



N.C. CENTER FOR  
PUBLIC POLICY  
RESEARCH

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# From The Center Out

*The Newsletter of the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research  
A voice for good government  
August-September-October 2007*

## CENTER WINS TWO PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL AWARDS

The N.C. Center for Public Policy Research has won two prestigious national awards for high-quality policy research from the national Governmental Research Association (GRA). The Association is a nonpartisan group of 33 public policy groups in 22 states. GRA organizations promote transparency in state and local budgets and provide information to citizens about the performance of government programs.

### **Award for Distinguished Research**

The N.C. Center received an award for Distinguished Research for its evaluation of the performance of charter schools in North Carolina. Released in June, the 71-page study was honored for evaluating charter schools' performance under the six goals set out in state law for charter schools when they were first authorized in North Carolina in 1996. Charter schools receive almost \$190 million in state, federal, and local funds in North Carolina. The Center's research found that charter schools need to improve in four areas before the state should consider raising the cap of 100 charter schools. These four weaknesses are low academic performance, lack of racial balance as required by state law, lack of transfers of educational innovations to public schools, and sometimes questionable management and financial compliance.

### **Award for Outstanding Policy Achievement**

The Center also won a national GRA Award for Outstanding Policy Achievement for research that improves public policy and the lives of citizens. The award honored the Center for its in-depth analysis of the problem of high school dropouts and ways to reduce dropouts. The Center's study outlined ways to calculate more accurate dropout and graduation rates, assessed who drops out and why, reviewed programs designed to minimize the number of dropouts, and recommended changes in state policy to address this pressing problem.

This year, the N.C. Department of Public Instruction has implemented a more accurate way of counting dropouts and graduation rates. Speaker of the N.C. House Joe Hackney created a Select Committee and Initiative on Dropout Reform. The Center testified on its research findings before this group. And, the new state budget enacted on July 31 creates a new Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation and appropriates \$7 million for dropout prevention grants across the state.

This is the third year in a row that the Center has won national GRA awards. In 2005, the Center's study of domestic violence won the top award for Most Effective Education of the public. Since then, the N.C. General Assembly has passed legislation implementing six of the Center's recommendations, including creation of a joint House and Senate study commission on domestic violence, expansion of family courts, funds for domestic violence shelters, more accurate reporting of domestic violence homicides, stiffer penalties for domestic violence offenders, and help for victims of domestic violence. In 2006, the Center won the top award for Distinguished Research for our 402-page study of higher education and governance of public universities.

## CENTER STUDY TARGETS BLANK BILLS IN THE N.C. LEGISLATURE

In July, the Center released a study recommending that the legislature permanently ban the use of blank bills. When blank bills are introduced, they contain no description of the laws to be changed. They have a title, often vague, but no text. Then these bills are held in committee, and the content is not added until later in the session. This means there is much less opportunity for public debate or analysis by the media.

The Center said blank bills do not provide adequate notice of legislators' intended changes in law, and they curb the opportunity for citizen input. Our study showed that the North Carolina General Assembly had increased its use of blank bills since 1995, with as many as 805 bills starting out blank and many of these turning into significant legislation by the end of the session. Bills that started out blank have suddenly turned into legislation that revised the state budget, banned video poker, and expanded occupancy taxes. The Center praised the legislature for curbing the use of blank bills in the 2007 session.

Ran Coble, the Center's director, said, "The public has a right to know the content of all bills when they are *first* introduced in the legislature. Blank bills don't give adequate notice to the public of what a legislator is proposing, they're not transparent in their content and purpose, and sometimes they are used to rush passage of significant legislation. We commend the 2007 legislature for adopting rules that limit blank bills this session. But the public deserves a legislative process that will *permanently* ban them."

### The Pattern of Use of Blank Bills in the North Carolina Legislature

Traditionally, the rules of each house in the General Assembly have governed the use of blank bills. In the 1990s, as the General Assembly became more evenly divided between the two political parties, more legislators began to introduce blank bills. The number of blank bills increased from 17 in the 1995-96 session, to 380 in 1997-98, to 623 in 1999-2000, to 682 in 2001-02, to a high of 805 in 2003-04, to 665 in 2005-06.

In the 2007 session, new House rules have prohibited the introduction of blank bills, and the 2007 Senate rules prohibit members from introducing more than two blank bills. As a result, only 79 blank bills (all in the Senate) were introduced in 2007.

### Blank Bills Used To Pass Significant Legislation

The Center says the problem with the rise in the number of blank bills over the last decade is compounded because blank bills are being used to shortcut the legislative process, and then they morph into significant changes in law and policy. In the 2001-02 session, 65 blank bills became law, and 49 blank bills became law in 2003-04.

For example, a follow-up bill that revised the 2006 state budget was first filed on February 25, 2005, as a one-page blank appropriations bill. On July 19, 2006, the bill was withdrawn from the Senate Committee on Rules and Operations and re-referred to the Senate Appropriations/Base Budget Committee. Language was inserted into the bill, and the committee gave a favorable report to what had become an 18-page bill. It was placed immediately on the Senate calendar, and the bill passed both second and third readings in the Senate – all on that same day.

The purpose of blank bills also sometimes changes completely from its original title. For example, Senate Bill 912 was introduced in 2005 as a blank bill with a title indicating that it would direct the public schools to teach personal financial literacy to high school students. When it was ratified, however, the bill phased out video poker instead.

<p>GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA SESSION 2005</p> <p>S SENATE BILL 198 I</p> <p>Short Title: Blank Appropriations Bill-2. (Public)</p> <p>Sponsor: Senator Garrow.</p> <p>Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">February 23, 2005</p> <p>1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED 2 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS. 3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts: 4 SECTION 1. This act appropriates funds. 5 SECTION 2. This act becomes effective July 1, 2005.</p>	<p>GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA SESSION 2005</p> <p>SENATE BILL 198 RATIFIED BILL</p> <p>AN ACT TO MAKE TECHNICAL, CLARIFYING, AND OTHER MODIFICATIONS TO THE CURRENT OPERATIONS AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 2006.</p> <p>The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:</p> <p>SECTION 1. S.L. 2006-66 is amended by adding a new section to read: "SECTION 6.11.(a) Section 5 (c) of S.L. 2005-1 reads as rewritten: SECTION 5.(a) The Department of Crime Control and Public Safety shall modify the Crisis Housing Assistance Fund (CHAF) to provide money to persons who do not qualify for CHAF assistance solely because they failed to apply for federal assistance through FEMA or the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Real Property Disaster loan program. The Department shall review these persons' applications for CHAF assistance using the same criteria employed by the SBA to determine eligibility for an SBA Real Property Disaster loan. The Legislature shall be notified for CHAF assistance if it is determined that they would have failed to qualify for assistance under the SBA Real Property disaster loan criteria and that they otherwise meet the criteria in CHAF." SECTION 6.11.(b) This section applies to persons applying for Crisis Housing Assistance Fund (CHAF) assistance due to hurricane damage during the summer and fall of 2004. SECTION 6.11.(c) This section expires on November 1, 2006." SECTION 2. S.L. 2006-66 is amended by adding a new section to read: SECTION 6.17.(d) G.S. 143-16.3 reads as rewritten: "§ 143-16.3. No expenditures for purposes for which the General Assembly has considered but not enacted an appropriation. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no funds from any source, except for gifts, public or private grants, funds allocated from the Repair and Renovations Account in accordance with G.S. 143-15.3A, and funds allocated from the Contingency and Emergency Fund in accordance with G.S. 143-12(b), may be expended for any new or expanded purpose, position, or other expenditure for which the General Assembly has considered but not enacted an appropriation of funds for the current fiscal period; provided, however, that in the event the Director of the Budget declares that it is necessary to deviate from this provision, he may do so after prior consultation with the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations. For the purpose of this section, the General Assembly has considered a purpose, position, or other expenditure when that purpose is included in a bill, amendment, or petition and when any committee of the Senate or the House of Representatives deliberates on that purpose." SECTION 6.17.(e) This section is effective when this act becomes law." SECTION 2A. Notwithstanding Page Item 17 of the Joint Conference Committee Report on the Continuation, Expansion and Capital Budgets dated June 30, 2006, funds appropriated to the Department of Public Instruction for Futures for Kids, Inc., a nonprofit corporation, may be used for operations during the 2006-2007 fiscal year while the corporation develops a plan for consolidation during the 2007-2008 fiscal year with the Pathways Program, which is administered by The University of North Carolina, General Administration. Futures for Kids, Inc., and the Pathways Program</p>
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The Blank Bill

18-page final bill, which passed the Senate in one day

In another example, Senate Bill 369 was introduced in the 2005 session as a blank bill entitled “7<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District Local Act-1.” On first reading, this blank bill did not have any content, and the title did not indicate that it would involve a tax. The Senate Finance Committee adopted a committee substitute which would impose a room occupancy tax in Franklin County, and this version of the bill passed second reading and third readings in the Senate. The House Finance Committee adopted a committee substitute, and the bill ended up including multiple occupancy taxes – authorizing Franklin County and the cities of Eden and Reidsville to levy a room occupancy and tourism development tax and also amending the Durham occupancy tax.

### **Blank Bills Also Criticized by Leading Associations**

Some leading associations in the state also have criticized blank bills and described the problems they create in shortcutting the normal legislative process. In May 2003, a legislative bulletin of the North Carolina League of Municipalities said, “[B]lank bills can be dangerous. They are filed with a generic title (such as Amend Laws 3) and contain no substantive provisions, so they provide no notice of intended content. They can pop up in committee at any time and be filled in with provisions that we have not had a chance to read, analyze, or discuss with legislators.”

In February 2005, the North Carolina Association of Realtors’ *Legislative & Regulatory Update* said, “Most of these [blank bills] are filed as placeholders for potential local legislation wanted by local governments in lawmakers’ districts. This process makes it more difficult to monitor and track bills that overnight turn into significant pieces of legislation.”

In March 2005, the *Legislative Bulletin* of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners warned of the problems associated with blank bills: “Whether intentional or not, the result of this process is to shortcut the normal process for review and analysis of the legislation. When these blank bills suddenly acquire substance, it will be when they are presented as substitute proposals in committee. Whether there is an opportunity to review these new substantive provisions before they are presented, or within a reasonable time thereafter, will be of a matter of chance or willingness on the part of the introducers. We will be on the lookout for surprises, but will be playing ‘catch-up.’”

### **Conclusions and Recommendation**

The Center found four problems with blank bills, as follows:

- (1) Blank bills **do not provide the public or the news media with adequate notice** of the intended changes in law from the moment of introduction.
- (2) Blank bills undermine the democratic process in their **lack of transparency** through a failure to reveal the purpose and content of proposed legislation.
- (3) Blank bills severely **curtail the time available for deliberative debate** and analysis of each bill and its strengths and weaknesses. Instead of the contents being revealed at the moment of introduction, the purpose and intent are not known until a committee substitute for the bill is brought up later in committee.
- (4) In some cases, the use of blank bills **may even be unconstitutional** if legislators seek to meet the state constitutional requirement to have three separate readings of each bill. The problem occurs when they count the introduction of a blank bill as an adequate first reading. And, when blank bills become *revenue* bills, the state constitutional requirement of three separate readings on three separate days may also be violated by the legislature’s current practice of considering a conference report as the first reading.

**The Center recommends that the legislature enact a permanent statute that would ban the use of blank bills in future sessions of the General Assembly.** As part of this statute, the Center said the General Assembly could allow legislators to introduce two *local* bills after the deadlines agreed upon in a chamber’s rules only if a majority of the chamber votes to allow introduction of the blank local bill. This would give legislators a way to respond to last-minute needs of constituents and local governments in their districts.

The Center’s study of blank bills received coverage in 43 articles in 34 newspapers across North Carolina. It also received coverage on the 90 radio stations in the N.C. News Network and on statewide public radio, as well as on commercial TV stations from Greenville to Raleigh to Asheville to Columbia, S.C. The Center’s recommendation for a permanent statutory ban on blank bills was endorsed in editorials across the state – from newspapers in Asheville and Brevard, to Greensboro and High Point, to Raleigh and Fayetteville.

## 9 MOST SIGNIFICANT PIECES OF LEGISLATION IN THE 2007 LEGISLATIVE LONG SESSION

### **Significant Legislation #1: The 2007 State Budget**

The 2007 legislative session started on January 24<sup>th</sup> and ended on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The state budget is always the most significant decision in state public policy because the budget is really an expression of our state's priorities, and education was the biggest beneficiary this year, receiving \$1 billion of the \$1.8 billion increase in spending. Public schools, community colleges, and public universities together make up 57% of the state General Fund – 39% for public schools, 5% for community colleges, and 13% for public universities.

1. **Pay Raises** – The budget provides pay raises of 4% for most state employees but 5% raises for judges, public school teachers, and community college and university faculty.

2. **Enrollment Increases** – There's money to fund enrollment increases in universities (\$48 million) and community colleges, and the public schools (a total of \$218 million overall).

3. **Governor Mike Easley** had success in gaining funding for his education initiatives:

\* His More at Four pre-kindergarten program will expand by \$56 million, and

\* His efforts to reduce class size will get \$37.5 million.

4. **Low-wealth public school districts** got more money, so the total now appropriated for low-wealth schools is \$187 million.

5. **Public Universities** received a 12% increase in funding, the largest percentage increase of any state agency. In addition to the faculty pay increase and funds for enrollment increases, they also received 58% (\$133 million) of the total General Fund money appropriated to all state agencies for capital improvements (\$231 million) and 72% of the \$669 million in new debt obligations incurred this year for new buildings. The legislature also let stand a tuition increase for public universities. UNC President Erskine Bowles has said he plans to have tuition go up by up to 6½% for each of the next 4 years. UNC-Chapel Hill will receive \$25 million this year, \$40 million next year, and a recurring \$150 million in future years for a new Cancer Research Center.

6. **Medicaid** – The fastest growing part of the state budget is the Medicaid program, which has doubled over the last 10 years and is now 16% of the state budget. Medicaid pays for health care for the poor, disabled, children and a lot of elderly people in nursing homes. North Carolina was one of 20 states (the news media often said we were the only state) that requires counties to participate financially in paying for part of Medicaid (15% of nonfederal share) – a sore spot with county governments. This is one of the most significant policy decisions in the state budget because it **redefines the responsibilities of state and local governments**. Here are the key elements of the trade.

\*The state will **take over county Medicaid costs**, which are about a \$426 million responsibility.

\*To pay for that, the state will **take back a half-penny of the county's sales tax revenue**. The state legislature also made permanent a temporary sales tax increase first levied in 2001.

\*To help replace the revenue it took from the counties, the legislature gave counties – but not municipalities – the right to go to the voters and ask for **authorization to raise the local sales tax** by a quarter-cent or to levy a **real estate transfer tax** of 0.4 percent. Already, at least 27 counties will have proposals for tax increases on their ballots this fall. Generally, the high-growth counties will prefer the land transfer tax option, while the low-growth counties will likely prefer the sales tax increase.

7. **Tax Policy** – The other major decisions in the budget bill were in state tax policies .

\*The legislature rolled back another temporary tax increase it had levied in 2001 on **high-income taxpayers** – those making more than \$100,000 individually or a married couple making more than \$200,000. The tax rate on these high-income taxpayers will fall from 8% to 7¾%.

\*The legislature also helped **low-income taxpayers** – the working poor – by creating an Earned Income Tax Credit worth \$45 million.

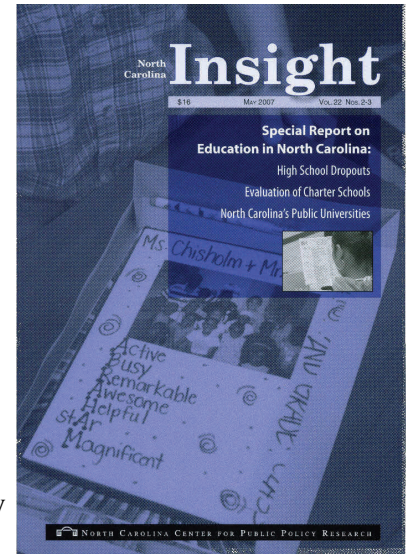
\*The major help for the **middle class** and poor is through Gov. Easley's new **NC EARN program** that will provide financial aid to needy students so they can get a bachelor's degree from a UNC college debt-free (\$27.6 million this year, \$100 million next year). This was a recommendation of the Center because it will increase North Carolina's average college-going rates and help close the racial gap in college-going rates for African Americans and Latinos.

**8. Dropout Prevention** – Earlier this year, the Center released a major study of North Carolina’s dropout rates and ways to prevent dropouts, so we’re pleased that the state budget includes a \$7 million appropriation of funds to reduce our high school dropout rate. The budget also creates a new Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation.

**9. State Lottery Changes** – The state budget also contains a special provision changing the state lottery law by increasing the payouts for prize money and reducing the percentage of revenues going to education programs. Remember that the four educational programs due to receive lottery money are:

- More at Four and early childhood programs;
- reducing class size;
- college scholarships for needy students; and
- public school construction.

State officials hope that the increase in prize money will encourage more people to play the lottery. But after lottery revenues were much lower than expected this year, the budget also reduced the estimated total revenue that the lottery will generate from \$425 million last year to \$350 million for 2007-2008.



**Significant Legislation #2: Further Action on Ethics, Campaign Finance, and Lobby Law Reform**

North Carolina’s reputation as a Clean Government State has been severely damaged. Over the last few years, we have seen scandals involving a Democratic Congressman, a Republican former U.S. Attorney, the Agriculture Commissioner, several legislators, the Highway Patrol, the N.C. School of the Arts, and Blue Ridge Community College. As a result, last year’s reforms included the following:

- \*Campaign contribution checks with blank payee lines are banned.
- \*Delivering a lot of campaign contribution checks together for maximum impact (bundling) is banned.
- \*Using campaign contributions for personal expenses is banned.
- \*Lobbyists can’t make campaign contributions to legislators.
- \*There’s a ban on gifts worth more than \$10 to legislators.
- \*And, the legislature created a new Ethics Commission that will oversee all three branches of government.

This year, the scandals continued. Former House Speaker Jim Black, a Democrat, was indicted and now is in prison, and Republican legislator David Almond resigned. Leading lobbyist Don Beason had to quit lobbying. Christian Action League President and Cabarrus County Commissioner Coy Privette resigned, the Legislative Black Caucus was criticized for questionable ethics, and at least one more lawmaker may be indicted.

Thus, the legislature continued its reforms of ethics and campaign finance law:

- \*State ethics hearings will now be open to the public after probable cause is found, and even ethics hearings related to legislators will be required to be open.
- \*Contributions to legal defense funds set up by elected officials will be subject to full disclosure to the public.
- \*Elected officials convicted of corruption or misconduct in office will lose their pensions .
- \*And, the legislature passed two more experiments in public financing of elections:
  - The town of Chapel Hill will be allowed to experiment with public financing for its municipal elections, and
  - Candidates for three statewide offices will have the option to voluntarily choose public financing. About \$4.6 million was set aside for public financing for candidates for State School Superintendent, State Auditor, and State Insurance Commissioner. Appellate judges have been under a public financing system since 2004.

**Significant Legislation #3: Same Day Registration During Early-Voting Period** –

The third major legislative accomplishment was a change designed to boost voter turnout. In 2003, the Center for Public Policy Research recommended that North Carolina enact a law that allows voters to register and vote on the same day because we found that 6 of the top 11 states in voter turnout have such laws. This year, North Carolina became the first state in the South to adopt a law where citizens will be able to register and vote at the same time during the early voting period in that final 2½ weeks before election day. A coalition of 32 nonprofits led by Democracy North Carolina worked hard to pass that bill this session.



**Significant Legislation #4: Renewable Energy Bill** – One of the most far-reaching bills this session was a renewable energy bill, which makes North Carolina the first state in the Southeast to have such legislation. It requires public utilities to generate 12.5% of their power from renewable energy sources (7.5%) such as solar, wind, and hydro energy, and from energy efficiency initiatives (5%). Currently, less than 2% of the state’s electricity comes from renewables and efficiency programs. In a compromise for meeting this mandate, the power companies got the right to charge consumers for the construction of new power plants before the plants produce electricity. This is called “construction work in progress,” and it is a law that was repealed 20 years ago but is reinstated now.

**Significant Legislation #5: The Solid Waste Management Act of 2007** – Another significant piece of environmental legislation that passed was the Solid Waste Management Act of 2007, which is the most important overhaul of the state’s solid waste laws in two decades. This bill grew out of a year-long moratorium on new landfills enacted last year in response to proposed mega-landfills in Eastern NC. The new act places strict environmental controls on large landfills, and creates a \$2 per ton surcharge on trash, with the proceeds to be used for cleanup of 700 abandoned landfills and hazardous waste sites. It also creates a computer recycling program.

Since North Carolina now has more hogs than people, separate legislation also made North Carolina the first state in the country to permanently ban new hog lagoons and sprayfields. That bill provides \$2 million a year in aid to hog farmers to help them voluntarily convert to more environmentally friendly waste disposal technologies.

**Significant Legislation #6: More Domestic Violence Legislation** – For the third year in a row, the legislature passed significant legislation to address domestic violence. The 2007 General Assembly enacted legislation recommended by the Center that requires better reporting of domestic violence homicides. Surprisingly, such data was not readily available when we first conducted our research. As we recommended, there also will be increased penalties for repeat violators of domestic violence protective orders, increased penalties for persons who knowingly violate a protective order armed with a deadly weapon, and increased protections for victims of domestic violence.

**Significant Legislation #7: A High-Risk Health Insurance Pool** – A significant accomplishment was to establish a high-risk health insurance pool so that people with serious, long-term illnesses can buy more affordable health insurance; 34 states have such pools.

**Significant Legislation #8: Mental Health Parity** – Another major piece of health legislation requires group health insurance plans to cover nine mental illnesses at the same level that they cover physical illnesses. This is called mental health parity. Together, the high-risk health insurance pool and the mental health parity bill provide access to health coverage to two groups who for a long time have been priced out of the health insurance market.

Mental health reform will continue to be on the legislative agenda, however. For example,

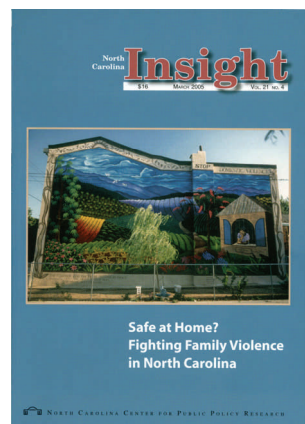
\*Coming up is a decision on the use of the Dorothea Dix property when that Mental Hospital closes in Raleigh.

\*Two state mental hospitals (Broughton in Morganton and Cherry in Goldsboro) have been threatened with a cutoff of federal funds (Medicare and Medicaid) because of concerns about quality of care.

\*And, the pace of funding for mental health reform in moving patients from state hospitals to community-based programs has been much criticized.

**Significant Legislation #9: Policy Changes on State Economic Development Tax Incentives** – No sooner had the legislature left town in August than it came back for a special session in September on economic development tax incentives. The special session was prompted by Gov. Easley’s veto of an earlier bill. The legislation that passed in the special session will provide as much as \$60 million over 10 years to help Goodyear Tire Company upgrade a Fayetteville plant and help rival tire manufacturer Bridgestone/Firestone do the same in Wilson. The companies must invest \$200 million within six years.

This legislation marks two big changes in state policy with respect to economic development incentives. Such incentives used to go to recruit *new* companies to North Carolina. These incentives go to *existing* companies that are already here. Also, it used to be that you had to *add jobs* in order to get incentives. This special session package will pay out even if the companies *cut* as many as 20 percent of their employees, but their grants will be reduced if they do cut jobs. The amount of Bill Lee Act economic development tax credits has doubled from \$42.4 million in 2002 to nearly \$94 million (\$93.8 million) in 2006.



**Special Thanks to Our Foundation and Corporate Contributors**  
**July 1 - September 30, 2007**

The Center recognizes and thanks The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, the John S. & James L. Knight Foundation, and the Freedom Forum for their recent grants. **The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust** made a \$90,000 grant in support of our research on issues affecting the aging in North Carolina. **The John S. & James L. Knight Foundation** made a \$15,000 grant for general operating support. **The Freedom Forum** made a \$5,000 grant for general operating support. We express our appreciation for these grants.

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## LAST CHANCE TO HELP THE CENTER WITH YOUR IRAs

The federal Pension Protection Act of 2006, enacted by Congress in August 2006, creates a new way that you can use your IRAs (Individual Retirement Accounts) to support the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research. You can now give up to \$100,000 in 2007 to the Center from a traditional or Roth IRA account *without having the donated amount count as taxable income* IF:

- You are over the age of 70 years, 6 months at the time of your contribution, *and*
- The custodian of your IRA transfers the funds directly to the Center and not to you (to avoid this being income taxed to you), *and*
- **Your gift is completed before December 31, 2007.**
- The distribution must be made to a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, such as the Center. Our tax ID number is 56-1162341.

This means there is only a brief window of time – about two months – to choose this vehicle for charitable giving. If you choose to do this, please let the Center know because the gift would come directly from your IRA custodian and not from you. Without your notifying us, it might be unclear who made the gift, and we both want to thank you and send you a receipt so you will not have to pay federal income taxes on the distribution. This is not meant to be legal advice. You should consult with your own IRA custodian or your own tax advisor. We just want you to be aware of this new way to support the Center. Please contact Center director Ran Coble (at 919-832-2839 or [rancoble@nccppr.org](mailto:rancoble@nccppr.org)) if you have any questions.



**North Carolina Center for  
Public Policy Research, Inc.**  
5 West Hargett St., Suite 701  
P. O. Box 430  
Raleigh, NC 27602  
Tel: (919) 832-2839  
Fax: (919) 832-2847  
[www.nccppr.org](http://www.nccppr.org)

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