



NORTH CAROLINA BURGLAR AND FIRE ALARM ASSOCIATION

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

JANUARY 9, 2007

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Happy New Year! It has been a nice break from the hectic pace of session but the beginning of the 2007 Session of the North Carolina General Assembly is right around the corner. We wanted to provide a short preview of the upcoming session and make sure that we have all of the appropriate email addresses to reach your association.

It has been an interesting interim with the election in November that saw the Democrats solidifying their hold on power by increasing their advantage in the House to 68-52 and in the Senate to 31-19. Although we do not anticipate many changes in the Senate since the Senate Democrats have elected the same leadership, we expect huge changes in the House. Speaker Black has announced that he will not seek a new term as Speaker as a result of pressure from other Democrats as well as his connection to a variety of scandals in state government. Although Speaker Black won his seat by a very slim margin and will remain a representative, it is not clear how much influence he will continue to wield.

There have been a variety of House members who are seeking to be House Speaker. Several candidates have already dropped out of the contest including Representative Bill Faison representing Caswell and Orange Counties and Representative Hugh Holliman who represents Davidson County. There are six House Democrats who are officially in the race for Speaker including: Representative Dan Blue from Wake County who served as Speaker in previous sessions of the General Assembly; Representative Joe Hackney from Orange County who is the former majority leader; Representative Mickey Michaux from Durham County; Representative Drew Saunders from Mecklenburg County; Representative Jim Crawford representing Granville and Vance Counties; and Representative Joe Tolson who represents Edgecombe and Wilson Counties. Of course, other names have been mentioned along the way as well and most consider the race to be wide open. House Democrats are scheduled to meet on January 10th to have their caucus vote for a Speaker candidate. Although it seems that the Democrats should be able to reach a consensus on a candidate, more than likely there will be some suspense until a Speaker is elected on the House floor during the first several days of session. In the past, there have always been some who have not followed the party recommendation and so it will be an interesting and intriguing opening of the session in the House.



Once the Speaker is elected then a leadership team will be put in place. This team will determine who chairs the committees, how the rules for session are established, where the representatives' offices are located, where they sit in the House Chamber, and many other substantive and mundane details. We expect it to take several weeks for the House to get organized enough to get any work done.

The session will officially begin at noon on January 24, 2007. Legislators will begin filing bills on the very first day as some legislators like to be the "first" to file bills of interest to their constituents. We will provide a periodic legislative report and, during the busy parts of session, you should receive that report late in the day on Friday or on Monday morning. During slow times of the session, we might extend that to every two weeks if there is not a lot of new business to report to your association.

I am honored to represent the North Carolina Burglar and Fire Alarm Association for the 2007 Session of the North Carolina General Assembly. I look forward to working with you to identify legislation of interest or concern to your association and to work together during this session for the benefit of your members. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

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