
The Chapel Hill Newspaper	100

And the Center's continuing thanks go to these corporations which recently renewed their support for the Center:

Philip Morris, USA	2000
Branch Banking and Trust Company	1000
Burlington Industries Foundation	1000
Consolidated Diesel Company	1000
Ecusta	1000
General Electric	1000
Golden Corral Corporation	1000
Macfield Inc.	1000
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Arthur Andersen & Company	500
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N.C. Retail Merchants Association	500

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Planters National Bank	500
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Weyerhaeuser Company	500
N.C. Natural Gas Corporation	300
Fayetteville Publishing Company	250
Glen Raven Mills	250
Hoechst Celanese Corporation	250
Astro, Inc.	100
Harper Companies International	100

ACCORDING TO OUR READER SURVEY

Insight magazine does not get chunked - 78% of you read 4 of the last 4 issues
70% of you saved 4 of the last 4 issues
88% of you regularly save back issues

INS AND OUTS IN STATE GOVERNMENT AND ELSEWHERE

Ins: Jacob F. Alexander III as deputy assistant transportation secretary in the N.C. Dept. of Transportation....Lonnie Blizzard as president of Lenoir Community College....Lorrie L. Dollar as chief legal counsel for the Dept. of Correction.... Harry Gooder as chairman of the UNC-CH faculty....Paul Hardin as chancellor of the University of N.C. at Chapel Hill....Kenneth R. Harris appointed to the State Board of Education by Gov. Jim Martin....Ginger M. Hegler as manager of detention in the Div. of Youth Services....Ben G. Irons II as attorney for East Carolina University.... William F. Lane as assistant secretary for small business in the Dept. of Commerce.... Larry K. Linker as president of Randolph Community College....Cy K. Lynn as director of marketing services for the Dept. of Community Colleges....Lisa B. Morris as director of nursing for the N.C. Special Care Center in Wilson....Dr. Robert F. Patterson as chairman of the Board of Directors for the Governor Morehead School for the Blind.... Grace J. Rohrer as director of the Appalachian Humanities Project, a leadership development venture at Appalachian State University....Stephen M. Wallis as acting deputy secretary of state for securities.

Outs: Donald S. Beilman as president of the Microelectronics Center of N.C.... Merrill Eisenbud as chairman of the N.C. Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Authority....Gordon McRoberts as director of the Dept. of Commerce's export marketing program....Costas Melissaris as chairman of the State Board of Barber Examiners.... Lewis H. Myers as assistant secretary in the Dept. of Commerce....Hayden B. Renwick as associate dean of the UNC-CH college of arts and sciences....Samuel R. Williamson Jr. as provost of UNC-CH.

Other Ins: David M. Blackwell as publisher of the N.C. Lawyers Weekly....E. Ann Christian as executive vice president and general counsel of the N.C. Academy of Trial Lawyers....Susan R. Valauri state director of the National Federation of Independent Business, appointed to the N.C. Small Business Administration's Advisory Council.

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