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2008 State Legislative Session Wrap-Up

The 2007-2008 General Assembly adjourned on July 19, 2008 with legislators expected to return for the 2009-2010 General Assembly on January 28, 2009. Even though much work remains to be done, the 2008 short session saw the passage of significant legislation that will positively impact low wealth individuals and communities across North Carolina. Important legislation was enacted on housing, education, tax fairness, consumer protection, worker protection, health care, and other issues critical to the Justice Center's work. These accomplishments include:

- **Improved Foreclosure Protections:** through the expansion of the Home Protection Program statewide and new laws to protect homeowners from abusive lending practices, mortgage servicing companies, and a new program to help homeowner's avoid foreclosure.
- **Lower taxes for working families:** through an increase in the refundable state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).
- **Improved educational opportunities:** through more money for low-wealth school districts and the education of low-income students, drop-out prevention grants, and the Governor's EARN Scholars program
- **Increased protections for workers:** by strengthening protections afforded to agricultural workers exposed to pesticides.

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FY 2008-2009 Budget Overview

The General Assembly passed and the governor signed a final budget ([HB 2436](#)) for FY2008-09 that increases General Fund spending by \$698 million or 3.4% compared to the previous fiscal year and by \$661 million or 3.2% compared to the certified budget. This is the smallest rate of year-over-year growth in General Fund spending since 2002-03. More than a third of the new spending will go to pay raises for state employees and teachers. Other significant spending increases include funding for higher education enrollment growth, performance bonuses for public school teachers and fuel for school buses.

Legislators will face a difficult fiscal situation going into the 2009-11 biennium as North Carolina will need revenues to grow by more than \$1 billion in 2009- 10 in order to pay for a reasonable continuation budget – and that does not include pay raises for state employees and teachers. This is due to the following factors in the current budget: the use of non-recurring revenues, significant non-recurring spending that should be considered recurring, the delayed tax reductions, payments on the new debt, and the estimated \$500 million the state will need to pay for enrollment growth and inflation.

Increase Access to Safe, Decent and Affordable Housing

Budget Items:

- **North Carolina Housing Trust Fund: \$2 million** recurring increase to the Housing Trust Fund bringing the total annual appropriation to \$10 million. An additional **\$7 million** in non-recurring money was included to fund housing for people with disabilities.
- **Operating Subsidy for Housing for People with Disabilities: \$ 1 million** recurring appropriation to ensure housing developed for people with disabilities is affordable for those on SSI.
- **Home Protection Program-** Program changed from a pilot to a statewide permanent program, with a non-recurring appropriation of \$1.5 million increased to **\$3 million** recurring for 2008-2009.
- **Prevent Displacement of Manufactured Homes-** Provides a tax deduction of **5%** of sales price to an owner who sells a manufactured home park to the residents.
- **Extend Low Income Housing Tax Credit-** The Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program was extended until January 1, 2015. The credit can be used for the development of affordable rental housing by amending G.S. 105-295.45.

- **Community Development Initiative - \$1 million** non-recurring appropriation for grants to CDI's Green Fund for reduction of energy costs and water use in affordable housing developments.

Legislation Passed:

- **House Bill 1134- Cleanup of Abandoned Manufactured Homes:** Amends Chapter 130A by encouraging counties to develop plans for the deconstruction and removal of abandoned manufactured homes, providing for the abatement of such homes determined to be a nuisance and designates \$1 million from the Solid Waste Management Trust Fund to be used for the removal of abandoned homes. *Bill sponsors: Haire (D-Haywood), Allen (D-Franklin), Tolson (D-Edgecombe), Justice (R-New Hanover)*
- **Senate Bill 1878- Property Tax Modifications:** Several amendments were made to certain statutes related to property taxes. In particular, amends G.S. 105-277.15 so that local governments must use the "income approach" as the method of valuation in valuing affordable federal tax credit rental properties and take into account rent restrictions on such properties. *Bill sponsor: Clodfelter (D-Mecklenburg)*
- **Senate Bill 1924- Require Carbon Monoxide Detectors:** Requires installation of carbon monoxide detectors in certain single family and multi-family dwellings and in certain residential rental properties by amending Chapters 143 and 42 of N.C.G.S. *Bill sponsor: Purcell (D-Scotland)*
- **House Bill 2409-Multi-Unit Assisted Housing Services Registration Fee:** Amends G.S. 131D-2(a)(7a) to require annual registration with the Division of Health Services Regulation with a fee of \$350 for "multiunit assisted housing with services." *Bill Sponsors: England (D-Cleveland), Farmer-Butterfield (D-Edgecombe), Bordsen (D-Alamance), Pierce (D-Hoke)*

Protect Consumers/Address the Home Foreclosure Crisis

Budget Items:

- **Counseling Services: \$1 million** non-recurring appropriation from the State Banking Commission for foreclosure prevention housing counseling services.
- **Legal Services:** (a) **\$200,000** recurring appropriation to the NC State Bar to provide \$100,000 each to the Landloss Prevention Project and the Financial Protection Law Center for legal services for low income consumers to avoid foreclosure and home loss. (b) Amended G.S. 7A-474.3(b) to allow state funds for legal services programs to be used to assist low income consumers avoid foreclosure and home loss.

Legislation Passed:

- **House Bill 2463: Regulate Mortgage Servicers and Amend Chapter 45:** Amends Chapter 53 giving the Commissioner of Banks regulatory authority over Mortgage Servicers, and provides significant additional protections to homeowners facing foreclosure resulting from illegal lending or servicing practices by making additional amendments to Chapters 53 and 45. *Sponsors: Blue (D-Wake); Church (D-Burke); Carney (D-Mecklenburg).*
- **House Bill 2188: Amend Chapter 45-91 Fee Provisions and Ban YSP on Sub-Prime Loans:** This legislation modifies fee notification provisions in NCGS 45-91 and prohibits incentives, known as yield spread premiums, paid to brokers for steering borrowers into more expensive loans that often end in foreclosure. *Sponsors: Blue (D-Wake); Church (D-Burke).*
- **House Bill 2623: Emergency Program to Reduce Home Foreclosures:** Amends Chapter 45 creating a procedure in the foreclosure process whereby servicers have to notify homeowners of certain facts and rights prior to the filing of a foreclosure and provide the Administrative Office of the Courts with certain information that can be accessed by the Commissioner of Banks. The Commissioner is given new authority including the power to postpone certain foreclosure cases by up to 30 days. *Sponsors: Blue (D-Wake); Church (D-Burke); Carney (D-Mecklenburg); Weiss (D-Wake).*

Support and Protect Workers

Budget Items:

- **Increased Child Care Subsidies: \$9 million** recurring appropriation to both prevent removal of 931 children from the program currently and funding to create 1,100 new subsidy slots. No funding was allocated to adjust the provider reimbursement rates.
- **Increased Funding for Community Colleges:** The FY2008-09 budget spends a little over **\$1 billion** on community colleges, an increase of \$18.6 million or 1.9% over the previous year and \$64 million or 6.8% over the 08-09 certified budget. The budget meets basic system needs and will allow them to serve the increase in enrollment that has occurred due to the economic downturn. It also makes some modest investments designed to address certain long-standing problems like the erosion in funding for vocational programs. The budget special provisions also contained some promising studies that might help address other long-term problems like financial aid and adult education funding. This budget will allow the system to serve the increased enrollment but it does not adequately address certain longstanding, fundamental issues.
- **Worker Safety positions: \$350,000** recurring appropriation to fund 4 new positions for a program to assure worker safety.

- **Pesticide Safety positions:** Recommendations by the Governor’s Pesticide Task force that was convened in light of the Ag-Mart case resulted in the following funding:
 - 1 epidemiologist position and operating expenses were added to the Division of Public Health/DHHS for a **\$79,140** recurring appropriation. **\$50,000** non-recurring was included for surveillance of acute pesticide poisonings.
 - 1 bi-lingual field faculty person was added to the NCSU Cooperative Extension for a **\$48,548** recurring appropriation. **\$17,841** non-recurring was included for operating expenses.
 - 1 Quality Assurance Manager (new position) was added to Agriculture and Consumer services for a recurring appropriation of **\$54,256**. **\$50,000** non-recurring was included to accelerate the development of a comprehensive data tracking system for field inspectors.
 - 1 outreach worker was added to the Office of Rural Health/DHHS for **\$39,430** recurring appropriation and **\$17,480** non-recurring for operating expenses
- **Green Business Fund: \$1 Million** non-recurring appropriation for grants to private businesses with less than 100 employees, non-profit organizations and state agencies to encourage growth of a “green economy.”
- **Employment Security Commission (ESC) of NC Support** – The budget allowed for a transfer of **\$20 million** from the Reserve Fund for operations and support of local ESC offices.

Legislation Passed:

- **Senate Bill 847: Prevent Agricultural Pesticide Exposure**- Enacts recommendations from Governor Easley’s Pesticide task force - (1) Adds NC’s Pesticide Law to the list of employment laws where those who make complaints are protected from retaliation under NC’s Retaliatory Employment Discrimination Act (REDA) and (2) Directs the NC Pesticide Board to adopt rules to improve record keeping requirements for farmers. *Sponsor: Albertson (D-Duplin).*
- **Senate Bill 741: Unemployment Insurance/Advanced Payments**: Amends G.S. 96-9 regarding advance payments by non-profits and Indian Tribes to conform with federal requirements. SB 741 initially addressed the issue that people eligible for unemployment insurance benefits have to wait a week before receiving their first payments. That part of the bill was dropped due to cost considerations. *Sponsor: Clodfelter (D-Mecklenburg).*

Legislation Considered:

- **House Bill 1583: Restore Contract Rights to State and Local Workers**: Would secure collective bargaining rights for public employees by repealing NCGS 95-98 which currently nullifies certain agreements and contracts. Collective bargaining is the process of negotiation between representatives of workers and management to determine the conditions of employment. The collectively determined agreement may cover compensation, hiring practices, layoffs,

promotions, working conditions and hours, worker discipline, and benefit programs. *Sponsors: Blue (D-Wake); Coates (D-Rowan); Goforth (D-Buncombe); Brown (D-Davidson).*

Status: Did not pass. Referred to Committee on Appropriations.

- **House Bill 2670: Healthy Families and Healthy Workplaces Act/Paid Sick Leave:** A joint resolution was passed authorizing the General Assembly to consider a bill titled, Healthy Families and Healthy Workplaces Act that would ensure that all workers have paid sick days to address their own health needs and the health needs of their family. *Sponsor: Adams (D-Guilford).*

Status: Did not pass. Referred to Committee on Rules, Calendar, and Operations

- **Senate Bill 2055: Pay Equity Study Commission-** Would have created a study commission to study the extent of gender and race disparities in pay among state government workers and would recommend actions for addressing such disparities. *Sponsor: McKissick (D-Durham)*

Status: Did not pass. Referred to Committee on Appropriations/Base Budget

Improve Tax Fairness and Adequacy

Budget Items:

- **State Earned Income Tax Credit:** The FY2008-09 budget bill included an increase in the state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) from 3.5% to 5%. The increase was delayed until tax year 2009. This current tax year, 2008, North Carolina will join 23 other states that have successfully implemented a state version of the federal credit with a 3.5% state credit. The federal EITC is a proven and effective tool for supplementing the wages of low- and moderate-income working families, enhancing tax fairness and stimulating local economies. More than 845,000 working families will benefit from the increased state EITC.
- **Decoupling from Bonus Depreciation allowed by the Federal Stimulus Act of 2008:** North Carolina's appropriations bill included language to decouple our state tax rules regarding "bonus depreciation" from the changes to federal tax code allowed by the Federal Stimulus Act of 2008. This move will prevent an estimated \$282 million revenue loss from our corporate income tax.

Legislation Passed:

- **Senate Bill 1878- Property Tax Modifications:** This bill will require counties to conduct more frequent property revaluations. This will make the property tax fairer for all homeowners because it will reduce the discrepancy between the property tax value of property and its real market value.

Ensure a Sound Basic Education for all Children

Budget Items:

- **Dropout prevention grants:** A **\$15 million** non-recurring appropriation will fund grants to be awarded on a competitive basis to a variety of local organizations such as schools, churches and community groups.
- **Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Fund:** An additional **\$6 million** in recurring dollars will be distributed to school districts based on their concentrations of students considered disadvantaged. All 100 districts receive some funding. This increase brings the total DSSF allocation to \$76 million.
- **Fuel for school buses:** A **\$35 million** nonrecurring increase was included in the budget. Fiscal analysts argued that because of the high cost of diesel fuel, an additional \$45 million was needed to fully fund this priority. If the state funds fall short of what is needed, school districts will have to find local funds to keep buses on the road.
- **Children with Disabilities-** A **\$6.2 million** recurring appropriation increases the amount of funds allotted to LEAs to support special education and related services for students with identified disabilities. The funding formula was increased by \$667 per student to a total of \$3,386 per disabled student.
- **Teacher and Staff Pay raises:** The final budget includes a 3% average pay raise for teachers and 2.69% average pay raise for other public school personnel.
- **ABC performance bonuses:** A **\$90 million** non-recurring appropriation for performance bonuses for schools, one of the most hotly debated budget items, and the final amount was not resolved until the final hours of negotiations. The \$90 million appropriation is not sufficient to provide teachers in schools that meet performance criteria with the same bonus as previous years. This year's bonuses will be \$1,053, compared to \$1,500 in past years, for teachers in schools that exceed expectations. Teachers at schools that meet expectations will receive \$527 instead of \$750. Some critics of this initiative cite the fact that 73% of all public schools receive the bonuses. The Department of Public Instruction estimates at least \$107 million is needed to fully fund the bonuses.
- **Learn and Earn High Schools:** A **\$3.5 million** recurring increase will allow an additional 14 high schools to participate in the Learn and Earn program in the upcoming school year, bringing the total number of high schools participating to 56. Qualified students in these schools are able to earn college credit while still completing high school. There is also a \$1 million related appropriation to help counties in the extreme northeast part of the state to set up virtual Learn and Earn schools because they do not have access to higher education instruction in their communities

- **More at Four:** A **\$30 million** recurring appropriation will provide for an increase in the per-slot funding that will allow additional students to enroll in this program for at-risk four-year olds.
- **Low-wealth schools:** A **\$2.9 million** non-recurring appropriation will go to schools that were previously considered low-wealth but whose status changed prior to the 2007-08 school year.
- **School connectivity:** A **\$10 million** increase in recurring appropriations will support the information technology infrastructure of school districts across the state. This is in addition to \$12 million already included in the certified budget.
- **Teacher mentoring:** **\$3 million** in recurring dollars will fund this initiative that targets new teachers and school personnel. The Legislative Study Committee on Public School Funding Formulas recommended this increase.
- **Communities in Schools:** **\$500,000** additional recurring dollars will go to this private non-profit organization that connects at-risk students and their families to community resources such as tutoring and mentoring.
- **Smart Start:** **\$500,000** additional recurring dollars will go to this program which is administered by 78 local non-profit partnerships provides an array of services to young children and their families to help them be fully prepared to succeed in public school. Advocates for Smart Start had requested a \$39 million increase in funding.

Legislation Passed:

- **House Bill 12: Students Ineligible for Special Education Protections-** Provides additional protections in the disciplinary process for students with special needs who have not been identified and have not received special education services. A school shall be deemed to have knowledge that a student has a disability if that disability is clearly established by the student's performance or behavior. *Sponsors: : Glazier (D-Cumberland); Jeffus (D-Guilford); Bell (D-Sampson); Wiley (R-Guilford)*

Legislation Considered:

- **House Bill 1366: Anti-Bullying Bill/School Violence Prevention Act:** Requires each district to adopt a policy defining bullying and harassment and outlining consequences for such behavior.

Status: In 2007 session passed the House; Amended version passed the Senate; House and Senate failed to concur on compromise and measure did not pass. *Sponsors: Glazier (D-Cumberland); Justice (R-Pender); Stiller (R-Brunswick); Fisher (D-Buncombe)*

Improve Access to Health Care

Budget Items:

- **NC Health Choice:** A **\$9.4 million** increase to recurring appropriations will allow the state to continue enrolling eligible children from low-income families in this health insurance program. Funding will serve an additional 7,341 children, raising the total number of children enrolled to 129,694.
- **NC Kids Care health insurance:** Implementation of this new program, which will serve children whose families earn between 200% and 300% of the federal poverty level, has been postponed until July 1, 2009 resulting in a \$7 million non-recurring reduction. Federal funding is required before this program can begin enrolling children unless the state chooses to assume the full cost of this program estimated to be \$12 million per year.
- **Home and Community Care Block Grant:** A **\$2 million** increase to recurring appropriations will allow the state to expand this category of in-home and community-based services that help seniors to remain in their homes.
- **Mental-health services:** A **\$21 million** increasing in recurring appropriations for various mental-health-related initiatives slated for expansion, including increased staffing at psychiatric hospitals, mobile crisis-intervention teams, and additional beds at the Dorothea Dix hospital overflow unit. The sum total of these increases, however, is more than offset by the \$86 million reduction to community support services, which fall under the Medicaid budget.
- **Foster-care assistance payments:** **\$8.2 million** additional recurring dollars will be used to increase the assistance payments to families who care for foster children by 30%.
- **Medicaid provider payments:** Payments to Medicaid providers were reduced by **\$35 million**. Under this provision, the state will forego the scheduled increase in payments to top medical-care providers who serve Medicaid patients.

Legislation Considered:

- **House Bill 2688: NC Institute of Medicine Access To Health Care Study Group/Health Care Policy Council-** Would establish a permanent policy council charged with developing a plan to provide a choice of affordable health coverage for all North Carolinians. Everyone from insurance companies to patients would be represented and have a say in developing

comprehensive solutions. *Sponsors: Insko (D-Orange); Holliman (D-Davidson); Wainwright(D-Craven); and Fisher(D-Buncombe).*

Status: Did not pass the House or Senate. Language in the large study bill that covers many things the General Assembly wishes to look at over the coming year included a requirement that the NC Institute of Medicine study “issues relating to access to health care.” The Institute can come up with some proposed recommendations, but cannot “study issues related to scope of practice and professional licensing.”

Immigrant Issues

Budget Items:

- **Immigration Enforcement - \$600,000** non-recurring appropriation to the Governor’s Crime Commission to contract with NC Sheriff’s Association for Immigration enforcement services. By March 1, 2009 Sheriff’s Association must submit a report to Chairs of Appropriation and Justice and Public Safety Sub-committee on the operation and effectiveness of the “Illegal Immigration Project.”

Legislation Passed:

- **Senate Bill 1955: Limited Release from Prison for Deportation-** Allows limited release from prison for deportation. *Sponsor: Rand (D-Cumberland).*

Improve Access to and Fairness in the Courts

Budget Items:

- **Innocence Inquiry Commission: \$121,537** recurring and **\$18,537** non-recurring appropriations for an Investigator and secretary.
- **10 New Magistrates: \$287,310** in recurring and **\$47,620** in non-recurring appropriations to add magistrates to the following counties: Durham (1), Forsyth (1), Gaston (1), Guilford (1), Mecklenburg (4), Wake (2).
- **Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils:** The budget restored funding (**\$22.6 million** recurring) and expanded JCPC formula allocation by \$500,000 recurring appropriation.
- **Tax Class Actions:** The appropriations bill was amended (G.S 1A-1, Rule 23 and G.S. 105-241.18) to establish a basis for a class action lawsuit seeking refund of a tax, the class requirements, procedures and statute of limitations.

- **Increase in Divorce Filing Fee** – Increases filing fee for divorce from \$55 to \$75, with \$20 increase dedicated to the Domestic Violence Center Fund for shelters
- **Criminal Justice Partnership Program** A **\$9.4 million recurring appropriation** was restored to the Criminal Justice Partnership Program. This program provides community corrections alternatives to prison sentences for non-violent offenders. This budget would make funding for this program a recurring item and also increases funding by \$257,729.

Legislation Passed:

- **House Bill 2105: Compensation for Erroneously Convicted**- Increases from \$20,000 to \$50,000 per year of incarceration, up to a maximum of \$500,000, for someone wrongfully convicted. Person must receive a full pardon from the Governor and is eligible for job skills training for one year and payment of tuition and fees. *Sponsors: Glazier (- Cumberland); Ross (D-Wake); Blue (D-Wake); Harrison (D-Guilford)*
- **House Bill 1113: State Tort Claims/Public Duty Doctrine**- Amends Article 31 of Chapter 143 to limit the public duty doctrine as an affirmative defense to claims under the State Tort Claims Act in certain instances. *Sponsors: Glazier (D-Cumberland) & Faison (D-Orange).*
- **House Bill 2438 (2008 Budget Technical Corrections): Medicaid Appeals Process** – Modifies the process for applicants for and recipients of Medicaid to appeal HHS decision to deny, terminate, suspend or reduce Medicaid covered services. Allocates \$2 million from HHS to Office of Administrative Hearings for mediation services and other services necessary to conduct appeal process. *Sponsors: Michaux (D-Durham); Tolson (D-Edgecombe); Yongue (D-Robeson).*
- **House Bill 2189: Domestic Violence Victim Assistance**- Requires law enforcement agencies to provide an informational sheet to domestic violence victims covered by the Crime Victims’ Rights Act. Also requires a study of the adoption of a statewide automated victim notification system for persons who have received a protective order under Chapter 50B. *Sponsors: McLawhorn (D-Pitt); Ross (D-Wake); Farmer-Butterfield (D-Wilson); Pierce (D-Hoke).*
- **House Bill 44: Domestic Violence Orders/Repeat Offenders**- Strengthens the enforcement of domestic violence protective orders by reducing the number of prior convictions required from 3 to 2 to charge an offender with a Class H felony for a violation. *Sponsors: McLawhorn (D-Pitt); Ross (D-Wake); Farmer-Butterfield (D-Wilson); Parmon (D-Forsyth).*

Legislation Considered:

- **House Bill 1291: North Carolina Racial Justice Act**- Would establish a procedure to overturn a death sentence if the basis for the sentence is based on race. Evidence may include statistical evidence of racial disparities in seeking death sentences at the judicial district,

county or state levels. *Sponsors: Womble (D-Forsyth) & Parmon (D-Forsyth).*

Status: Passed House in 2007; failed to pass in Senate.

Improve North Carolina's Transportation System

Legislation Passed:

- **House Bill 1770: Future Conveyances/Special Assessments:** This bill enables property owners to agree to impose a special tax or assessment on themselves, in order to pay back bonds financing the capital costs of street, school, water, sewer, flood control and public transportation improvements. This bill affords business modernizers the opportunity to help pay for infrastructure improvements, including public transportation facilities, from which they will be beneficiaries. In order for a special assessment to be lawful, the owners of at least 66% of a special assessment's district value must approve the project plan and the special assessment. County commissioners must approve the plan, and are the final arbiters of deciding the dollar amount of the special assessment based on the degree to which different property owner benefits from the improvement project. *Sponsor: McComas (R-New Hanover)*

Legislation Considered:

- **House Bill 2363: The Congestion Relief/Intermodal Transport Fund:** This bill was pulled from consideration and will need significant improvements to pass next year. The bill would let voters in the certain metropolitan areas decide whether to add a half-cent or quarter-cent sales tax to fund transportation projects. A sales tax is an unstable funding source that falls too heavily on low-income residents. In addition, the state match for the local money raised was not funded or it's source identified. Criteria to assess applications for state matching money were unspecified. Better local finance provisions will be the key to passage of this bill. *Sponsors: Carney (D-Mecklenburg); Allen (D-Franklin); Ross (D-Wake); Harrison (D-Guilford).*

Community Economic Development

Budget Items:

- **Minority Support Center - \$1 million** non-recurring appropriation to provide financial assistance to small businesses unable to obtain adequate financing and bond assistance in connection with contracts.

- **NC Rural Economic Development Center** - \$50 million non-recurring appropriation for water, sewer and natural gas and \$4 million non-recurring appropriation for “Rural Economic Transition Program.”

Legislative Studies: House Bill 2431

The following is a list of authorized studies contained in [HB 2431](#) related to issues confronting low-income people and communities:

- **The Legislative Research Commission:**
 - Prohibit Execution/Severe Mental Disability
 - Educational Assistance for Minimum Wage Workers
 - Youthful Offender Expunction
 - Improvements in Consumer Credit Reporting Practices
 - Standards Applied in Disputed Child Custody cases
 - Certificate of Need Process and its Impact on the Availability of Local Health Services
- **Joint Legislative Corrections, Crime Control, and juvenile Justice Oversight Committee:**
 - Study inmate access to education, training, and work release programs
- **NC Study Commission on Aging:**
 - Study state’s readiness to response to the coming wave of older adults
- **Department of Health & Human Services, Division of Aging and Adult Services and Division of Medical Assistance:**
 - Study the feasibility of operating a licensed adult care home in a public housing facility
- **Department of Public Instruction (DPI):**
 - DPI was instructed to study the participation and dropout rates of students with disabilities in Learn and Earn Early College High Schools, Redesigned High Schools, the North Carolina Virtual Public School, and North Carolina public high schools that are on block schedules
- **NC Institute of Medicine:**
 - Instructed to study issues related to access to health care
- **Joint Legislative Study Commission on Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Management Recovery**
 - Purpose is to study and develop plans to enhance disaster management capabilities at the county level

- **Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation**
 - The work of this Commission was extended through 2011

- **Legislative Study Commission on Urban Growth and Infrastructure Issues**
 - Instructed to study measures the General Assembly may take to foster regional water resource and transportation planning, incentive-based local land use planning, and more responsive and cost-effective planning to accommodate rapid population growth in North Carolina's urban areas

- **Joint Legislative Study Commission on Public School Funding Formulas**
 - The work of the Commission was extended and instructed to review the implementation of any modifications to school funding formulas that are enacted by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Committee and shall evaluate the impact of those modifications

- **Poverty Reduction and Economic Recovery Legislative Study Commission**
 - Instructed to study and develop a coordinated, integrated approach to poverty reduction and economic recovery across the State with an emphasis on the following counties: Alleghany, Avery, Bladen, Columbus, Edgecombe, Graham, Halifax, Hoke, Northampton, Robeson, Scotland, Tyrrell, Warren, Watauga, and Yancey.

- **Joint Legislative Study Commission on Municipal Annexation**
 - Instructed to study municipal annexations in North Carolina including issues related to governing involuntary annexation, voluntary annexation by petition, and voluntary satellite annexation and municipal compliance with current annexation procedural standards