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NEWS RELEASE

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FORMER LEGISLATORS QUICKLY WIELD INFLUENCE AS LOBBYISTS

Eleven former legislators now rank among the most influential lobbyists in the North Carolina General Assembly in the latest rankings released today by the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research. Harold Brubaker, former Speaker of the N.C. House of Representatives, ranks as the most influential lobbyist. A Republican from Randolph County, he served 18 terms in the House, including two terms as House Speaker in 1995-98. Brubaker represents 21 clients as a contract lobbyist, including health care companies such as GlaxoSmithKline Inc. and Blue Cross Blue Shield, as well as associations such as the N.C. Association of Realtors and the N.C. Beer and Wine Wholesalers. The rankings of the most influential lobbyists are compiled from a survey of all state legislators, registered lobbyists based in North Carolina, and capital news media.

In addition to Brubaker, four other former Republican legislators who left the N.C. General Assembly in 2011 or 2012 are ranked among the most influential lobbyists. Jeff Barnhart, who served 5½ terms in the N.C. House, ranks 13th; Richard Stevens, who served five terms in the N.C. Senate, ranks 20th; Debbie Clary, who served seven terms in the N.C. House and 1½ terms in the Senate, ranks 31st; and Fred Steen, who served 4½ terms in the N.C. House and who now represents the office of the Governor, ranks 37th. Also new to being ranked among the most influential lobbyists is Patrick Ballantine at 22nd, a state Senator from 1994-2004 and Republican candidate for Governor in 2004.

The other legislators-turned-lobbyists who have been ranked in previous years and are ranked again this year are Jim Harrell (8th), Steve Metcalf (14th), Chuck Neely (15th), Connie Wilson (25th), and Sandy Sands (38th). "The high number of former legislators who are now influential lobbyists shows that these individuals continue to have an impact on policy even after leaving elected office," says Paige Worsham, policy analyst with the Center. "They draw on their knowledge of both the people and the legislative process."

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, 35 states, including North Carolina, have a statutory "cooling off" period before a legislator can register as a lobbyist. These cooling off periods can range from the remainder of their term as a legislator up to two years after leaving office. Under North Carolina law, a legislator may not register as a lobbyist until six months after leaving office.

A New Top Lobbyist and the Ripple Effect of a New Republican Majority in the Legislature

After Republicans gained a majority in the state House and Senate in the 2010 elections, lobbyists with Republican ties gained influence in the legislature. Former Republican legislators, former Republican Party Chairman Tom Fetzter, and a former staffer for U.S. Sen. Jesse Helms, Jimmy Broughton, all entered the ranks of influential lobbyists in 2012.

This year, former N.C. House Speaker Harold Brubaker takes the top spot as the most influential lobbyist after resigning his seat at the end of the 2012 session to open his own lobbying firm, Brubaker & Associates. Brubaker says, "As a former legislator, I appreciate brevity and know how important it is for a lobbyist to explain the issue in five to ten minutes. I tell a legislator that I need five minutes of their time and get right to the point. And, I couldn't do this work without my team."

Former Senator Richard Stevens, who ranks 20th in his first session as a lobbyist, says, "Being a former legislator helps build relationships, and it's important for members to be able to rely on someone they trust."

Dana Simpson, a contract lobbyist and partner with the law firm of Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan, ranks 2nd in this session's rankings. He also shares a link to top-ranked Brubaker – Simpson served as Special Assistant for Communications and Policy for former Speaker Brubaker in the late 1990s. This is Simpson's fifth consecutive session in the lobbyist rankings.

Tom Fetzter, former Mayor of Raleigh and former N.C. Republican Party Chairman, also finished in the top echelon at 3rd. Fetzter opened his lobbying firm, Fetzter Strategic Partners, in 2010 and lobbied for 22 clients during the 2013 session, including the N.C. League of Municipalities, Wake County Government, and the City of Salisbury.

Andy Ellen, who represents the N.C. Retail Merchants Association, finished 4th in the rankings. Ellen has ranked among the top 11 lobbyists five consecutive times. Harry Kaplan ranks 5th for the second time in a row. Kaplan has ranked among the most influential lobbyists for 11 consecutive legislative sessions. With 43 clients, he represents the most clients of any ranked lobbyist.

New Names Among the Most Influential

A record number of 25 lobbyists and legislative liaisons are ranked among the most influential for the first time. The previous record was 22, set in 2011. In addition to the six former Republican legislators ranked for the first time are three lobbyists representing the N.C. Chamber of Commerce. These three are Gary Salamido, Vice President of Government Affairs, who ranks 10th; Jake Cashion, Director of Government Affairs, who ranks 53rd; and Nathan Babcock, Political Director, who ranks 57th. The Chamber's advocacy platform includes a variety of issues – from reducing regulations on business to teacher pay raises to cutting corporate income taxes.

Other lobbyists and liaisons ranked for the first time are Chris McClure (24th), Tommy Sevier (33rd), Dave Simpson (34th), Joy Hicks (40th), Kim Crouch (42nd), Julia Adams (44th), Paula Page (46th), Chris Hollis (47th), Cady Thomas (49th), Tami Fitzgerald (50th), Thomas Moore (55th), Jon Carr (56th), Jake Parker (58th), Philip Isley (59th), and Betty Doster (60th). Also new to the list at 32nd is John Metcalf, who is the son of former Democratic state senator Steve Metcalf, who himself ranks as the 14th most influential lobbyist this year.

One of the newly-ranked lobbyists, Paula Page, who represented the N.C. Farm Bureau for 31 years and recently retired, recalls working with a broad coalition of individuals on a piece of immigration legislation last session. “The pro-agriculture, pro-business, and pro-farm groups teamed up with a relentless legislator to pass the bill. I would say it’s one of my finest hours as a lobbyist.”

McClure, Sevier, Hollis, Moore, Carr, and Isley work for Raleigh law firms and serve as contract lobbyists for multiple clients. Dave Simpson represents Carolinas Associated General Contractors, Crouch represents the N.C. Bar Association, Julia Adams represents The Arc of North Carolina, Cady Thomas represents the N.C. Association of Realtors, and Tami Fitzgerald represents The N.C. Values Coalition. Page and Parker represent the N.C. Farm Bureau, and Hicks and Doster serve as legislative liaisons for the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and for UNC-Charlotte, respectively. Three-quarters of the 60 most influential lobbyists had some connection to health care or medical interests in 2013.

Record Number of Women Rank as Influential Lobbyists

The list of most influential lobbyists includes 16 women, also a record-breaking number. Theresa Kostrezewa (6th), Kathy Hawkins (7th), Lori Ann Harris (11th), Connie Wilson (25th), Debbie Clary (31st), Laura DeVivo (35th), Joy Hicks (40th), Lisa Martin (41st), Kim Crouch (42nd), Julia Adams (44th), Paula Page (46th), Cady Thomas (49th), Tami Fitzgerald (50th), Estherine Davis (52nd), Susan Valauri (54th), and Betty Doster (60th) were among the top 60. The previous record was 12 women in 2011.

Three African Americans also ranked among the most influential lobbyists – down from four in the previous rankings: Johnny Tillett (9th), Lori Ann Harris (11th), and Estherine Davis (52nd).

A Record Number of Contract Lobbyists

Contract lobbyists work for a law firm or lobbying firm and are hired on contract by multiple clients. Contract lobbyists differ from in-house lobbyists, who are employed by the client they represent. Contract lobbyists make up a record 37 of the top 60 influential lobbyists and hold 12 of the top 15 spots. The previous record was in 2011, when 34 of the top 60 spots were held by contract lobbyists. The Center’s Paige Worsham says, “This is the fourth consecutive legislative session that contract lobbyists have set a new record for influence.”

The law firms with the most ranked lobbyists include McGuire Woods Consulting with three influential lobbyists; Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan with three; Williams Mullen with three; Womble, Carlyle, Sandridge & Rice with two; and Troutman Sanders Strategies with two influential lobbyists.

Why and How the Lobbyist Rankings Are Done

“The rankings of the most influential lobbyists help citizens understand which key interests and organizations have clout with legislators in North Carolina,” says the Center’s Worsham. “The rankings shed light on what is often an invisible process. They also show trends in the lobbying profession and illustrate which issues are the hottest.”

This is the 17th time the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research has released its rankings of the most influential lobbyists. The new rankings are based on the results of a survey conducted in October, November, and December of 2013. At that time, 50 state Senators, 120 Representatives, 438 registered lobbyists (including the lead state agency legislative liaisons), and 36 state capital news correspondents

were asked to list the 10 most influential lobbyists or state agency legislative liaisons during the 2013 sessions at the N.C. General Assembly. In 2013, the legislature met in regular session from Jan. 9, 2013 to July 26, 2013, and in a reconvened session on Sept. 3-4, 2013 to override Gov. McCrory's two vetoes.

Sixty-three of the 120 House members (53%) responded to the Center's survey, as did 33 of the 50 Senators (66%), 159 of the 438 lobbyists and lead legislative liaisons based in North Carolina (36%), and 6 of 36 capital news correspondents (17%). The overall response rate was 40%.

At the end of the 2013 sessions, 768 lobbyists were registered with the Secretary of State, representing 1,049 different companies or organizations. The Center's calculations of the number of lobbyists count each lobbyist only once, even if they represent more than one client, and each lobbyist can only vote once in the survey. The Secretary of State's records also listed 88 legislative liaisons that represent 59 different state government agencies and licensing boards, but the Center surveys only the lead liaison for each agency or board.

About the Center

The North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit research organization created in 1977 to evaluate state government programs and study important public policy issues facing North Carolina. The Center is supported by grants from 10 private foundations, 100 corporate contributors, and about 400 individual and organizational members. The Center publishes in-depth research reports and a journal called *North Carolina Insight*, which recently evaluated telepsychiatry as a way to deliver mental health services in rural areas.

The Center also publishes a citizen's guide to the legislature and recently has conducted a study of ways to prevent and prosecute fraud committed against the elderly. That study led to legislation enacted by the 2013 General Assembly. An upcoming study will examine state tuition and financial aid policy in public universities.

Printed copies of the *Rankings of the Most Influential Lobbyists in the N.C. General Assembly* are available from the Center for \$10 each, or you may download a digital copy from the Center's Website at www.nccppr.org for \$10 each. An entire printed set of publications about the legislature is available for \$40. This includes the new rankings of the most influential lobbyists, *Article II: A Citizen's Guide to the 2013-2014 N.C. Legislature*, and the rankings of the effectiveness, attendance, and roll call voting participation for all legislators. To order the set or just the printed lobbyists rankings booklet, write the Center at P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, NC 27602, call (919) 832-2839, fax (919) 832-2847, email Tammy Bromley at tbromley@nccppr.org, or visit the Center's Website at www.nccppr.org.

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