



FROM THE CENTER OUT

The Newsletter of the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research...A voice for better government
May-June-July, 1998

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Center Celebrates 20th Anniversary Year

The Center celebrated its 20th anniversary year at a March 11th event called "An Evening with Four Educators." CNN national assignment reporter John Holliman moderated a discussion of key issues in education policy with UNC President Molly Corbett Broad, N.C. Central University Chancellor Julius Chambers, N.C. Community College System President Martin Lancaster, and Superintendent of Public Instruction Mike Ward. The panelists discussed such questions as key accomplishments and challenges for the state's universities, community colleges, and public schools, how to increase access to higher education, and whether a state lottery would provide a good source of funds for education.

As part of the celebration, leaders in government, business, philanthropy, and the media paid tribute to the Center. Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., a Democrat, said, "North Carolina is very fortunate to have an organization that has worked so hard to make the state a better place for children and families. For 20 years, the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research has served as one of the finest examples of such public service. The Center's thorough research on issues facing our state has helped shape policy, inform our people, and inspire constructive debate. I congratulate the Center on two decades of service and for making such a significant difference in the lives of North Carolina's citizens."

Phil Kirk, President of N.C. Citizens for Business and Industry, former chief of staff for Republican Governor James G. Martin, and former Center Board Chairman, said, "When thinking North Carolinians want unbiased, objective information, they turn to the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research. Since its founding, the Center's staff and Board have earned the confidence of thousands of our citizens, including the news media and our elected and appointed officials."

Mary Mountcastle, a member of the Board of Directors for the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation and also a Trustee for the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, said, "The Center continues to do extraordinary work and to make us, your funding partners, look very wise. We congratulate you on what you have accomplished in improving public policy and the lives of North Carolina's citizens."

In media coverage of the anniversary, a *Transylvania Times* editorial said, "This state is very fortunate to have the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research, an independent state-level think tank and government watchdog... On behalf of all citizens, we extend thanks to the Center for all that it has done during the past 20 years to improve the quality of life for all North Carolinians."

Jack Betts, associate editor for *The Charlotte Observer*, wrote a column titled "20 Years in the Public's Interest," which said, "In an age when fewer citizens have time for heavy reading and sober reflection on the way the state is governed, or how public policy research and analysis might improve the services government delivers, the longevity of the Center, and the respect in which it is held, is remarkable... It's something of a rarity in the think-tank business. It has a non-ideological outlook that requires its board of directors to reflect the political, demographic and geographic diversity of the state. It has a tradition of accommodating opposing points of view in its sometimes heavy-duty research projects and book-length reports. Its board chairs have included conservatives and liberals who have insisted on the institution's intellectual independence."

And though he didn't like the event itself, Greensboro *News & Record* columnist David Dubuisson had words of praise for the Center. He wrote, "The North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research has been a state treasure for two decades, a rare blend of substance and objectivity. It has made measurable improvements in the quality of government North Carolinians enjoy. In its studies over the years, and its admirable journal, *North Carolina Insight*, the Center has always prodded this state to examine itself candidly and to do better... The Center is one of the things other states envy about North Carolina."

If you missed your chance to attend the 20th anniversary program in person, you can catch it on Time Warner Cable affiliates. Time Warner videotaped the event and is showing it statewide on local cable channels.

Help Us Complete the Sustaining Fund Campaign

In 1996, the Center began a \$2 million Sustaining Fund Campaign designed to fulfill the following purposes:

◆ To extend the Center's independent, nonpartisan research to public libraries and teachers of government in the public schools, community colleges, and public and private colleges and universities;

◆ To increase use and coverage of our work by the broadcast media, including partnerships with (a) the commercial, 90-station N.C. Radio News Network; (b) WUNC-FM and other public radio stations in N.C.; (c) WTVD Television in Durham and other ABC affiliates; and (d) Time Warner Cable affiliates;

◆ To move the Center's research onto the Internet through the World Wide Web with links at multiple sites such as the university network called Sunsite, Charlotte's Web, Raleigh's Nando.net, Durham's CitySearch, and other computer networks; and

◆ To allow for future expansion of the Center's independent, nonpartisan efforts to foster informed debate on significant public policy issues facing North Carolina.

We have raised \$1.85 million toward our \$2 million goal from foundations, corporations, and individuals in North Carolina. We need you, our Center members, to help us reach our goal. There are three ways you can give:

• contributing or pledging whatever you can now;

• making a planned future gift to the Center through a bequest in your will or consulting your attorney about using other advantageous legal options; or

• becoming a Charter Donor in the Center's new circle of Individual Donors who pledge to give \$1,000 - \$5,000 a year for five years. *We only need 30 more Center members to step forward with this type of pledge.*

Please consider these options seriously. We ask each one of you to give in some way to help us ensure the Center's future service to North Carolina. Thank you!

Center Releases Special Issue of *Insight* on Key Issues in State Economic Development Policy

The Center's theme issue of *North Carolina Insight* on state economic development policy hit Center member mailboxes in January. At 124 pages, this double issue of *Insight* covered everything from trends in the North Carolina economy to how the state is playing the incentives game, to the relative state tax burden on North Carolina businesses. We highlighted two articles with news releases — one on rural economic development and the other evaluating the state's job training programs. The Center's examination of rural economic development issues received newspaper coverage in 19 articles, as well as broadcast coverage on the 90-station North Carolina News Network, a two-hour talk show on WPTF-Radio, WUNC Public TV, and a half-hour television special by WTVD-NewsChannel 11 in Durham. Our analysis showed where North Carolina's 65 nonmetropolitan or "rural" counties lagged their metropolitan or "urban" counterparts. Among the findings:

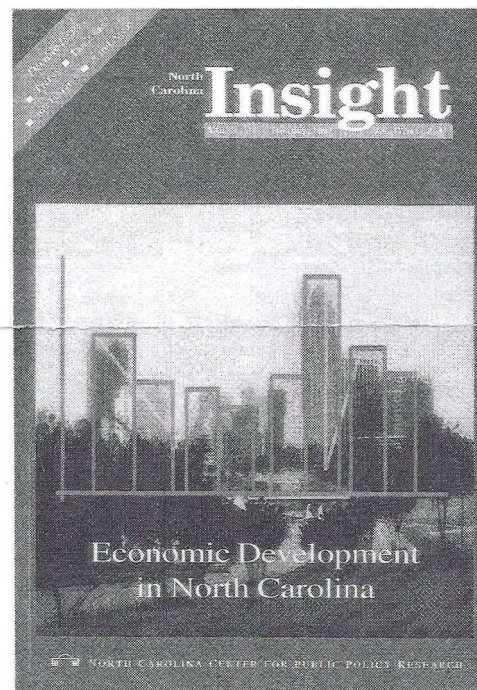
Per capita income: Residents of rural counties earned almost \$3,800 less per capita than residents in urban counties, with rural per capita earnings averaging \$17,031 compared to \$20,830 in metro areas.

Population: Metropolitan areas added population at nearly twice the rate of nonmetropolitan areas from 1990 to 1996, with urban areas growing by 12 percent and rural areas registering only a 7.3 percent population increase. The counties projected to lose population throughout the 1990s -- Alleghany, Hertford, Hyde, Northampton, Tyrrell, and Washington -- all are rural.

New jobs: Urban counties added jobs at nearly twice the pace of rural counties from 1990 to 1996, with metro counties registering a 10.9 percent increase in total employment compared to only a 5.7 percent gain for rural areas.

In addition, the Center noted three indicators from the U.S. Census that illustrate the plight of the rural economy:

(1) rural areas have a less educated workforce, with fewer high school graduates and barely half as many college graduates as urban areas; (2) rural counties registered much higher poverty rates than urban counties (16.5% vs. 11.1%); and (3) a total of 4.4 percent of rural residents lived in substandard housing units compared to 3.0 percent of urban residents.



"These statistics paint a clear picture of an emerging dual economy," says McLaughlin. "Urban areas may worry about killing the economic goose that laid the golden egg, but at least they've got a goose."

State House Rep. Wayne Goodwin (D-Richmond) wrote us, saying, "Over the years I have enjoyed reading your magazine, particularly during my work with the Institute of Government in the midst of my law school days. I found your series of articles on economic development in North Carolina... very compelling and have recommended them to a number of leaders in the 32nd House District and the nearby area."

The Center's evaluation of job training efforts also hit the press (11 newspapers plus radio coverage) when *Insight* editor Mike McLaughlin testified before a Legislative Study Commission on Job Training Programs in January. McLaughlin advocates that the state adopt a standard that job training programs place at least half their participants in employment that lasts at least a year and pays above poverty-level wages.

Center Releases Effectiveness Rankings for All Legislators

In April, the Center released rankings for the effectiveness of all 170 state legislators. For only the second time in 20 years, the Speaker of the House did not capture the top ranking in the N.C. House of Representatives. In 1989, Rep. David Diamont (D-Surry), then-Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, held the distinction of being ranked the most effective Representative. The Speaker of the House in 1989, Joe Mavretic (D-Edgecombe), had taken office after a coalition of dissident Democrats and Republicans unseated four-time Speaker Liston Ramsey.

Based on performance in the 1997 session, Rep. Richard Morgan (R-Moore) was ranked as the most effective legislator in the House. Morgan is chairman of the powerful House Rules Committee and guided major legislation regulating hog farms to passage in 1997. Majority Leader Leo Daughtry (R-Johnston) ranked second, and Speaker of the House Harold J. Brubaker (R-Randolph) ranked third. In the Senate, President Pro Tem Marc Basnight (D-Dare) was ranked the most effective Senator for the third consecutive session.

The Center's rankings are based on surveys completed by legislators themselves, by registered lobbyists based in North Carolina and legislative liaisons who regularly work in the General Assembly, and by capital news correspondents. These three groups were asked to rate each legislator's effectiveness on the basis of participation in committee work, skill at guiding bills through floor debate, general knowledge, and expertise in special fields. The respondents also were asked to consider the respect legislators command from their peers, the political power they hold (by virtue of office, longevity, or personal attributes), their ability to sway the opinions of fellow legislators, and their aptitude for the overall legislative process.

The 1997-98 rankings mark the 11th time the Center has undertaken this comprehensive survey. The first edition in 1978 evaluated the performance of the 1977-78 General Assembly. The response rate to the survey continues to be very high. Ninety-one of the 120 House members (76%) responded to the Center's survey, as did 39 of the 50 Senators (78%), 147 of 308 legislative liaisons and registered lobbyists based in North Carolina (48%), and eight of 28 capital news correspondents (29%).

The rankings garnered statewide press coverage, with 72 articles in 57 newspapers to date. The purpose of the rankings is to give citizens feedback on how their elected representatives are perceived by the three groups who observe legislators' performance every day. And, "effectiveness" is a neutral concept so both liberals and conservatives can finish high. The rankings are not based on selected votes on particular issues, in contrast with the practice of many national advocacy groups. *Governing* magazine has called the Center's rankings "the most straightforward and most widely respected" in the country, and the Kentucky Center for Public Issues recently began a similar effectiveness rankings effort in Kentucky. The N.C. rankings are available from the Center for \$8.50. Rankings of the *Most Influential Lobbyists* will be released after the 1998 legislative session.

Work Underway on Theme Issue of *Insight* on Children with Special Needs

Center staff are rolling up their sleeves to produce a special theme issue of *North Carolina Insight* on the state's role in issues affecting children with special needs. Among the topics to be examined are: an overview of the state's responsibilities in serving children with special needs; an extensive look at special-needs children and public education; and an examination of trends in allocation of funds between the state residential institutions (for the blind, deaf, emotionally disturbed, etc.) and community-based organizations in relation to the number of special-needs children served. Also on tap is an examination of legal issues in educating children with special needs, as well as a look at model school systems or programs that are doing an exceptional job of educating special-needs children. We welcome Center members' thoughts and suggestions as we explore this important topic. WUNC-FM public radio has committed to airing a series of radio specials based on this research.

The Center gratefully acknowledges the support of The Glaxo Wellcome Foundation for this project. The Foundation made a grant of \$100,000 that has been used in 1997-98 to conduct research, interviews, and analysis on issues affecting children with special needs. The Foundation's executive director is Marilyn Foote-Hudson, and Glaxo Wellcome CEO Robert Ingram chairs the Foundation's Board of Directors.

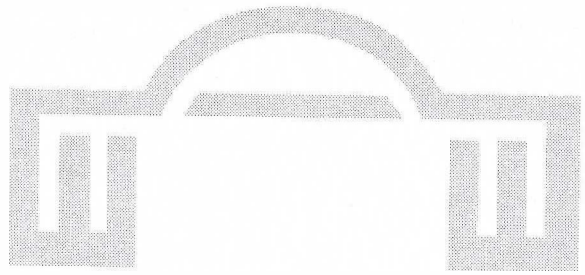
Also in Progress: Major Study of Issues in Higher Education Governance

Last year, the Center's 29-member Board of Directors voted to undertake a comprehensive study of issues in higher education governance in North Carolina. With the 16-campus university system having completed more than 25 years under the UNC Board of Governors, and Molly Corbett Broad taking the helm as the system's new President, our Board thought it was a good time to evaluate what has been accomplished over that time and to examine issues for the future. To meet this objective, the Center plans four reports over the next two years.

Part I will be a historical review of the restructuring in 1971 that led to the creation of the governance system in place today. It will be published this fall. Part II will compare the different types of governing structures for higher education used by all 50 states. Part III will assess the selection process for the UNC Board of Governors and the allocation of powers between the Board of Governors and the local campus Boards of Trustees. Part IV will analyze public policy issues facing the system in the 21st century, including the missions of the system, funding allocations to the 16 campuses, access to higher education, and allocation of new academic programs and elimination of duplicative programs.

1997

Effectiveness Rankings for
Members of the
North Carolina General Assembly



a report by

The North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research

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1997 Year-End Campaign Raises Nearly \$20,000

Thanks to the generosity of more than 100 corporate and individual Center members, the gifts from our 1997 Year-End Appeal totaled nearly \$20,000. This valuable support helps the Center continue to be a voice for better government in North Carolina. Many thanks to these Center Friends!

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Marsha Sherry, honoring
Mebane Rash Whitman

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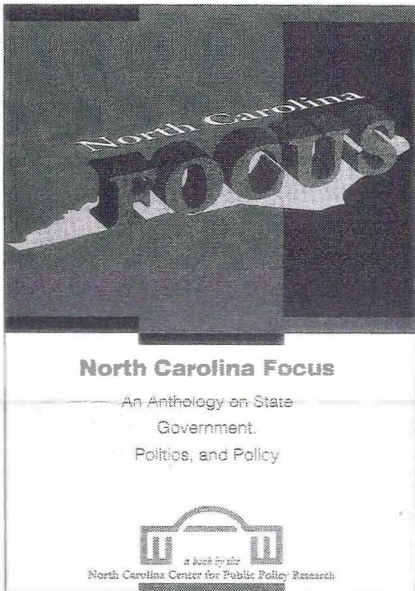
New Center Board Members

The Center welcomes seven new members to its 29-member Board of Directors this year. Elected to the Center's statewide Board for three-year terms (1998-2000) were Philip R. Dixon of Greenville, Donald Harrow of Charlotte, Angie McMillan and Joyce Peters of Raleigh, Russ Stephenson of Wilson, Dr. Bertram Walls of Durham, and Cameron West of Brevard.

Dixon is an attorney and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Trustees for East Carolina University, and Harrow is Vice President of Government Relations for Piedmont Natural Gas Company. McMillan is Director of Intergovernmental Relations for the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. Peters is a legislative lobbyist in her own firm of J.P. Associates. Stephenson, recently retired from Wachovia Bank, is now President and CEO of Stephenson Millwork Co., Inc. Walls is a physician and President of Century America Insurance Company. West is retired and former President of both Pfeiffer and Brevard colleges, as well as former Executive Director of the Illinois Board of Education.

Margaret B. Dardess was elected Chair of the Center's Board for 1998. She is Senior Vice President for Corporate Affairs for Glaxo Wellcome Inc. in Research Triangle Park. Also elected as officers for one-year terms were Dr. Loleta Wood Foster of Fayetteville as Vice Chair, Elaine F. Marshall of Lillington as Secretary, and Peter Keber of Charlotte as Treasurer. Foster is a licensed psychologist and Executive Director of Assessment, Counseling and Consulting, Inc. Marshall was elected N.C. Secretary of State in 1996 and is an attorney and former state legislator, while Keber is Senior Vice President and Manager of State Government Relations for NationsBank.

N.C. Focus Anthology on State Government Available



To help N.C. citizens learn more about their government and to aid teachers of government in universities, community colleges, and public schools, the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research has published *North Carolina Focus: An Anthology on State Government, Politics, and Policy*. The 817-page *North Carolina Focus* is an anthology divided into three sections -- one on the state's political history, another on the state's constitution and related issues, and a third on key public policy issues facing the state in the future.

The opening section of *Focus* provides a unique, four-decade perspective on North Carolina's political history with articles analyzing the state's politics and demographics written in 1949, 1976, 1983, and 1993. These include V.O. Key's seminal article describing North Carolina as a "Progressive Plutocracy." The second section features clear treatment of constitutional issues with chapters on the rights of citizens; the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government; and how state government is financed. The third section of *Focus* examines key public policy issues that currently dominate the political landscape and are crucial to North Carolina's future. These include chapters on economic development, education, health care, the environment, prisons, and the role of the media in covering government and politics.

Focus is available for \$36, which includes postage, handling, and sales tax. To order, contact the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research by phone (919-832-2839), fax (919-832-2847), mail (P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, NC 27602), or order on the Internet (<http://www.nando.net/insider/nccppr>).

Order Form

I'd like to order the following Center publications:

- copies of *North Carolina Focus* (\$36.00 each)
- copies of *Effectiveness Rankings for Members of the 1997-98 N.C. General Assembly* (\$8.50 each)
- copies of *Article II: A Guide to the 1997-98 Legislature* including supplement with committee assignments (\$22.50 each)
- copies of *The Most Influential Lobbyists: Rankings in the 1997-98 N.C. General Assembly* (\$5.00 each, to be released in August 1998)
- copies of *North Carolina Insight*, Vol. 17, No. 2-3, State Economic Development Policy (\$20.00)

Total amount enclosed \$ _____ OR Please bill me \$ _____

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1998-1999 Center Research Agenda

At its March meeting, the Center's Board of Directors adopted the following plan of research for March 1998-March 1999. We welcome comments and ideas from Center members.

Begin study of *Higher Education Governance*: Part I: History of the 1971 Restructuring of the University System;

Part II: Comparison of Higher Education Governance Structures in All 50 States.

Effectiveness rankings of members of the 1997-98 General Assembly

Rankings of the Most Influential Lobbyists in the General Assembly

Insight Theme Issue: Issues affecting children with special needs

Insight General Issue: featuring

1. The sustainability of N.C.'s efforts in education reform
2. Wood chip mills
3. Health care needs of Hispanics/Latinos

Other

1. 20th Anniversary Celebration
2. Conclude \$2 million Sustaining Fund Campaign
3. Op-ed pieces
4. Briefings for policymakers
5. Specials with public radio network
6. Specials with WTVD



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