

Minutes of the January 20, 2015, Legislative Affairs Committee Meeting

Tom Bowlin, NCNG
DVA Asst. Secretary Ilario Pantano, NCMAC
Bill Hatcher, NCMAC
Rep. George Cleveland, NCMAC
Jeremiah Daniels, NCMAC
Drew Moretz, UNC
Maj Neely Mahoney, NCNG
Ryan Combs, DPS
Maj Holloway, NCNG
Sen. John Bell
Sen. Wesley Meredith

3:02 Sen Brown called the meeting to order and called the roll.

We will review how bills will be introduced and discuss strategy going forward.

- BRAC Bill: This bill will likely be introduced this year at approximately twice the amount of the bill two years ago, and looks promising from both the House and Senate perspective.
- Base Sustainability (Encroachment): Most of the dollars to buy property around bases normally goes to environmental groups. We must ensure that military language is in budget to allow them to continue buying property around bases. We will consider adding money to environmental groups for land purchases moving forward. Rep. Cleveland suggests tightening up wind farm legislation to ensure military complexes are not harmed. Tax credits expire at the end of June – federal tax credits will still exist.
- Quality of Life: In-state tuition programs for veterans, PSAP studies, and exemption from state income taxes for military retiree pay. The Yellow Ribbon program has been tweaked by the federal government. Sen. Brown recommends a meeting with UNC and NC Community Colleges to make sure we take advantage of any available federal funding. Per Drew Moretz, including current fiscal year appropriation in escrow, and add to next year's recurring appropriation at a cost of \$4 million for UNC and \$1 million for NC Community Colleges.
- Exemption From State Tax on Military Retiree Income: Rep. George Cleveland has a bill ready to file that includes all government employees. With last year's tax changes, the cost will drop.
- Economic Development: This encompasses credit for military training and transitioning veterans into workforce. There are bills in place that are accomplishing these goals, however, will continue looking at ways to add to what exists.
- National Guard: Legislative requests include renovation and construction of armories/readiness centers, funding for Tarheel Challenge Academy. Consider including renovation piece in Governor's budget and introduction of a bill for Tarheel Challenge Academy. 75% matching funding is at stake for Tarheel Challenge Academy. Armory fire insurance also needs funding. The Guard has been speaking and working with DENR, Triangle Land Conservancy for the

Durham County side of Camp Butner, Tar River Land Conservancy for the Granville County side of Butner, and have been in touch with land owners. Granville County is interested and will submit to the Clean Water Trust Fund to look at next budget cycle.

- Veterans Affairs: The Governor's team is working the request for 15 personnel, exploring cross-decking positions with the National Guard. Publishing annual report documenting progress since 2013. Sen. Brown has drafted a bill that calls for the reporting by employers of veteran hires to the Secretary of State. Considering revisiting a 2011 bill that treats veteran contractors. Asking that county support be reinstated to allow counties to be more efficient and fund CRM software licenses.

Additional Business:

- Bill drafting deadline is March 2015.
- We will work toward coordinating passing legislation on this year's Military Appreciation Day.

With no further questions or comments from the Committee, Chairman Brown adjourned the meeting at 3:26 pm.