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release, email tthromley@nccppr.org.

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

RECORD NUMBER OF WOMEN AND AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THIS LEGISLATURE

The numbers of women and African Americans serving in the N.C. General Assembly are at record highs in 2005, says the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research in a new report released today. Meanwhile, rates of turnover among legislators remain high – averaging close to a fourth of the House and a fifth of the Senate every two years since 1984. And, the Center's survey of legislators, lobbyists, and capital news reporters finds that legislative committees dealing with state budgets, taxes, rules, and education continue to be viewed as the most powerful. These and other trends are detailed in the Center's new citizens' guide to the 2005-2006 legislature.

The Rise of Women in N.C. Politics

The first woman to serve in the N.C. General Assembly, Lillian Exum Clement of Buncombe County, took office in 1921, right after the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution gave women the right to vote in 1920. Women were a rarity in the legislature from then until 1973, when nine were elected. Since then, their numbers have increased at a relatively steady pace, reaching a record-high 39, or 23 percent, of all 170 legislators this year. This is nearly double the 12 percent of seats women held 20 years ago and now equals the average percentage of state legislative seats held by women across all 50 states. North Carolina also leads the South in the number of female legislators.

The Center's executive director Ran Coble says, "With more women in the General Assembly, issues such as curbing domestic violence, providing affordable child care, and achieving pay equity among state employees have a better chance to be heard and acted upon." At a recent forum in Chapel Hill on "The State of Women in the State," Sen. Ellie Kinnaird (D-Orange) said, "I think women's public policy is very different from men's public policy."

Women now hold the majority of chairs heading the most powerful committee, Appropriations, which puts together the state budget. In the Senate, two of three Appropriations Committee co-chairs are women – Senators Linda Garrou (D-Forsyth) and Kay Hagan (D-Guilford). In the House, three of six Appropriations Committee co-chairs are women – Representatives Debbie Clary (R-Cleveland), Beverly Earle (D-Mecklenburg), and Wilma Sherrill (R-Buncombe). Rep. Clary says, "Having more women in the legislature assures that cuts won't be made to the Health and Human Services budget without due process."

Women also now chair or co-chair two of the six most powerful committees in the Senate and four of the six most powerful committees in the House. In the Senate, women co-chair the Appropriations and Education/Higher Education committees. In the House, women chair or co-chair the Appropriations, Finance, Education, and Transportation committees. Jennifer Weiss (D-Wake) says, "In the General Assembly,

everyone has a voice and everyone has a seat, but it makes a difference when more women get into positions of power within the legislature.”

Significant Milestones in the Rise of Women in N.C. Politics

*1921: Lillian Exum Clement became the first woman to serve in the General Assembly.

*1996: Elaine Marshall elected as N.C. Secretary of State, the first woman to be elected statewide to the Council of State.

*2000: Four of the 10 members elected to the Council of State were women, including Lieutenant Governor Beverly Perdue, Secretary of State Elaine Marshall, Labor Commissioner Cherie Berry, and Agriculture Commissioner Meg Scott Phipps.

*2002: Elizabeth Dole became the first woman to be elected as U.S. Senator from North Carolina.

Most African Americans Ever in General Assembly Also in 2005

The 2005 General Assembly also has a record number of African American members, with 26, or 15 percent of 170 legislators. In 1968, Henry Frye (D-Guilford) was the first African American elected to the General Assembly since the 19th Century. The longest-serving African American in the 2005 General Assembly is Representative H.M. “Mickey” Michaux (D-Durham), who has served 14 terms, beginning in 1973. African Americans chair or co-chair one of the six most powerful committees in the Senate and three of the six most powerful committees in the House.

Significant Milestones in the Rise of African Americans in N.C. Politics

*1968: Henry Frye became the first African American elected to the General Assembly since the 19th Century.

*1991: Dan Blue (D-Wake) became the first African American to serve as Speaker of the state House of Representatives.

*1992: Ralph Campbell elected as State Auditor, the first African American elected statewide to the Council of State.

*1999: Henry Frye became the first African American to be named Chief Justice of the state Supreme Court.

High Turnover Among Rank and File Legislators, Low Turnover Among Leaders

North Carolina also has high turnover among legislators. Since the 1984 elections, turnover has averaged 22.9% in the state House every election and 20.4% in the Senate. The 2005 General Assembly has 12 Senators and 21 Representatives who are new since the 2003 session, with three more who were appointed to seats in 2004 and are serving their first full terms in their chambers.

The Center’s Coble says, “We have significant turnover in North Carolina, even without term limits.” He says the high turnover stems not only from legislators who lose their primary or general elections, but also from legislators who run for higher office, die in office, are appointed to other positions, or who retire because of age, poor health, or polls that tell them they would have trouble being re-elected. For example, former legislators Virginia Foxx and Patrick McHenry were elected to the U.S. Congress, long-time legislators Eric Reeves and Gordon Allen retired, and Connie Wilson chose not to run for re-election to the state House because she was placed in the same Mecklenburg County House district as another incumbent Republican in the 2003 redistricting map. Two legislators have died in office the last two years.

Despite high turnover among rank and file members, the General Assembly has low turnover among the leadership in each chamber. Senator Marc Basnight (D-Dare) is serving his seventh term as President Pro Tempore of the Senate, while Representative Jim Black (D-Mecklenburg) is serving his fourth term as Speaker of the House – including one as Co-Speaker with Rep. Richard Morgan (R-Moore) in 2003-04. The length of Basnight's tenure is unprecedented, while Black's length of service now matches that of the previously longest-serving Speaker of the House, Liston Ramsey (D-Madison), who was Speaker from 1981 through 1988.

Survey Results on the Most Powerful Committees in the 2003-2004 Legislature

The Center's guide also contains rankings of the "most powerful" committees in each chamber to help citizens understand the inner workings of the legislature. Based on surveys of all legislators, registered lobbyists based in North Carolina, and capital news correspondents, the six most powerful Senate committees, in order, are: (1) Appropriations/Base Budget; (2) Finance; (3) Rules and Operations of the Senate; (4) Judiciary I; (5) Education/Higher Education; and (6) Commerce. The six most powerful House committees are: (1) Appropriations; (2) Finance; (3) Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House; (4) Judiciary I; (5) Education; and (6) Transportation. Coble said the committees viewed as most powerful are very consistent from session to session.

Other Trends in the Legislature

Other trends in the legislature highlighted by the Center in its new legislative guide include:

- *The most frequent occupations for legislators are business-related with 56 of 170 legislators in business or sales.

- *Forty-eight legislators are retirees.

- *Thirty-nine legislators are attorneys, but this is significantly fewer than the number of attorneys (68) that served in the legislature in 1971.

These and other legislative trends are outlined in *Article II: A Guide to the 2005-2006 North Carolina Legislature*. This edition marks the fifteenth legislative session the Center has published the guide. Authored by Center policy analyst Sam Watts, this citizens' guide contains profiles and photos of each of the 170 members of the General Assembly, including business and home addresses; telephone and fax numbers; counties in their districts; the number of terms they have served in the legislature; and their educational and occupational backgrounds. For members who served in the previous session, the guide lists five bills they introduced in the 2003-2004 session, their votes on 12 bills of statewide interest, and their past rankings of attendance, roll call voting participation, and effectiveness. The effectiveness rankings are based on surveys of all legislators, registered lobbyists based in North Carolina, and the capital news media. The latest set of legislative effectiveness rankings was released in May 2004. The guide also includes demographic and occupational trends for the General Assembly since 1985 and rankings of the 50 most influential lobbyists in the legislature.

A pocket-sized *Supplement to Article II* contains important information for citizens, lobbyists, and reporters, including all committee assignments and each legislator's political party affiliation, home county, legislative office address and telephone number, e-mail address at the General Assembly, and legislative seat number. The supplement also contains seating charts, committee meeting schedules, and deadlines for introducing various kinds of bills and resolutions.

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 is supported in part by a grant from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation in Winston-Salem, with additional support from 10 other foundations, 160 corporate contributors, and nearly 700 individual

and organizational members across the state. In addition to publishing *Article II: A Guide to the 2005-2006 N.C. Legislature*, the Center also publishes *North Carolina Insight* and book-length research reports. The Center recently has conducted in-depth studies on domestic violence, the teacher shortage in North Carolina, ways to improve voter turnout, and the pros and cons of state lotteries. The Center currently is studying governance of public universities and charter schools.

Copies of *Article II: A Guide to the 2005-2006 N.C. Legislature* and the *Supplement* with committee assignments are available for \$25 a set, which includes tax, postage, and handling. 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.

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For more information, contact Ran Coble, executive director, or Sam Watts, policy analyst, at the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research at (919) 832-2839.

Trends in Legislative Demographics

Category	Year and Number of Members per Category										
	1985	1987	1989	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
African Americans											
Senate	3	3	4	5	7	7	7	7	7	6	7
House	13	13	13	14	18	17	17	17	18	18	19
Total	16	16	17	19	25	24	24	24	25	24	26
percent	9%	9%	10%	11%	15%	14%	14%	14%	15%	14%	15%
Women											
Senate	4	4	4	5	7	6	6	7	5	7	7
House	16	20	21	20	24	22	23	24	27	28	32
Total	20	24	25	25	31	28	29	31	32	35	39
percent	12%	14%	15%	15%	18%	17%	17%	18%	19%	21%	23%
Native Americans											
Senate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
House	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
percent	0%	0%	0%	.6%	.6%	.6%	.6%	.6%	.6%	.6%	.6%
Hispanics											
Senate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
House	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	2
percent	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	.6%	.6%	.6%	.6%	1.2%	1.2%
Democrats											
Senate	38	40	37	36	39	26	30	35	35	28	29
House	82	84	74	81	78	52	59	66	62	60	63
Total	120	124	111	117	117	78	89	101	97	88	92
percent	71%	73%	65%	69%	69%	46%	52%	59%	57%	52%	54%
Republicans											
Senate	12	10	13	14	11	24	20	15	15	22	21
House	38	36	46	39	42	68	61	54	58	60	57
Total	50	46	59	53	53	92	81	69	73	82	78
percent	29%	27%	35%	31%	31%	54%	48%	41%	43%	48%	46%
Turnover Ratio*											
Senate	18	6	5	8	10	15	11	7	5	15	12
percent	36%	12%	10%	16%	20%	30%	22%	14%	10%	30%	24%
House	39	25	25	21	42	39	22	16	15	35	21
percent	33%	21%	21%	18%	35%	33%	18%	13%	13%	29%	18%

* If a member served in the legislature during the immediate past session, he or she is not considered a new member. If a member served in either chamber during sessions prior to the immediate past session, however, he or she is considered a new member.

This research was drawn largely from editions of the North Carolina Manual and from information obtained from the House and Senate Principal Clerks, and does not reflect members who first reached the General Assembly by appointment to legislative vacancies caused by death or resignation.

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Trends in Legislators' Occupations

Occupation	Year and Number of Members per Category											
Senate	1985	1987	1989	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	
Bank/Financial	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	6	5	3	
Business/Sales*	21	19	15	16	12	15	14	15	13	12	15	
Construction	2	1	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	
Education	3	3	3	4	7	5	3	2	4	4	4	
Farming	6	6	5	6	7	6	7	8	8	3	4	
Health Care	0	0	0	2	3	3	4	3	4	4	2	
Homemaker	2	0	1	0	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	
Insurance	4	4	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	0	0	
Law	17	21	20	17	18	16	19	19	21	15	18	
Manufacturing	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Minister	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	
Real Estate	8	6	6	6	4	6	7	4	3	6	5	
Retired	6	4	6	6	8	7	8	10	9	11	14	
Self-employed**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	5	9	

House of Representatives

Bank/Financial	3	0	0	0	4	2	3	2	7	8	5
Business/Sales*	45	43	37	33	34	31	39	39	40	41	41
Construction	2	2	3	2	2	5	5	4	5	4	4
Education	15	12	7	15	14	14	8	8	19	21	16
Farming	16	12	8	11	12	10	8	8	8	5	3
Health Care	4	4	4	7	10	5	3	1	3	2	8
Homemaker	3	4	4	3	2	1	1	1	4	4	3
Insurance	10	10	8	12	9	10	8	9	9	6	5
Law	24	23	25	18	21	16	17	18	17	17	21
Legislator	0	0	0	0	2	4	3	3	5	4	5
Manufacturing	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	0	1	2
Minister	7	4	4	2	2	2	2	1	1	3	3
Real Estate	20	15	17	20	17	13	18	18	9	9	10
Retired	13	17	22	28	24	30	23	28	37	33	34
Self-employed**	0	0	0	0	3	1	5	4	10	8	10

Note: Some legislators list more than one occupation; thus, the total number of occupations may be higher than the actual number of members.

* Business/Sales includes Principal Clerk's listings of business, small business, consultants, and self-employed.

** Also includes consultants

N.C. Senate

President: Lt. Governor Beverly Eaves Perdue

President Pro Tempore: Marc Basnight

Deputy President Pro Tempore: Charlie S. Dannelly

Majority Leader: Tony Rand

Majority Whip: Jeanne Hopkins Lucas

Republican Leader: Philip E. Berger

Assistant Republican Leader: Robert M. Pittenger

Deputy Republican Leader: Tom Apodaca

Republican Whip: Jerry W. Tillman

Deputy Republican Whip: Andrew C. Brock

Number of Senators: 50

Length of Term: 2 years

Demographics:

Democrats: 29 (58%)

Republicans: 21 (42%)

Men: 43 (86%)

Women: 7 (14%)

Caucasian: 42 (84%)

African American: 7 (14%)

Native American: 0 (0%)

Hispanics: 1 (2%) (Apodaca)

Total New Members: 13

New Members Serving
First Term Ever: 11 (22%: Atwater, D. Berger,
Boseman, Brown, Cowell,
Goodall, Graham, N. Hunt,
Jacumin, Presnell, Snow)

Returning After Hiatus of
One or More Terms: 1 (East)

Members Appointed to Fill
Vacancy in Prior Session
and Elected in 2004 to First
Full Term in Senate in 2005: 1 (Nesbitt)

Served in House in
2003–2004 Session: 0

Most Terms in Senate: 15 (R. C. Soles, Jr.)

SENATE 15

N.C. House of Representatives

Speaker: James B. Black

Speaker Pro Tempore: Richard T. Morgan

Majority Leader: Joe Hackney

Democratic Whips: Larry Bell, Hugh Holliman,
Marian McLawhorn

Minority Leader: Joe Kiser

Minority Whip: Mitch Gillespie

Number of Representatives: 120

Length of Term: 2 years

Demographics:

Democrats:	63	(52.5%)
Republicans:	57	(47.5%)
Men:	88	(73%)
Women:	32	(27%)
Caucasian:	99	(82.5%)
African American:	19	(16%)
Native American:	1	(.8%) (Sutton)
Hispanic:	1	(.8%) (McComas)
Total New Members:	23	(18%)
New Members Serving First Term Ever:	19	(16%: Almond, Brown, Cleveland, Coleman, Current, Dollar, Faison, Folwell, Goodwin, Harrison, Hollo, Holloway, Langdon, Martin, Pierce, Vinson, Wiley, Wilkins, Wray)
Returning After Hiatus of One or More Terms:	2	(Tucker, Underhill)
Members Appointed to Fill Vacancy in Prior Session and Elected in 2004 to First Full Term in House in 2005:	2	(Fisher, Steen)
Served in Senate in 2003–2004 Session:	0	
Most Terms in the House:	14	(Brubaker, Holmes)