



The Holloway Report:

NC House of Representatives
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The General Assembly has now passed a budget in each chamber, and we await a final budget as the Senate and House negotiate. I still have the same criticism as in the past session, and that is the process by which the budget is created. Regardless of new House leaders, the process remains the same. Two or three members from each the House and Senate write the budgets and negotiate the budgets. It does not matter if you are a Democrat or Republican; you are left out of the process. Yes, there are many things a legislator can do to effect laws and policies in the state, but when it comes to budgets, one can only vote “yes” or “no” to the entire package. We are not even allowed to run amendments on the final budget, therefore cutting off any attempt from the other 160 or so legislators from both chambers from being able to correct poor budgeting. Every session a bill is filed to correct this process called zero based budgeting, however; the leadership never allows a vote.

The House and Senate budgets were very different items with respect to their financial structure. The House budget continues to extend the 300 million dollar temporary taxes that should have expired about eight years ago. There is hundreds of millions of dollars in pork spending, and millions were once again raided from the highway trust fund. Are there any good measures in the House budget? Yes, but one has to vote for the entire financial package since we do not use a line item vote. I voted ‘no’ to the House budget because of a continual broken promise to sunset the temporary taxes, and because far too much money is spent irresponsibly on pure pork barrel projects that do not benefit the state as a whole.

The Senate budget was by no means a perfect budget, but it was in my opinion much better than the House budget. The Senate budget did not increase taxes, and it allowed the 300 million dollar temporary taxes to expire. The budget also capped the gas tax, and lays out a plan to stop Medicaid fraud. The Senate budget passed almost unanimously, with only two voting “no”. The House and Senate are now negotiating a final budget, and we await the opportunity to vote for the package.

In the next couple of months, I will detail the final budget, tell you about progress of the bills I filed, and recap the session. Until then, take care and God bless!

Sincerely,

Representative Bryan Holloway, 91st District