

Minutes of Legislative Affairs Committee Meeting – April 29, 2014

Roll call:

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Cornell Wilson (Military Affairs Advisor)  
Bill Hatcher (Camp Lejeune)  
George Cleveland (House)  
John Bell (House)  
Efton Sager  
Jeremiah Daniels (Seymour Johnson)  
Darryl Black (Sen. Brown's office)  
Sen. Harry Brown  
Nathan Batts, NC Bankers Association  
Rose Von Williams, Legislative counsel for Department of Insurance  
Lewis King (Speaker's office)  
Drew Moretz, University of North Carolina General Administration  
Ilario Pantano, Veterans Affairs  
Beau Memory, Pro Tem's Office  
Chris Whitmire, Senate  
Joy Thrash  
Liz Hill  
Trey Raven  
Jimmie Cook

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:**

Sen. Wesley Meredith  
Lt. Gov. Dan Forest

Call to Order/Opening Remarks:

**Unfinished Business** : Drew Moretz spoke on behalf of Community Colleges as well as UNC System. He addressed the in-state tuition for veterans and residency requirements in the bill that is being honed for passage into law. The bill requires that a veteran and/or spouse must be stationed in NC or maintain a home of record in North Carolina, or take steps to do so prior to enrollment. The actual cost based on new tuition rate is \$9.2M. In his budget, the Governor slated \$1.8M for community colleges and \$5M for UNC system.

**Selection of Adjutant General:** Rep. Chris Whitmire gave updates on bill and amendments. He was able to add terms regarding "having had command" as distinguished from "having had command of a National Guard Unit."

**Civilian Credit for Military Equivalent Experience/Training /Formal Coursework** : Rep. Chris Whitmire addressed this 3-part bill. The bill ensures that licensure boards post criteria for eligibility for recognition, provides a 30-day timeline within which the boards must approve or deny request for credit, calls for a study where the UNC System will develop a review process to determine whether

associate's degrees procured through the military will be recognized by UNC System and credited toward a 4-year degree.

**Land Use :** Rose Von Williams, legislative counsel to Department of Insurance, commented on HB 433, which governs tall building structures around bases and a stakeholders' meeting that took place. The Insurance Commissioner has been appointed to enforce the requirements of the bill. If the Commissioner remains the enforcer, the following adjustments to the bill are requested: that a process needs is in place so that the complaint gets to the Commissioner and he has a proceeding upon which to act, and make the hearing process pursuant to the proper Article of the Administrative Procedure Act to allow the Department of Insurance to act and hold a hearing.

Darryl Black added that the development of a statewide, land use map is being discussed with zones clearly identifying encroachment areas in order to make it conducive for management by Department of Insurance. The issue is not limited to military, but includes the aviation industry as well.

**Hoffman Forest Update:** General Wilson updated that the closing on the property is expected to go forward in June; the purchaser wants assurance that DoD will negotiate with him about easements for military training.

**New Business - Cell Tower Placement on DoD Bases:** Trey Raven addressed this matter. DoD is working on an initiative at the federal level, that seeks to promote wireless mobility solutions for DoD operations. The wireless infrastructure on bases is not set up to support a widespread commercial handset deployment. A significant infrastructure bill process will need to take place, and takes twice as long as the commercial sector. The wireless industry is seeking to streamline the process. The industry is engaging base commanders to get the process approved.

**Key issues for Potential Policy Reform in NC :** MajGen Cornell Wilson briefed on the handout from the office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff identifying 10 key issues affecting military and comparing support of military in other states to military support in NC and setting forth best practices of various states.

**National Guard Legislative Request :** LTC Cook briefed on three items related to construction and leveraging federal funds in contrast to National Guard Bureau funding. The first issue is requesting an exemption from GS Section 143(c)827, in order to have ability to start construction with 100% federal funds and facility being 100% federally maintained, with short-notice funds being provided by National Guard Bureau. The goal is for the OSBM director to have the ability to approve that type of project. Second issue, is to amend the Session Law Section 36-11(c) to allow leveraging of funds so that excess from cost savings can be used for an additional location within two years, or so; 25 projects are currently slated for federal dollars with a possible 4 or 5 more projects. Third is the opportunity to renovate the Wilmington armory with a state match of \$2.5M. Sen. Brown requested an update of how funds were spent on renovations last year.

**Veterans' Affairs:** Secretary Ilario Pantano briefed on the inaccuracy of the 2013 NC Commerce Report, which underreports by \$6.36B the veteran economic contribution to the State, and the need for a new analysis. The Fiscal Research Division is looking into the reporting process.

**Military Appreciation Day:** Nathan Batts of NC Bankers Association addressed the origin and outline of the event and its timing as it relates to the upcoming session of the General Assembly. The resolution honoring the military will originate in the Senate.

Darryl Black briefed on a pending bill "Protect BRAC-related Documents," the closed session of the BRAC Committee and concerns related to protection of proprietary information. General Wilson elucidated on classification of information.

Sen. Brown made a motion to approve the draft bills. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.