



## NCRGEA Government Relations Update

### **NCRGEA Government Relations Update #21-02 February 3, 2021**

#### **The Ongoing Pandemic Again Requires the House to Amend its Rules.**

The House has evoked emergency rules again to go virtual. In order to keep members and staff safe, many committee meetings and possibly floor sessions could be conducted virtually, as well as in person. During the last session, they left it up to the individual members whether they wanted to participate in person or virtually. Many members will take advantage of this until more people are vaccinated from what has turned out to be a horrible virus.

#### **This Week at the General Assembly**

This week we expect the General Assembly to spend the rest of Cares Act funds (federal money sent last year from Congress) to provide additional relief to businesses affected by the COVID-19 virus. We will keep you updated as COVID bills work their way through the General Assembly.

#### **Bill Tracking**

Bills are going to start rolling in fast! Bill filing deadline for the Senate is March 11th and March 31st for the House. The Senate will initiate the budget process for the biennium. As the session progresses, we will keep all of you informed on all bills filed that pertain to retiree's and where they are on their journey to becoming law.

#### **Senate Bill 4 Equal Tax Treatment for Government Retirees** (Filed January 27, 2021 and referred to Senate Rules Committee)

This bill addresses our highest legislative priority -- maintaining pension value. NCRGEA would like to give a huge thank you to the lead primary sponsor, Senator Jim Burgin a Republican representing Harnett, Johnston, and Lee counties, who will guide this important bill through the Senate.

Our thanks also go out to primary bill sponsors; Senator Don Davis a Democrat representing Greene and Pitt counties and Senator Michael Lazzara a freshman Republican representing Jones and Onslow Counties.

This bill (if passed) will extend to state and local retirees who vested after **August 12, 1989** the ability to deduct their annual pension income from their adjusted gross income. We will track this bill closely and keep you up to date on its every move.

The NCRGEA lobbying team has been hard at work meeting with legislators on both sides of the aisle to discuss all of our legislative priorities. Recently, we met with Representatives Jason Saine and Robert Reives. Representative Saine represents Lincoln County and is a Senior Chair of the House Appropriations Committee. Representative Reives is a representative from Chatham County who was just elected among his caucus and promoted to House Democratic Leader in the House.

Representative Saine gave us a preview of what we might expect this session on the budget front and COVID related issues. There is some uncertainty with long-term revenue projections due to COVID and the resulting impact on our economy; however, there does appear to be non-recurring funding available for funding priorities. We also talked with him about the NCRGEA's legislative priorities. He understands our needs and is sympathetic to our issues. He did acknowledge that non-recurring priorities will be easier to pass rather than recurring due to the uncertain revenue picture.

We also talked to Representative Reives our legislative priorities and specifically about a COLA. Rep Reives understands that yearly inflation without a cost-of-living adjustment continues to decrease the overall pension value for every retiree. He happily committed to continuing to make this a caucus issue and looks forward to working with us on legislation supporting a COLA.

Thank you all for once again tuning in, we will keep you all updated and informed as more unfolds down at the General Assembly.

**Click to watch video** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rG0tGDo1qA&feature=youtu.be>

Take Care and Stay Tuned!!

Richard Rogers  
NCRGFEA Executive Director