CHARLOTTE

Charlotte City Council

Governmental Affairs Committee

Meeting Summary for May 3, 2010

COMMITTEE AGENDA TOPICS

I. **Subject:** **Debrief from Delegation Breakfast**
Action: None.

II. **Subject:** **Review of GAC Operating Guidelines for Short Session Beginning May 12, 2010**
Action: None.

III. **Subject:** **Review State Legislative Agendas**
Action: None.

IV. **Subject:** **Update on Federal Agenda**
Action: None.

V. **Subject:** **Next Meeting**
Action: Monday, June 7 at 4:00 p.m. in Room 280

COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Present: Nancy Carter, Patrick Cannon and Andy Dulin
Absent: Warren Turner and Susan Burgess
Time: 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Agenda Package
2. Updated Charlotte Chamber Legislative Agenda

DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

Committee Discussion:

Council member Carter welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked those in attendance to introduce themselves.

I. Debrief from Delegation Breakfast

Dulin: I would like to say I was disappointed there were not more Council members at the breakfast this morning. We did some good work this time and if I were a legislator, I would wonder why am I here?

Cannon: Or, why should I provide support. I agree it sends the wrong message. Is there a better job we can do to raise the level of importance?

Carter: What percentage of the Delegation was there?

Fenton: There were 9 members.

Dulin: So, 9 out of 15.

Carter: And, then 6 out of 12 of us, so that is a pretty even percentage.

Dulin: Some housekeeping, Town Hall Day in Raleigh is the same day as the Chamber trip.

Carter: I am going to go up to Raleigh the day before and say thanks and hand out information. Anyone is welcome to join me. I think there are eleven of us going on the Chamber trip, but it is important for us to be seen in Raleigh.

Dulin: I am going to decline since I will be gone the two days after.

Cannon: I will look at my calendar. It might work if you are going up and back the same day.

Carter: I will send an email to invite everyone. Mr. Fenton, what were your thoughts from this meeting?

Fenton: First, I would like to note that at the next Committee meeting on June 7 more information will be provided about Town Hall Day.

I thought the Mayor did a good job at the breakfast by starting out talking about partnerships. It was good to mention the award for Representative Carney and recognize Senator Clodfelter. I thought it was a good briefing of our expectations and very productive. But, that was the easy part.

Now, we will have to continue those good discussions.

Dulin: You've been in the Virginia legislature?

Fenton: Yes, for ten years.

Dulin: Did they have a short session?

Fenton: Yes, their short session occurs in the odd number years, lasts for 45 days and is basically to amend the budget.

Dulin: So, you've worked this before?

Fenton: Yes. I liken the session to a marathon. This is the two minute drill but the regular session will go on for several months. In Virginia, it was sixty days. Eric can attest to this as well and there is an eternity between the short session and long session.

Dulin: About eight months.

Campbell: This is actually Dana's second session this year.

Fenton: The legislature adjourned on the 61st day by passing the budget.

Cannon: Public Safety. Representative Samuelson needed some clarity; I would suggest that you make sure she is educated. Well, all members of our Delegation. Sometimes "we" don't let on that we don't know or don't understand issues so in as much as possible we need to make sure people clearly understand our position.

Carter: Thank you for that feedback. The public safety item is very technical in nature, but being specific will be helpful.

Cannon: I didn't sense any real pushback this morning. At first blush, they seemed receptive and to be listening.

Dulin: I can't see why they wouldn't think the retirement item wasn't light lifting. Who can't support that?

Carter: Senator Clodfelter for some reason thought those two items would be the only heavy lifting in our agenda.

Cannon: That's why I was asking for an education session.

Carter: I think because those are administrative details for our bills, those get branded as important just to us.

Fenton: I have dealt with a lot of local issues and oftentimes there are questions from other parts of the state. So, I try to get the answers. We will get more information from the internal departments and be ready to meet with folks.

Dulin: These issues are important to me, to us, so I don't mind helping. We've all heard before about the great State of Mecklenburg. I was at a dinner in Raleigh and heard that phrase mentioned at least three times in conversation.

Carter: If perception is repeated enough it becomes reality.

Cannon: But, they are a changed body now.

Carter: Charlotte is the economic engine for the state and that should be part of the message.

Fenton: We will get more detailed information ready immediately for Representative Samuelson and we will also be ready for future questions.

Carter: I think it is important for the Representative to get the information rapidly and then back to Council. I was impressed by the interaction this morning. I thought Senator Clodfelter was on target with his remarks. I was surprised there was no mention of a change or movement with the State's funding mechanism. That is one issue that can come up rapidly so we need to be ready so we can look out for the business privilege tax. In this budget year that is going to be a huge issue, the State has a huge gap to fill.

Dulin: We need to figure out what's important and get to the core functions. We are doing the same thing today. There are some hard decisions on the table for us too.

Carter: That's a good parallel.

Cannon: At the end of the meeting Senator Graham mentioned moving forward with medical services provided here in Charlotte with CMC and UNCC. I would like for us to not be the last to find out. It seemed like everyone was aware but us. The private sector has been engaged, but we don't know if there is a real need we can address. Can we find out what, if any, our role is to be? It seems we should be speaking with our colleagues at other levels to move that agenda. If it is important, we should be in lockstep with Senator Graham moving forward.

Carter: I think it is appropriate and there was an Economic Development Committee discussion about priorities for our city and developing clusters

around health/medical care, bio research, and a medical school. There was a similar debate between ECU and UNC a few years ago about the need for another medical school. You have to determine if you can have enough of a patient base. Charlotte can pull from South Carolina and the mountains. This would give North Carolina a fifth major medical center. I believe we do have the patient base. But, the issue on the table is not in our purview. They are looking for political allies. This issue is important to Erskine Bowles. It makes sense to have a medical school.

Cannon: I don't know our role, but I would like to find out where we fit in the puzzle. They used to say we had no medical school and no law school due to the politics in Raleigh because they maintain the perception that Charlotte has it all. We would love to provide a proper education for medical and law. We have the law now. I saw where CMC has a goal of opening 10 in 10 by acquiring other hospitals. That is an aggressive move.

II. Review of GAC Operating Guidelines for Short Session Beginning May 12, 2010

Carter: Do you all receive the update information from the Metro Coalition?

Dulin: Yes.

Cannon: Yes.

Carter: What about the US Conference of Mayors or just the major issues?

Dulin: I'm not interested in receiving that information. Are we watching out for the collective bargaining bill? Number five on the guidelines references watching "bad" bills.

Fenton: Yes, we are watching this carefully. Our federal lobbyists are engaged. There was some new legislation introduced a few weeks ago, but nothing happened. We've seen this come up for discussion at least twice.

Carter: Would the federal bill trump anything North Carolina proposes?

Fenton: Yes, this would supersede all state statutes. We're not sure the number this affects, but I know Virginia is not in compliance. There are a lot of people worried out there.

Carter: I see the same potential with annexation.

Dulin: When we talked about developing a rapid response process that makes

sense to me. I'm not sure how we deploy it. Do we go to the hill and lobby everyone on every issue or rotate? Or, do we say – we know Andy Dulin is passionate about Police and Fire, so do we call him and he's on it? It seems to be something we would do as a Council.

Carter: I think it should be interest-based. We can circulate issues that come up and get sign-off for who is going to lobby.

Dulin: Things aren't going to come up now because they are all in contested races.

Carter: I was glad to see Carolyn Flowers in Raleigh.

Fenton: She was at the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee meeting and did a great job presenting.

Carter: I was surprised there weren't more questions about the 25%. I thought that would be the most contested issue.

Cannon: They haven't had time to digest all the information. It will be.

Carter: That's why in the spirit of collaboration, we need to do some advanced lobbying. This is a great document to work from. Thank you.

III. <u>Review State Legislative Agendas</u>

Carter: We have been given an informative set of documents as well as a revised one from the Chamber. They revised the education part on the second sheet to give the board some leeway and hopefully save some jobs.

Dulin: I am personally not a fan of furloughs. I think that just moves the problem. I don't understand how Governor Perdue can retroactively pay when there is no money.

Carter: I view this as a mutual sharing of cost to ensure jobs.

Dulin: Allison, on your list under **Transportation**, why is the Yadkin River not on the list? It is impactful.

Waller: I don't know why – we do support it.

Dulin: It's a glaring omission on this list.

Carter: On the Metropolitan Mayor's list the next to the last bullet is prickly. "Maintain a cost-effective…" How? It is interesting, but I'm not sure it

will be supported. I applaud their boldness.

Cannon: Back to the Chamber's list, Allison, are there no public safety issues the Chamber is wrapping around? Nothing for Police or Fire?

Waller: Not really. There was an adopted resolution on roads that was not on the agenda.

Carter: I thought the list of priorities was interesting.

Dulin: Under **Job Creation**, you have $500,000 to the CIAA basketball tournament.

Waller: Yes, from the State. We didn't get it this year and it is not looking good for next year.

Dulin: That is something that could be easy to cut, the CIAA will come anyway. The President loves it here.

Waller: The CRVA requested we add that to our agenda.

Dulin: As I look at the Metro Mayor's list, I don't think it says anything.

Carter: The payroll tax?

Dulin: We have specialized taxes already Uptown.

Carter: Maybe property tax?

Cannon: Can we get some clarity on this?

Dulin: We can, but they aren't looking for our input.

Carter: On Mecklenburg County's list, number eight, Council member Cannon I think you might be interested in that one regarding publishing offenders. That is a cost savings for them.

Cannon: I need to mull that over.

Carter: Back to the Chamber's list under **Job Creation**, I don't understand the next to the last one.

Waller: That one is very technical. HB 813 is now sitting in the Senate, but this is being pushed by the trial attorneys. The State Chamber is very active and working with the business community on this bill. We can get more

information to you, but it is very complicated.

Dulin: It's talking about tort reform, isn't it? Basically eliminating the ability to sue anybody for anything. It makes it more balanced and easier.

Hagemann: Yes, tort reform.

Carter: Can you get the clarification for us?

Dulin: I have not read the Charlotte Realtors Association agenda, but Elizabeth Barnhardt is here.

Barnhardt: This is a copy of our federal, state and local agenda. As far as the State is concerned, we are looking at anything targeting taxes on housing and real estate development regulations that impact us.

Dulin: I saw an email exchange that reflected the housing issues are staying consistent. If you build good buildings, the regulations aren't as rigid.

Barnhardt: We are also looking at an issue with coastal insurance where they want to level the payout to charge inland communities. We don't feel we should pay for needs the needs of the coastal communities. They knew what they were buying. So, we will be watching that for the inland counties. There is also a steep slopes bill for the western counties and clean water issues.

Dulin: I see the Apartment Association is represented here today. Where are you?

Szymanski: With City Council or the General Assembly?

Dulin: How can we help in Charlotte?

Szymanski: We are tracking requirements for accepting rent subsidies with forced Section 8 or source of income discrimination. Locally, we are interested in public safety and crime deterrents.

Carter: I notice the CRRA references prioritizing transportation and maintaining the highway trust fund and also a recommendation to support the housing trust fund.

Barnhardt: We are looking for a reduction in one tax for the user fee to go away, there is room for negotiation on top of the current standards. We also think that for every dollar that goes to Raleigh we need to get that dollar back.

Carter: I understand the "in addition to" to lobby effectively.

Carter: The Chamber also references **Workforce and Quality of Life** issues.

Waller: Those rolled over from 2009; they just remained from last year.

IV. Update on Federal Agenda

Fenton: The last page of the agenda is a chart with the current status of the earmarks. Last year the House republicans had a pact for no earmarks, so you won't see anything with Myrick. But, the lobbyists still contacted all of our representatives to maintain support.

Carter: That is revealing.

Dulin: When we were in Washington we met with Mel Watt and he mentioned Sue Myrick was able to work through back doors to help lift the blue line. I wonder if she will continue to be able to work towards those loopholes. Another area of crossover is the Briar Creek Sewer extension. It starts in Myrick's district (Randolph Road) and crosses over to Kissell and ends up in Watt's. So, we have no trouble when everyone has skin in a project.

Carter: Is there an issue of support in Myrick's office or can she find some money?

Fenton: Holland & Knight is continuing to make the rounds for support.

Cannon: Are they making rounds to Larry Kissell? He looks low in support of our projects compared to everyone else. New Starts, he was $2.5 million versus Watt at $40 million; Emergency Communications he was $1 million to everyone else's $5 million. He was $0 on STAG. Could you find and report to us where he stands?

Fenton: We can find that out.

Carter: You might get a better explanation after tomorrow.

V. Next Meeting

June 7, 2010 at 4:00 p.m. in Room 280

Meeting Adjourned.

Governmental Affairs Committee

Monday, May 3, 2010 at 3:00 p.m.
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
Room 280

Committee Members: Nancy Carter, Chair
Warren Turner, Vice Chair
Susan Burgess
Patrick Cannon
Andy Dulin

Staff Resource: Ron Kimble

AGENDA

I. Debrief from Delegation Breakfast

II. Review of GAC Operating Guidelines for Short Session Beginning May 12, 2010 (Attachment)

III. Review State Legislative Agendas of (Attachments):

1. **NC Metropolitan Mayors Coalition**
2. **League of Municipalities**
3. **Mecklenburg County**
4. **UNC Charlotte**
5. **Charlotte Chamber of Commerce**
6. **Charlotte Regional Realtors Association**

IV. Update on Federal Agenda (Attachment)

V. Next Meeting:

June 7, 2010 at 4:00 p.m. in Room 280

Distribution: Mayor/City Council, Mac McCarley, Greg Gaskins, Curt Walton, City Manager, Stephanie Kelly, Kim Eagle, Leadership Team, Bob Hagemann

A. The Two Main Objectives for the City's Governmental Affairs Committee Are:

1. **Recommend annual state and federal legislative agendas**
2. **Recommend strategy for lobbying for passage of state and federal agendas**

B. How Does The Governmental Affairs Committee Suggest This Be Carried Out?

1. Strengthen/better align current relationships with state, federal, and local elected officials and staff (including appreciation) to advance the City's legislative agenda
2. Keep all members of the City Council and the Delegation informed, equipped, and engaged
3. Identify public, private, and nonprofit community partners and what our common agendas as well as friction points are
4. Keep in close communication with US Conference of Mayors, NC Metro Coalition, National League of Cities, North Carolina League of Municipalities, Centralina Council of Government, etc.
5. Monitor legislative sessions closely and watch for "bad" bills as well as favorable opportunities on such issues as tax reform, annexation preservation, and transportation
6. Develop a rapid response process and team which clarifies roles of Mayor, Council and Staff
7. Work closely with Holland & Knight as our contracted Federal lobbyist
8. Promote Metropolitan Transit Commission legislative initiatives
9. Use Council Retreat outcomes and Council priorities in generating the recommended legislative agendas
10. Periodically debrief/critique ourselves in order to improve

North Carolina Metropolitan
MAYORS
COALITION

NC Metropolitan Mayors Coalition

The North Carolina Metropolitan Mayors Coalition was founded in 2001 by large-city mayors and today represents the state's 26 largest cities and more than three million citizens. The Coalition remains a nonpartisan, mayor-driven organization advocating on issues that affect large cities in a fast-growing and urbanizing state.

The Coalition has successfully worked with federal and state elected officials to promote job creation, protect local revenue streams, invest in infrastructure, and keep our cities safe. The group originally formed to advance issues related to transportation and transit, which remain a mainstay today.

Most recently, the Coalition successfully advocated for legislation to halt the growth of gangs in our urban cities and for additional resources for prevention strategies.

2010 Advocacy Agenda

- Defend against attempts to shift state responsibilities to local governments and protect local revenues
- Continue to improve the relationship between N.C. Department of Transportation and local government
- Explore ways to partner with the State to build and maintain a robust transportation system
- Reduce gang violence
- Strengthen the state's judicial system
- Support efforts to advance North Carolina's biotech industry and grow related jobs
- Preserve local government ability to engage and lead in communication public enterprises
- Maintain a cost-effective way to manage growth, provide services and ensure all who benefit from the heart of their community also share in the cost
- Preserve local authority and decision making related to support public sector employees and oppose state and federal efforts to allow public sector collective bargaining.

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NCLM Advocacy Agenda 2009–2010

UPDATED FALL 2009

Advancement and Protection of Core Municipal Principles

The League will advance and protect core municipal principles. These include ensuring a stable, reliable municipal revenue stream; maintaining the flexibility needed for sound fiscal management; advocating against unfunded, burdensome mandates; preserving local authority and decision-making; adhering to standards of ethical conduct and open government; providing wide-ranging services without overly burdensome liability; and ensuring citizens are well served through cost-effective, environmentally responsible operations, planning and land management.

Annexation for Fair, Managed Growth

The League continues to support careful change to the long-standing municipal annexation laws in a way that provides for fair and equitable consideration of all citizens' needs and concerns and allows cities and towns to grow in an orderly manner.

Air Quality

The League will seek legislation and administrative action to obtain technical assistance and to authorize the use of tools such as early action compacts to promote regional cooperation and assist nonattainment areas in complying with new ozone regulations.

Water Resources

The League will seek legislation to provide for the gathering of data for all water withdrawals sufficient for basin-wide modeling and future allocation decisions. The League will seek amendments to water allocation legislation to provide for the appropriate duration of permits, protection of existing municipal withdrawals, autonomy in determining rate structure, and simplifying and integrating the state water and sewer funding process. The League will seek legislation or administrative changes to promote water reuse, including a redefinition of reclaimed treated water as a resource for non-potable purposes. The League will seek further study of water storage needs and methods, including surface and aquifer conservation and storage.

Municipal Incorporation Reform

The League will seek legislation imposing more stringent requirements on new municipal incorporations and requiring an incorporation proposal to receive a positive recommendation from the Joint Legislative Commission on Municipal Incorporations in order to be considered by the General Assembly.

Infrastructure Financing

The League will work to ensure that both short- and long-term solutions are developed and implemented to address critical infrastructure needs for roads, bridges, transportation systems, high speed broadband communications, water, sewer, stormwater systems, and affordable housing, without unwise preemption of local authority. These are the foundation for the high quality of life our citizens deserve and the future we wish to build in North Carolina. The League also will seek legislation to provide additional funds for key municipal infrastructure, including long term permanent sources of dedicated revenue, additional local option revenue sources, and state bond packages for infrastructure needs.

Energy/Sustainability

The League will seek legislation to enhance the ability of municipalities to implement sustainable, energy-efficient practices and programs, and to remove obstacles to doing so, through incentives, funding and research. The League will further seek to clarify local government land use authority related to renewable energy facilities.

Alcoholic Beverage Control

The League will seek further legislation to strengthen municipalities' ability to regulate inappropriate location of licensed alcohol establishments. Significant secondary effects have arisen from the inappropriate location of alcohol establishments. (Partially addressed by passage of HB 186, 2009)

Sanitary Sewer Overflows

The League will seek legislation or administrative changes to address inequities and inconsistencies in the issuance of notices of violation and civil penalties for sanitary sewer overflows.

Stormwater Fees

The League will seek legislation to codify the obligation of governmental agencies with regard to payment of local government stormwater utility fees for agency facilities.

Electronic Notices

The League will seek legislation to authorize municipalities to use the option of electronic means to provide public notice for certain public hearings. Providing internet notice for select public hearings is today a more effective and efficient method for reaching interested citizens in many communities.

Mecklenburg County
2010 State Legislative Agenda

Specific Bill Requests

1. Expand the membership of the Board of Equalization and Review to 15 members and make other changes to make the property tax appeal process more efficient.
2. Grant Mecklenburg County the same authority previously granted to the cities of Raleigh and Winston Salem to enter leases of greater than 10 years when contracting for energy efficiency equipment.
3. Restore Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's status as an entity that is eligible to receive state sales tax refunds.
4. Allow Mecklenburg County to maintain local EMS protocols which reflect the best practices in emergency medical care.
5. Restore State-Aid to Counties for Departments of Social Services.
6. Restore Funding cuts to Area Mental Health and reform the distribution formula for Mental Health funds.
7. Restore per diem payment for state prisoners housed in county jails.
8. Allow Mecklenburg County to publish names of delinquent taxpayers on its website in lieu of purchasing a newspaper advertisement.
9. Support legislation that provides incentives to local governments that develop Regional Planning Organizations.
10. Unfreeze magistrate positions to allow for the hiring of a magistrate in North Mecklenburg.
11. Restore funding for NCADAP (North Carolina AIDS Drug Assistance Program)
12. Support the request of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Board of Education for local flexibility regarding staff spending and the school calendar.

General Policy Positions

1. Support legislation that grants greater flexibility to counties.
2. Oppose legislation that restricts county flexibility.
3. Oppose legislation that creates unfunded mandates to counties.
4. Oppose legislation that shifts costs from state to county government.

UNC CHARLOTTE

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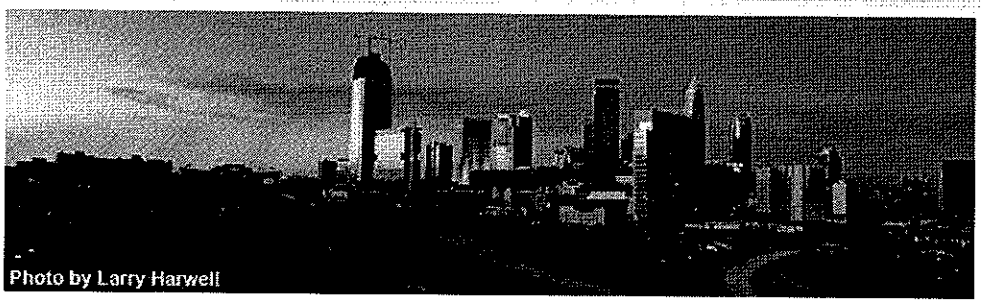
2010 UNC Charlotte Legislative Priorities

1. Secure $3 M recurring for EPIC (Energy Production and Infrastructure Center) for 7 Senior Faculty and 16 staff members

2. Protect enrollment growth funding
   9.2 M appropriated to UNC Charlotte

3. Approval of Football Complex non-appropriated capital
   $45.3 M serviced with fee paid over 30 years for:
   - 15,000 seat permanent stadium – expandable to accommodate 40,000
   - Field house with locker rooms, weight rooms, training rooms
   - Coach's offices
   - Practice facilities



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Charlotte Chamber 2010 Legislative Agenda

The Charlotte Chamber's 2010 Legislative Agenda, below, was approved by the Legislative Agenda Task Force on March 30. For final approval, this agenda must be voted on and accepted by the Executive Committee (on April 12) and the Board of Advisors (on April 26).

The Charlotte Chamber works to grow the economy, to serve as a voice for business and to deliver value in order to ignite success for its members and Charlotte. We understand the difficult revenue outlook facing the General Assembly due to the current economic conditions. The following recommendations include appropriations or tax changes in those areas that we believe will speed North Carolina's economic recovery. We have also identified statutory changes that will assist businesses and individuals in operating more efficiently as we lead the nation back to prosperity.

Transportation

- Support expedited completion of I-485.
- Support accelerated completion of Charlotte's mass transit and light rail plan.
- Support increased funding and new revenue sources for roads and equitable distribution of those funds.
- Support reform of NCDOT and remove conflicts between state and local policies and regulations.

Job Creation

- Support incentives to attract jobs that compete better with surrounding states and to fully fund job recruitment efforts including the Economic Development Partnerships and the Department of Commerce.
- Support increased funding for the arts, travel and tourism in North Carolina as it spurs economic development including:
    - Support for an additional $500,000 in funding for the CIAA basketball tournament in 2011.
- Support actions to ensure adequate supply of energy and promote regulatory tools to manage cost and rate impact to customers.
- Support the maintenance of a balanced civil liability system in North Carolina including the elimination of joint and several liability and the elimination of the collateral source rule.
- Support the preservation of current annexation laws.

Taxes

- Support a reduction in the corporate and personal income tax rates to make us more competitive with surrounding states including the 2011 expiration of the corporate and personal income tax surcharges.
- Support efforts to clarify the authority of the Department of Revenue regarding mandatory combined reporting of corporate income.
- Oppose targeted taxes, policies and rules that would impede business development and stifle home ownership or affordable housing.

Workforce & Quality of Life

- Support efforts to reform NC's Workers' Compensation Act.
- Oppose efforts to erode NC's Right-to-work laws.
    - Oppose collective bargaining for public employees.
- Support efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice system at the state and local level, specifically, to address technology and staffing issues.
- Support a housing stimulus package for North Carolina.

Education

- Support efforts to improve our public schools, community colleges and universities and to fully fund their enrollment increases including:
    - Support for the completion of the state's financial commitment to Johnson & Wales.
    - Support funding for faculty of UNC Charlotte's Energy Production Infrastructure Center (EPIC).
    - Support the UNC Charlotte football stadium complex project included the UNC system's non-appropriated capital projects list.
    - Support tax credits to businesses who offer internships.
    - Support the expansion of the NC Teaching Fellows program from 500 to 1,000 fellows per year.

Federal Issues

- Oppose Employee Free Choice Act
- Support legislative remedies to air quality issues rather than regulations.

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Charlotte, NC 28202
(704) 378-1300

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Charlotte Regional Realtor® Association

2010 Legislative Priorities

The Charlotte Regional Realtor® Association intends to successfully promote housing affordability, protect rights of property owners and advocate for improvements to the real estate industry at the local, state and national levels. Below is an overview of the issues that the association board of directors, government affairs committee and staff will engage in on behalf of its members.

Homeownership

Voice for Realtors®

The association will advocate, promote and protect the rights of its members. The association will keep the Realtor® point of view at the center of all discussions and promote the real estate industry throughout the community.

Limit Housing Taxes

Charlotte's housing affordability puts our region at a competitive advantage and facilitates greater economic development. Housing affordability is also a key factor in the high quality of life that we enjoy. The association will continue to defend the rights of home buyers and sellers in campaigning against transfer taxes and impact fees. Further, the association supports legislation to eliminate transfer-tax authority by North Carolina counties.

Oppose Taxing Services

There is renewed discussion about the idea of taxing services. This could have a significant impact on housing affordability as virtually all real estate services involved in a home sale could be subjected to a new tax. Realtors® have been instrumental in informing legislators about the economic impacts of these proposed taxes and will remain involved in the discussion to limit taxes on a real estate transaction.

Support the Housing Continuum

Not everyone is ready for homeownership right now. Realtors® support efforts to provide housing for all of our citizens at all levels of the housing continuum, from homelessness to homeownership. Realtors® believe that everyone deserves safe shelter. Realtors® can act as a resource, especially as it relates to homeownership and the home buying and selling process.

Promote Housing Affordability

A home is more than a shelter; it is an investment and a dream-come-true that symbolizes who we are. Realtors® seek to defend the special needs of first-time homeowners and others needing financial assistance by supporting local programs and services that assist with homeownership.

Support Housing Trust Funds

No one appreciates the importance of homeownership more than Realtors®. Realtors® will continue to support funding of the North Carolina Housing Trust Fund, the Charlotte Housing Trust Fund and other local housing-finance agencies to provide financing for affordable housing in the Charlotte region.

Improve Homeownership and Consumer Protection
Our legislative efforts will continue to combat mortgage fraud and unscrupulous, non-licensed real estate activity. Realtors® will support legislation to improve the regulation of real estate servicers, as well as to protect access to affordable homeowner's insurance.

Protect the Rights of Property Owners
Mandates placed on property owners can have an adverse affect on housing affordability and the overall economic health of a community. Development moratoria, transfers of development rights, inclusionary zoning, urban-growth boundaries and adequate public-facilities ordinances often threaten the value, usability and legal bundle of rights of ownership. Realtors® seek to keep the rights of property owners at the center of the decision-making process.

Safeguard Consumers
All Realtors® agree to abide by a Code of Ethics which sets them apart from real estate licensees. All Realtors® are bound by local, state and national laws. Realtors® continue to protect consumers by following the Federal Fair Housing Act and are prohibited from any form of discrimination. Realtors® will continue to work with elected leaders to eliminate discrimination and raise the standards of the real estate profession to serve all citizens equally.

Provide Housing Preservation Tools
Homeowners should be offered every resource possible to stay in their homes when faced with financial challenges. Realtors® want to protect a homeowner's investment and to be aware of homeownership resources available at all levels of government. Also, Realtors® are interested in creating community partnerships to address challenges related to foreclosures.

Protect Landlord and Tenant Rights
Property owners have the right to rent and manage their properties as the law allows. When renters violate the law, the property owners' rights should be protected throughout the eviction process, especially when a crime has been committed by a tenant.

Support Safe Rental Housing
Rental homes are a part of the housing continuum. Most homeowners were renters at some point. Realtors® are opposed to any policies that add fees and regulation on rental properties that could affect affordability or livability.

Monitor Land-Use Proposals
Through the association's partnership with the Real Estate and Building Industry Coalition (REBIC), Realtors® will actively monitor land-use measures that could limit growth or potentially limit the right of property owners.

Quality of Life

Support Economic Development
Economic development and growth of a community go hand in hand. Homes are where jobs go to sleep at night. The association will work with the Charlotte Chamber and other chambers of commerce in the region to support recruiting business and industry to our region.

Advocate for Equitable Funding of Infrastructure
In lieu of taxes and fees that target the housing sector, Realtors® will continue to support fiscal measures that are equitable. Realtors® will also continue to have a strong voice in discussions about funding various infrastructures, such as roads, public schools, water and sewer lines, and parks and recreation.

Support Environmental Sustainability
Realtors® support a safe, clean environment that is sustainable for future generations. However, Realtors® oppose punitive environmental regulations that serve to increase housing costs unnecessarily. Realtors® will work with government and the community to support voluntary, common-sense programs that will promote a healthy, sustainable environment.

Promote Quality Education
Every child in our community deserves a quality education. Realtors® often work with clients whose priority is to locate a school that meets the needs of their families. Realtors® will continue to promote choice, accountability and accessibility to all levels of education.

Prioritize Transportation
The Charlotte region continues to be a donor county when it comes to tax dollars collected to fund state road construction and maintenance. The association joins other Charlotte-area organizations to support maintaining the integrity of the Highway Trust Fund, equitable funding for new roads and maintenance and improvement of existing roads in the Charlotte region.

Provide Choices in Transportation
In a growing community, it is important that we support municipal and state governments as they meet the transportation needs of our community. Realtors® support continuing to build and maintain our broad network of roads, while supporting transit and mass-transportation options.

Oppose Vehicle Miles Travel Tax
Realtors®' duties are not encompassed by a typical nine-to-five job. Realtors® rely on their personal vehicles and a reliable transportation network to do their jobs. Association members oppose any taxes that would inordinately affect their business model.

Support Arts in Community
A thriving cultural community is as important to residents and future homebuyers as schools and infrastructure. The association supports arts-and-cultural funding through contributions to the Arts and Science Council. The association will continue to support culture through neighborhood and community-based projects involving arts, science, history and heritage.

Promote Community Safety
Safe neighborhoods and low crime rates are of critical concern to Realtors® as they work with clients in the home-buying and home-selling process. Realtors® support initiatives that help protect all of our citizens from crime and disorder and promote voluntary community safety initiatives.

Advocate for Affordable Health Care
Access to affordable health insurance has increasingly become an issue for Realtors®. A broad coalition of trade organizations, including the National Association of Realtors®, support legislation that would allow small businesses to join together through their trade associations to form small-business health plans.

FY2011 Charlotte Federal Appropriations Projects

Bill	Account	Project Name	Request	Kissell	Watt	Burr	Hagan
THUD	New Starts	Charlotte Blue Line Light Rail Extension (Northeast Corridor)	$40m	$2.5m	$40m	TBD	TBD
CJS	OJP - Byrne Discretionary Grants	Monitoring, Tracking, and Prosecuting Priority Offenders	$1.5m	$1.5m	$1.5m	N/A	$1.5m
DHS	State and Local Programs - Emergency Opera	Emergency Communications Co-Location	$5m	$1m	$5m	N/A	$1m
CJS	Office of Juvenile Programs	Gang of One & Police Activities League - Youth Initiative	$1.048m	$1.048m	$1.048m	$1.048m	$1.048m
E&W	Corps: Gen. Const.	Briar Creek Relief Sewer	$4m	$2.5m	$4m	$4m	$0
Interior	STAG	Briar Creek Relief Sewer	$4m	$0	$4m	$4m	$4m

2010 Legislative Agenda

The Charlotte Chamber creates competitive advantage by growing the economy, advocating pro-business public policies, and delivering innovative programs and services. We understand the difficult revenue outlook facing the General Assembly due to the current economic conditions. The following recommendations include appropriations or tax changes in those areas that we believe will speed North Carolina's economic recovery. We have also identified statutory changes that will assist businesses and individuals in operating more efficiently as we lead the nation back to prosperity.

Transportation

- Support expedited completion of I-485.
- Support accelerated completion of Charlotte's mass transit and light rail plan.
- Support increased funding and new revenue sources for roads and equitable distribution of those funds.
- Support reform of NCDOT and remove conflicts between state and local policies and regulations.

Job Creation

- Support incentives to attract jobs that compete better with surrounding states and to fully fund job recruitment efforts including the Economic Development Partnerships and the Department of Commerce.
- Support increased funding for the arts, travel and tourism in North Carolina as it spurs economic development including:
    - Support for an additional $500,000 in funding for the CIAA basketball tournament in 2011.
- Support actions to ensure adequate supply of energy and promote regulatory tools to manage cost and rate impact to customers.
- Support the maintenance of a balanced civil liability system in North Carolina including the elimination of joint and several liability and the elimination of the collateral source rule.
- Support the preservation of current annexation laws.

Taxes

- Support a reduction in the corporate and personal income tax rates to make us more competitive with surrounding states including the 2011 expiration of the corporate and personal income tax surcharges.

- Support efforts to clarify the authority of the Department of Revenue regarding mandatory combined reporting of corporate income.

- Oppose targeted taxes, policies and rules that would impede business development and stifle home ownership or affordable housing.

Workforce & Quality of Life

- Support efforts to reform NC's Workers' Compensation Act.

- Oppose efforts to erode NC's Right-to-work laws.

    - Oppose collective bargaining for public employees.

- Support efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice system at the state and local level, specifically, to address technology and staffing issues.

- Support a housing stimulus package for North Carolina.

Education

- Support efforts to improve our public schools, community colleges and universities and to fully fund their enrollment increases including:

    - Support legislation allowing LEAs (Local Education Authorities) to furlough employees due to temporary economic hardship.

    - Support for the completion of the state's financial commitment to Johnson & Wales.

    - Support funding for faculty of UNC Charlotte's Energy Production Infrastructure Center (EPIC).

    - Support the UNC Charlotte football stadium complex project included in the UNC system's non-appropriated capital projects list. Support tax credits to businesses who offer internships.

    - Support the expansion of the NC Teaching Fellows program from 500 to 1,000 fellows per year.

Federal Issues

- Oppose Employee Free Choice Act.

- Support legislative remedies to air quality issues rather than regulations.