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The North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research

NEWS RELEASE

For release on Tuesday, April 12, 2011:
May be broadcast Tuesday A.M. and may appear in Tuesday newspapers. Media may access an electronic version of the news release at www.nccppr.org or by emailing tbrumley@nccppr.org.

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42 FRESHMEN CHANGE THE FACE OF THE LEGISLATURE

The newest members of the General Assembly are changing the face of the state's legislature. The 2011 legislature has 42 freshmen – 15 state Senators and 27 Representatives. This is the largest class of first-term legislators since 2003. Among the first-term legislators are four women, four African Americans, and 32 Republicans, as well as an unaffiliated Representative who chose to join the Republican caucus. The average age of the first-term legislators is 54 years, compared to the average age of 60 for non-freshmen. The impact of this freshman class is highlighted in the new citizens' guide to the legislature released today by the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research.

"This large group of newcomers to the legislature is younger, but they are getting important responsibilities as Committee Chairs faster than usual," says Sam Watts, policy analyst at the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research. "And, because of their numbers, they are already having an impact on the tenor of the legislature. They are likely to determine the outcome of many policy debates this session."

With this influx of newcomers, Republicans took full control of both the House and Senate for the first time since 1870. In the 2011 Senate, the Republicans now hold 31 of the 50 seats, compared to 20 last session. In the 2011 House, Republicans hold 67 of the 120 seats, compared to 52 in the last session. This year, there also is one unaffiliated member of the House, Bert Jones (U-Rockingham), who chose to join the Republican caucus, bringing their voting majority to 68.

Nine Freshman Senators Are Co-Chairs of Legislative Committees This Year

Nine freshmen in the Senate were chosen as Co-Chairs of standing committees this year. It is unusual for freshmen to be appointed as committee chairmen. By contrast, in 2009 no freshman chaired any standing committees in either chamber of the General Assembly. The nine freshman Senators who chair committees are: Warren Daniel (R-Burke) as Co-Chair of the Judiciary II Committee; Jim Davis (R-Macon) as Co-Chair of both the Appropriations Committee on General Government and Information Technology and the Committee on State and Local Government; Thom Goolsby (R-New Hanover) as Co-Chair of the Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety; Kathy Harrington (R-Gaston) as Co-Chair of the Appropriations Committee on the Department of Transportation; Ralph Hise (R-Mitchell) as Co-Chair of the Pensions and Retirement and Aging Committee; Wesley Meredith as Co-Chair of the Insurance Committee; Buck Newton (R-Wilson) as Co-Chair of the Judiciary II Committee; Bill Rabon (R-Brunswick) as Co-Chair of the Transportation Committee; and Dan Soucek (R-Watauga) as Co-Chair of the Education/Higher Education Committee.

Profiles of Three Freshman Legislators

The House Republican freshmen elected Rep. Mike Hager (R-Rutherford) of Rutherfordton as their leader. The 48-year-old native of Waverly, Indiana has lived in Rutherford County, NC for 16 years. A former engineering manager for Duke Energy, he is now a homebuilder. His first bill in the General Assembly would specify what forms of identification are acceptable when required by law enforcement or other governmental officials, such as elections workers. The bill passed the House and now is pending action in the Senate. Hager writes, "During my campaign I promised five items: (1) stop federally-mandated health care; (2) institute a voter ID system; (3) reduce illegal immigration; (4) refuse to vote for any tax increases; and (5) remove the cap on charter schools. I will do as I promised my voters."

Another freshman legislator is Rep. Rayne Brown (R-Davidson), who lives in Lexington. The 59-year-old has had a career in social work, most recently as a medical social worker with Care Services Home Help Professionals. She gave up that job to serve in the legislature. She ran on a pledge to block a controversial annexation by the city of Lexington. The first bill she introduced in the legislature would block that annexation. It passed the House and awaits consideration by the Senate. Says Brown, "I want to help the cities – I'm not their enemy – but not this way through forced annexations. Forced annexations just breed ill will."

Sen. Eric Mansfield (D-Cumberland) is a freshman Democrat who is an ear, nose, and throat doctor. The 46-year-old Louisiana native grew up in Columbus, Georgia. He attended college on a ROTC scholarship and went on to get his M.D. before becoming a battalion medical officer in the 82nd Airborne. While on active duty, Mansfield was deployed to Kosovo during the NATO bombing campaign against Serbian forces in the former Yugoslavia. After leaving the military, he opened Cape Fear Otolaryngology in Fayetteville. After a Fayetteville man posed as doctor in a local hospital emergency room, Mansfield introduced his first bill to make the unauthorized practice of medicine a felony. It has passed the Senate and now is pending action in the House.

Some Freshmen Have Ties to the Tea Party Movement

The self-identified TEA (Taxed Enough Already) Party movement is a confederation of groups that choose to affiliate with a national umbrella organization named Tea Party Patriots, Inc. The umbrella organization is incorporated in the state of Georgia and operates as a 501(c)(4) nonprofit that can lobby for legislation and be involved in political campaigns but is not eligible for tax-deductible charitable contributions in the same way 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofits are. Eighty-one groups in North Carolina have chosen to be a part of the Tea Party Patriots national organization. While the national organization does not endorse or give campaign contributions to North Carolina legislative candidates, some of the groups operating in North Carolina do.

For example, one of the 81 groups in North Carolina is called the Independence Caucus, or iCaucus. This group operates across several states, and it endorsed nine North Carolina candidates in the 2010 elections. To obtain the iCaucus endorsement, candidates had to seek the assistance of the organization and then go through a vetting process that included interviews with the group. Three iCaucus' candidates were elected to the N.C. General Assembly as part of the freshman class. They are Rep. Glen Bradley (R-Franklin), Rep. Tim Moffitt (R-Buncombe), and Sen. Jim Davis (R-Macon).

In a video blog interview with members of another Tea Party-affiliated group, Triangle Conservatives Unite, Rep. Bradley says, "I have pretty much no political background. I've been a constitutionalist all my life, which means that I've been angry at both parties, quite frankly." The 37-year old Bradley owns a computer networking and point-of-sale services business. His first bill in the General Assembly is the N.C. Farmers Freedom Protection Act, which would make foodstuffs and other products produced for consumption inside the state exempt from federal laws and regulations. Bradley's bill has been referred to the House Agriculture Committee.

One in Seven New Lawmakers Were County Commissioners or County Managers

According to the N.C. Association of County Commissioners, six of the 42 freshmen in the legislature previously served as county commissioners or county managers. One of these is Rep. Bert Jones, elected as an unaffiliated candidate from Rockingham County. “I was a Republican for close to 30 years,” says Jones. “I am conservative; I haven’t changed my mind about that. After my commissioner term ran out, I decided as a private citizen that I would be unaffiliated. I wasn’t really thinking about running for state office.” His first bill in the legislature would eliminate straight-ticket voting by party, require that parties be rotated in ballots, and require that the State Board of Elections membership be split evenly between the parties. His bill has been referred to the House Elections Committee.

Another newcomer who served as a county commissioner is Rep. John Torbett (R-Gaston). He says, “No matter what party you are from, when you go home and see your people out of work, it’s going to break your heart. The primary issue is still focused on the economy and getting people those job opportunities.” His first bill would require that public universities, community colleges, and private colleges file a report to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement if a student who is not a U.S. citizen is absent for 10 school days or more. The bill has been referred to the House Education Committee.

Three Former Lawmakers Return to the Legislature and Seven Were Appointed to Vacancies in 2009-10

Three legislators in the 2011 General Assembly have previously served in the General Assembly but not in the 2009-10 session. They are Sen. Louis Pate (R-Wayne), who served four terms in the House between 1995 and 2008; Rep. Mark Hollo (R-Alexander), who served in the House in the 2005-06 session; and Rep. Stephen LaRoque, who served from 2003-06 in the House.

Six 2011 legislators are almost first-termers because they were appointed to fill vacancies that occurred well into the 2009-10 session. They are Rep. Rosa Gill (D-Wake), Rep. Frank Iler (R-Brunswick), Rep. Dan Ingle (R-Alamance), Rep. Patsy Keever (D-Buncombe), Rep. Diane Parfitt (D-Cumberland), and Sen. Michael Walters (D-Robeson). A seventh legislator, Rep. Darren Jackson (D-Wake), was appointed to fill a vacancy on January 26, 2009, two days before the 2009 session started.

Nearly One in Five Legislators Was First Appointed, Not Elected, to Office

When a vacancy occurs in the General Assembly – by death, resignation, or other causes before a term expires – the Governor is required by law to fill the unexpired part of the term with the person recommended by the local executive committee of the same political party as the person leaving office. Twenty-nine members (17 percent) of the 2011 General Assembly first came to the legislature by appointment. This compares to 23 appointed legislators in 2001 and 20 in 1991.

Average Age of Legislators Remains High, Number of Retirees Growing

Despite the large number of younger freshman legislators this session, the trend continues for the legislature to have more members 65 and older. Legislators aged 65 and older comprised 54 of the 170 members (32 percent) at the beginning of the session this year. This is up from 46 in the 1999 session and 37 in the 1989 session. The average age of the members of the 2011 General Assembly was 58 on opening day, just one year younger than the average age for 2009. In 1999, the average age was 57, and in 1989 it was 54.

The five elder statesmen in North Carolina’s legislature are Sen. Charlie Dannelly, 86 (D-Mecklenburg), Rep. Dewey Hill, 85 (D-Columbus), Sen. Harris Blake, 81 (R-Moore), Rep. Mickey Michaux, 80 (D-Durham), and Sen. Bill Purcell, 80 (D-Scotland).

The number of retirees serving in the General Assembly has been edging upward over the last 20 years. In 1989, the 28 legislators who were retirees comprised 16 percent of the body. By 1999, retirees made up 22 percent of the legislature, and this year, 40 legislators, or 23.5 percent, are retirees. The record number of retirees in the legislature was 51 (30 percent) in 2007.

Other Trends in the Legislature

The Center notes these additional trends in the legislature:

- The number of legislators who are lawyers has rebounded. In 1971, 68 of 170 legislators were lawyers. This number declined to 32 lawyers in 1995, but the current legislature has 39 lawyers.
- In addition to law, the leading occupational backgrounds for legislators are business and sales (36 legislators), education (23), and real estate (21).
- Twenty-nine of the 170 members of the 2011 General Assembly served as county commissioners or county managers before coming to the legislature.
- A large majority of the freshmen are white males, so the total numbers of women and African Americans serving in the legislature decreased this session. The 2011 legislature has 38 women, compared to 43 last session, which was an all-time high. Similarly, there are 25 African Americans in the 2011 General Assembly, compared to 30 last session.
- The members with the most seniority in both chambers are Republicans. Rep. Harold Brubaker is serving his 18th term in the House since 1977. The Senator with the most seniority is Austin Allran, who is in his 13th full term in the Senate after serving 3 terms in the House. The longest-serving Democrats are Rep. Mickey Michaux, who has served 16.5 terms in the House, and Sen. Martin Nesbitt who has served 15.5 terms in both the House and Senate.
- Rank-and-file legislators in North Carolina receive \$13,951 in annual salary, \$559 per month for expenses, and \$104 per diem for days the legislature is in session. The salary was last increased in 1994. They also are reimbursed 29 cents per mile for weekly travel to and from Raleigh.
- Legislative leaders such as the President Pro Tem of the Senate, Speaker of the House, and Majority and Minority Leaders receive salaries ranging from \$17,048 to \$38,151. Their salaries are higher because they spend more time in Raleigh than rank-and-file legislators.

Citizens' Guide to the Legislature Goes Online

These and other legislative trends are outlined in *Article II: A Citizen's Guide to the 2011-2012 North Carolina Legislature*. This is the first time the guide is available only online and via Internet-capable handheld devices. The Center has published a guide to the legislature since 1977.

Authored by Center policy analyst Sam Watts, this citizens' guide contains profiles and photos of each of the 170 members of the General Assembly; 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 2009-2010 session, the guide lists five bills they introduced in that session and their votes on 12 bills of statewide interest. It also includes past rankings of each returning legislator's 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 April 2010.

The online *Article II* also contains important information for citizens, lobbyists, and reporters, including each legislator's political party affiliation, home county, current legislative office address and telephone number, e-mail address at the General Assembly, legislative seat number, and all committee assignments. The guide shows seating charts in the House and Senate, committee meeting schedules, and deadlines for introducing various kinds of bills and resolutions. The guide also includes demographic and occupational trends for the General Assembly since 1989. Finally, the new guide also includes rankings of the most influential lobbyists in the legislature, the latest of which were released in September 2010.

The N.C. Center for Public Policy Research is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit research organization 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 for general operating support from the Z. Smith

Reynolds Foundation in Winston-Salem, with additional support from eight other private foundations, 120 corporate contributors, and about 500 individual and organizational members. In addition to *Article II: A Citizen's Guide to the N.C. Legislature*, the Center also publishes a journal called *North Carolina Insight* and in-depth research reports. The Center recently has conducted studies of key issues facing the state's aging population and important issues facing community colleges in North Carolina. Upcoming studies will evaluate the state's mental health reform efforts and examine policies on financial aid for students.

Article II: A Citizen's Guide to the 2011-2012 N.C. Legislature is available as an online subscription for \$40. The online subscription includes updates to the citizens' guide throughout the two-year legislative session, and two other 2012 publications from the Center – the online biennial *Rankings of Effectiveness, Attendance, and Roll Call Participation for the Members of 2011 General Assembly* and the *Rankings of the Most Influential Lobbyists in the 2011-12 General Assembly*. These rankings are scheduled for release in April and August of 2012. To order, visit the Center's Website at www.nccppr.org. If you have any questions about ordering, contact Tammy Bromley at (919) 832-2839 or tbromley@nccppr.org.

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For more information about the new citizens' guide to the 2011-12 legislature, contact Sam Watts, policy analyst at the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research, at (919) 832-2839 or samwatts@nccppr.org.

52 Members of the 2011 N.C. General Assembly Who Were Not Serving at the Beginning of the 2009-2010 Session

A. 42 Freshmen

	Party-Home County
1. Sen. Warren T. Daniel	(R-Burke)
2. Sen. James (Jim) Wayland Davis	(R-Macon)
3. Sen. Thomas (Thom) C. Goolsby	(R-New Hanover)
4. Sen. Richard (Rick) W. Gunn	(R-Alamance)
5. Sen. Kathryn (Kathy) Harrington	(R-Gaston)
6. Sen. Ralph E. Hise, Jr.	(R-Mitchell)
7. Sen. W. Brent Jackson	(R-Sampson)
8. Sen. Eric L. Mansfield	(D-Cumberland)
9. Sen. Wesley A. Meredith	(R-Cumberland)
10. Sen. E. S. (Buck) Newton	(R-Wilson)
11. Sen. William (Bill) P. Rabon	(R-Brunswick)
12. Sen. Gladys A. Robinson	(D-Guilford)
13. Sen. Daniel (Dan) F. Soucek	(R-Watauga)
14. Sen. Tommy Tucker	(R-Union)
15. Sen. Stan M. White	(D-Dare)
16. Rep. Glen A. Bradley	(R-Franklin)
17. Rep. K. Marcus Brandon, Jr.	(D-Guilford)
18. Rep. William (Bill) M. Brawley, Jr.	(R-Mecklenburg)
19. Rep. Rayne Brown	(R-Davidson)
20. Rep. Jeffrey (Jeff) L. Collins	(R-Nash)
21. Rep. William (Bill) Marvin Cook	(R-Beaufort)
22. Rep. James (Jimmy) W. Dixon	(R-Duplin)
23. Rep. Joseph (John) A. Faircloth, Jr.	(R-Guilford)
24. Rep. Kenneth (Ken) L. Goodman	(D-Richmond)
25. Rep. Charles V. Graham	(D-Robeson)
26. Rep. Michael (Mike) D. Hager	(R-Rutherford)
27. Rep. Susan (Susi) H. Hamilton	(D-New Hanover)
28. Rep. Kelly E. Hastings	(R-Gaston)
29. Rep. D. Craig Horn	(R-Union)
30. Rep. C. Herbert (Bert) Jones, Jr.	(U-Rockingham)
31. Rep. Jonathan C. Jordan	(R-Ashe)
32. Rep. Charles (Chuck) W. McGrady	(R-Henderson)
33. Rep. William Franklin (Frank) McGuirt	(D-Union)
34. Rep. Timothy (Tim) D. Moffitt	(R-Buncombe)
35. Rep. Rodney W. Moore	(D-Mecklenburg)
36. Rep. Thomas (Tom) O. Murry	(R-Wake)
37. Rep. Gaston Layton (G.L.) Pridgen	(R-Robeson)
38. Rep. Norman W. Sanderson	(R-Pamlico)
39. Rep. Phillip (Phil) R. Shepard	(R-Onslow)
40. Rep. Michael (Mike) C. Stone	(R-Lee)
41. Rep. John A. Torbett	(R-Gaston)
42. Rep. Harry J. Warren	(R-Rowan)

B. 7 Who Were Appointed During the 2009-10 Session Who Had Not Been Previously Elected to the Legislature

	Party-Home County	Date Appointed
1. Rep. Rosa U. Gill	(D-Wake)	6/18/2009
2. Rep. Frank Iler	(R-Brunswick)	6/18/2009
3. Rep. Dan W. Ingle	(R-Alamance)	6/12/2009
4. Rep. Darren Jackson	(D-Wake)	1/26/2009
5. Rep. Patricia (Patsy) R. Keever	(D-Buncombe)	9/7/2010
6. Rep. Diane M. Parfitt	(D-Cumberland)	2/19/2010
7. Sen. Michael P. Walters	(D-Robeson)	11/3/2009

Note: Sen. Dan Blue (D-Wake) was elected to serve in the House for the 2009 session but was appointed to fill a Senate vacancy on 5/19/2009.

C. 3 Legislators Returning After One or More Terms Out of Office

	Party-Home County	Terms Served
1. Sen. Louis M. Pate, Jr.	(R-Wayne)	(1995, 2003, 2005, 2007)*, 2011
2. Rep. Mark W. Hollo	(R-Alexander)	2005, 2011
3. Rep. Stephen A. LaRoque	(R-Lenoir)	2003, 2005, 2011

*While in the House