



Rep. Ruth Samuelson

Online with Ruth

418B Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925
(919) 715-3009 – ruths@ncleg.net



June 12, 2008

The House has been hard at work the past few weeks reworking the Governor's budget recommendations. I voted in support of the final House budget and it is now being considered in the Senate. After the Senate makes their adjustments, a committee of House and Senate members will meet in conference to negotiate the differences. That Conference budget will come back to the House and the Senate for final approval.

I don't know yet if I will be able to support the budget that finally emerges from the Conference Committee. Here are some things I liked about the House budget:

SIGNIFICANT reductions in Spending Increases over last year and previous years.

Holds the Line on Spending, at less than 3.7 %

Less than Inflation PLUS Population Growth.

- By Comparison, in 2007 the increase was 9.5 %

- In 2006 - 9.7 %

NO NEW TAX RATE INCREASES

RAISES Teacher AND all other State Employee's pay **PROPORTIONALLY**:

Teachers 3 percent + One Vacation Day

State employees 2.75% or \$1,100 (whichever higher)

In past years, state employees were shortchanged by Governor Easley

Stopped a higher salary increase for lottery officials

FIRST STEP to STOPPING Transfer of Road Money to GENERAL FUND*
(\$25 million this year, of \$172 million)

TAX RELIEF for fully disabled Military Veterans injured on-duty

TAX CREDITS for Small Business offering health insurance for employees

If you want to learn about the less favorable parts of the House budget, click on this link: http://www.johnlocke.org/press_releases/display_story.html?id=388

You can follow the budget bill at this link:
[http://www.ncleg.net/HB 2436 Modify Budget](http://www.ncleg.net/HB_2436_Modify_Budget)

Other items of interest:

Criminal Justice- There are a few increases in court positions proposed for Mecklenburg County and the gang prevention bill is still in process. It looks like the bill will pass and we will be able to get funding for it. You can track the gang bill's progress here: [http://www.ncleg.net/HB 274 Street Gang Prevention](http://www.ncleg.net/HB_274_Street_Gang_Prevention)

Environment- The drought is still a hot topic here with various measures proposed to address current impacts and future planning. I am hopeful that we will continue the momentum so we are better able to handle the inevitable future shortages. There are also two coastal issues that could have an effect on people who visit our beaches. One is the coastal storm water rule and the other is the terminal groins at Figure Eight Island. If you want to know more about these issues let me know.

"I don't care how poor a man is; if he has family, he's rich.

~M*A*S*H, Colonel Potter

I hope you all have a blessed and happy Father's Day!

Please feel free to contact us with any concerns or comments you may have. We look forward to hearing from you. You can reach us at our Raleigh number at (919) 715-3009 or you can email us at ruths@ncleg.net or samuelsonla@ncleg.net

Best wishes,
Representative Ruth Samuelson
District 104, Mecklenburg County

