



**NORTH CAROLINA CENTER FOR
PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH INC.**

News Release

For release on Wednesday, September 8, 2004:
May be broadcast Wednesday A.M. and may
appear in Wednesday newspapers. For an electronic
version of the rankings booklet or the news
release, email samwatts@nccppr.org.

For more information,
call Ran Coble at the
N.C. Center for Public Policy
Research at (919) 832-2839

New Generation of Influential Lobbyists Emerges in Center's Rankings

The latest rankings of the most influential lobbyists in the N.C. General Assembly by the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research show a new generation of lobbyists emerging. The rankings include the first African American ever in the Top 10, ten new faces among the 50 most influential, and a new face at the top of the rankings. The Center's biennial rankings are based on surveys of all state legislators, registered lobbyists based in North Carolina, and the capital news media.

Kevin Howell, legislative liaison for Governor Mike Easley, is the highest-ranked African American lobbyist ever at 10th, moving up 30 spots from 40th in the 2002 rankings. Topping the rankings for the first time is Don Beason of Raleigh, who lobbies on contract for corporate clients such as AT&T, BB&T, IBM, Progress Energy, and Dale Earnhardt Inc., as well as local government entities such as Catawba County, the City of Hickory, and Albemarle Mental Health Centers. Zebulon D. Alley of Raleigh, who lobbies for more than a dozen corporate clients, had held the top spot since 1987 and finished 2nd this year. The 10 new lobbyists ranked among the 50 most influential represent, among other clients, Bank of America, the N.C. Bankers Association, BellSouth, the N.C. Home Builders Association, the N.C. Biosciences Organization, the State Board of Education, and the University of North Carolina.

"The most important resource in the legislative process is information, and a new generation of influential lobbyists is providing much of that information," says Ran Coble, executive director of the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research. "This new generation reflects changes in the state's demographics and economic structure, with seven women and two African Americans among the 50 most influential, and with lobbyists for biotechnology and pharmaceutical interests representing increasingly influential parts of the state's emerging economy," he adds.

The 10 Lobbyists New to the Ranks of the Most Influential

Making their debut in the rankings of the most influential lobbyists in the N.C. General Assembly are Paul H. Stock at 24th representing the N.C. Bankers Association, Betty Turner at 28th representing Bank of America, R. Paul Wilms at 29th for the N.C. Home Builders Association, and Samuel M. Taylor, a contract lobbyist representing the N.C. Biosciences Organization, among others, at 33rd. They are followed by contract lobbyist Ken Melton (then with Alley & Associates and now at the N.C. Department of Revenue) at 35th, Robert Lammé of the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services at 38th, R. Mark Fleming of the University of North Carolina system at 40th, contract lobbyist Richard H. Carlton at 42nd, Debra L. Derr of BellSouth at 43rd, and Linda S. Suggs of the State Board of Education at 49th.

The Demographics of the Most Influential Lobbyists

The rankings of Debra Derr of BellSouth and Kevin Howell of the Governor's Office mark the first time that two African Americans were named among the 50 most influential lobbyists. Seven women were ranked among the most influential. In addition to Turner, Derr, and Suggs, they are Leslie Bevacqua Coman of N.C. Citizens for Business and Industry at 6th; Paula A. Wolf, formerly of the Covenant for N.C.'s Children, at 16th; contract lobbyist Jennie Dorsett at 26th; and Fran Preston of the N.C. Retail Merchants Association at 27th. The average age of all 50 influential lobbyists is 55, with the youngest at 37, and the most senior at 76.

Corporations and Organizations With Extra Clout

The Center noted in its release that at least four organizations have two or more lobbyists listed among the most influential. N.C. Citizens for Business and Industry, the statewide chamber of commerce, continues to have two lobbyists in the top 50 – Leslie Bevacqua Coman at 6th and its President, Phillip J. Kirk Jr., at 22nd. BellSouth Corporation has Jeff Van Dyke at 11th and Derr at 43rd. The N.C. Home Builders Association has J. Michael Carpenter at 21st and Paul Wilms at 29th.

The Governor's Office has three lobbyists ranked among the most influential – Senior Assistant for Governmental Affairs Franklin Freeman at 4th, Legislative Liaison Kevin Howell at 10th, and Senior Policy Advisor for Fiscal Affairs Daniel Gerlach at 44th. These three helped Gov. Mike Easley attain major legislative successes in obtaining funding for his More At Four program for at-risk children and reductions in public schools' class size, as well as his Moving Ahead transportation initiative.

Other State Agencies with Clout

Historically, the only state agency other than the Governor's Office with a lobbyist consistently ranked among the most influential has been the University of North Carolina system. UNC lobbyist Mark Fleming finished 40th this year, bringing UNC back into the top 50 after an absence since 1998.

Robert Lammé at 38th becomes the first legislative liaison for the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services to make the rankings. Lammé is a former staff member for Senate President Pro Tempore Marc Basnight. Linda Suggs ranked 49th, representing the State Board of Education and the N.C. Department of Public Instruction.

Lawyers, Former Legislators, and Contract Lobbyists Still Dominate the Top Spots in Influence

Lawyers and former legislators continue to dominate the top spots in the lobbyist rankings. Twenty-six of the 50 most influential lobbyists, or 52 percent, are lawyers. Eight of the 50 most influential, or 16 percent, are former legislators, and three more are former legislative staffers.

Six influential lobbyists are both lawyers and former legislators. They are Zebulon D. Alley, ranked 2nd; Alexander P. "Sandy" Sands III at 5th; Marvin D. Musselwhite Jr. at 12th; J. Allen Adams at 18th; Samuel H. Johnson at 32nd; and Charles B. Neely Jr. at 50th. The other influential lobbyists who are former legislators but not lawyers are contract lobbyist Roger Bone at 3rd and N.C. Citizens for Business and Industry's Phil Kirk at 22nd. The former legislative staffers are Paul Stock, Jennie Dorsett, and Robert Lammé.

The ranks of the 50 most influential lobbyists are almost evenly split between 26 lobbyists who advocate for a single client and 24 contract lobbyists. Contract lobbyists work for multiple clients under contracts for services that usually cover all or part of a legislative session.

How and Why the Rankings Are Done

This is the twelfth time the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research has released its lobbyist rankings. "The rankings of the most influential lobbyists help citizens understand which key interests and organizations have clout with legislators in North Carolina. They also let citizens know who is *not* represented in the legislature," says the Center's Coble. "The rankings shed light on what is often an invisible process. They show changes in the lobbying profession and which issues are hot," he adds.

For example, the Center said one of the hot issues this session was compensation to be paid by local governments for removal of billboards. Tony L. Adams, a lobbyist for the N.C. Outdoor Advertising Association, and Ellis Hankins of the N.C. League of Municipalities both ranked among the most influential. Similarly, lobbyists for the N.C. Medical Society and the N.C. Academy of Trial Lawyers also ranked high as doctors and lawyers jostled over whether to limit medical malpractice lawsuits.

The Center's rankings of influential lobbyists are based on results from a survey conducted in early 2004 after the N.C. General Assembly completed its Special Session in December 2003. All 170 state legislators, 366 registered lobbyists and legislative liaisons based in North Carolina, and the 21 capital news correspondents were asked to list the most influential lobbyists and legislative liaisons in the 2003 General Assembly session. Survey respondents received a list of all lobbyists and legislative liaisons registered with the Secretary of State at the end of the 2003 session.

Ninety-two of the 119 (77%) House members (one Representative died after adjournment) responded to the Center's survey, as did 37 of the 50 Senators (74%), 145 of the 366 registered lobbyists who regularly work in the legislature and who are based in North Carolina (40%), and 8 of 21 capital news correspondents (38%). The overall response rate was 51%.

At the end of the 2003 legislative session, 567 lobbyists were registered with the Secretary of State, representing 621 different companies or organizations. The Center's calculations of the number of lobbyists avoids double-counting by counting each lobbyist only once, even if the lobbyist represented more than one client. The Secretary of State's records also listed 78 legislative liaisons representing 41 different state government agencies and licensing boards, but the Center surveys only the lead liaison for each agency.

The N.C. Center for Public Policy Research is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit research corporation created in 1977 to evaluate state government programs and to study public policy issues facing North Carolina. The Center receives general operating support from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation in Winston-Salem, with additional funding from 13 other private foundations, 150 corporate contributors, and almost 800 individual and organizational members across the state. The Center publishes a magazine, *North Carolina Insight*, and book-length research reports, including a citizens' guide to the legislature. The Center recently has conducted in-depth studies on ways to improve voter turnout in North Carolina, on charter schools, on the pros and cons of state lotteries, and on how all 50 states govern their public universities.

The new rankings of the *Most Influential Lobbyists in the 2003 N.C. General Assembly* are available from the Center for \$10. A set of three publications – including *Article II: A Guide to the 2003-2004 N.C. Legislature* (\$25); rankings of legislators' effectiveness, attendance, and roll call voting participation (\$10); and rankings of the most influential lobbyists (\$10) – is available for \$35. To order, write the Center at P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, NC 27602, call (919) 832-2839, fax (919) 832-2847, or email tbromley@nccppr.org.

For more information about the rankings of the most influential lobbyists, call Ran Coble at the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research at (919) 832-2839.