

Metro Mayors Focus on Advocacy Agenda at Winter Meeting

The N.C. Metropolitan Mayors Coalition held its 2011 Winter Meeting in Greensboro, where members came together to elect leaders and develop policy focus areas for 2011-12. The Coalition was joined by Governor Beverly Perdue, U.S. Senator Kay Hagan, N.C. Speaker of the House Thom Tillis and N.C. President Pro Tempore Phil Berger who spoke on the state and federal budget outlook and its effect on cities.

“We are picking up the pieces now in North Carolina,” Gov. Bev Perdue told the Coalition as she briefed members on the state budget negotiations. She asked the mayors to join her to fight for school funding and money for economic incentives. “The top priority all of you talk to me about is jobs. And I need your help on this,” Perdue said.

Host Greensboro Mayor William H. Knight said the meeting came at a sensitive juncture, as state and city governments planned for severe budget constraints in 2011-12. “This meeting offered a great opportunity to share



N.C. Senate President Pro Tem Phil Berger provides an update on the state budget.

ideas and solutions at a critical time in the budget process,” said Knight. “I appreciated the opportunity to meet with our state officials and to showcase Greensboro’s efforts to provide economic incentives and job growth.”

The Coalition recommitted to its advocacy agenda, which states the Coalition will:

- Support additional revenues for the Mobility Fund, support set-asides within the Fund for expanding Powell Bill and Interstate Maintenance and defend against statutory changes to the formula;
- Defend existing statutory roadway responsibilities between the state and local government;
- Defend against attempts to shift state responsibilities to local governments and protect state-collected local revenues;
- Support the needs of the Justice System;
- Support efforts to reduce gang violence;

Continued on Page 2



N.C. House Speaker Thom Tillis addresses the Metro Mayors.

Redistricting Update

By John Rustin & Jonathan Kappler, North Carolina FreeEnterprise Foundation

Every 10 years after the decennial census, states across the country engage in the process of redrawing congressional and state legislative district maps to ensure that citizens enjoy fair and equal representation. Despite the fact that North Carolina experienced an 18.5 percent growth in population during the last decade—predominantly in metropolitan regions—the state fell approximately 15,000 citizens shy of gaining a 14th seat in Congress. Although state lawmakers just missed the opportunity to fashion an additional congressional district into the maps they are currently drawing, the boundary lines for North Carolina’s current 13 congressional seats, 50 state Senate seats and 120 state House seats are likely to change dramatically for two primary reasons: the state has experienced dramatic growth and shifts in population, and Republicans control both chambers of the state legislature for the first time in well over 100 years.

In political terms, population equates to representation and representation equates to power. Regardless of partisan politics, North Carolina’s cities and metro regions will be the clear winners once redistricting is completed. The state’s three major metropolitan areas—the Triangle, the Triad, and the greater Charlotte region—now make up roughly 62 percent of the state’s 9.5 million citizens. The 27 cities that constitute the Metropolitan May-

ors Coalition represent more than a third of the state’s population.

At the time of this writing, we don’t know exactly what the final maps will look like, but we can make some informed predictions. At the congressional level, districts that have long been dominated by rural communities will have to grow geographically and gain population in order to reach the ideal target district size. Conversely, fast-growing districts, particularly around Raleigh and Charlotte, will have to compress geographically and shed residents in order to meet the target population numbers. At the state legislative level, where the impact of population shifts will be even more apparent, urban and suburban counties will gain additional seats in the state House and Senate, while counties that are growing more slowly or losing population, like those in Western North Carolina and areas in the east, will lose seats and relative representation.

In addition, the fact that Republicans hold the reins in the North Carolina General Assembly will undoubtedly influence the maps’ ultimate design. A key factor

Continued on Page 2

Guest Column

John Rustin and Jonathan Kappler

- DURHAM**
Mayor William V. Bell
Chair
- SALISBURY**
Mayor Susan Kluttz
Vice Chair
- GREENSBORO**
Mayor Bill Knight
Treasurer
- APEX**
Mayor Keith Weatherly
- ASHEVILLE**
Mayor Terry Bellamy
- BOONE**
Mayor Loretta Clawson
- BURLINGTON**
Mayor Ronnie Wall
- CARRBORO**
Mayor Mark Chilton
- CARY**
Mayor Harold Weinbrecht
- CHAPEL HILL**
Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt
- CHARLOTTE**
Mayor Anthony Foxx
- CONCORD**
Mayor J. Scott Padgett
- FAYETTEVILLE**
Mayor Anthony Chavonne
- GASTONIA**
Mayor Jennifer Stultz
- GOLDSBORO**
Mayor Al King
- GREENVILLE**
Mayor Pat Dunn
- HICKORY**
Mayor Rudy Wright
- HIGH POINT**
Mayor Rebecca Smothers
- HUNTERSVILLE**
Mayor Jill Swain
- JACKSONVILLE**
Mayor Sammy Phillips
- KANNAPOLIS**
Mayor Robert Misenheimer
- MONROE**
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- RALEIGH**
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Legislative Review

As you know, we recently wrapped up a busy legislative session. The General Assembly passed a \$19.7 billion budget and more than 400 bills on a host of issues affecting our state. In fact, legislators' work is not yet complete. They will be back in Raleigh in July and September to deal with constitutional matters and redistricting.

I want to thank all of our members for their work in educating our legislators about key issues and building relationships that will benefit all of our cities. Many of you came to Raleigh to attend committee meetings, meet with your legislators or testify on a piece of legislation. Those efforts and our regular staff presence at the General Assembly keep the issues important to our cities – reducing crime, improving transportation and creating jobs – at the forefront.

Crafting a state budget is always a challenge, but this year was more difficult than most, with a looming budget deficit of \$2.7 billion and a number of competing needs. We appreciate that the General Assembly balanced the budget without passing the burden onto cities. Our cities are facing difficult financial times too and unfunded mandates or taking of our revenues would have been untenable. We have already cut costs and reduced our own budgets, and our local governments are working hard to meet the needs of our citizens. By protecting the important services that our cities provide, we can focus on creating jobs and moving North Carolina's economy forward, which means a brighter future for all of us.

There were a number of tough issues dealt with in this session, and the Metro Mayors were grateful that legislative leaders from both sides of the aisle worked with us to craft and improve legislation. Specifically on the issue of annexation, I appointed a select committee of Metro Mayors



Message from
the Chairman

**Mayor
Bill Bell**

which met with Speaker Tillis and Minority Leader Hackney to discuss meaningful reform. We appreciate their interest in hearing from us on this difficult topic and working to address concerns on both sides.

The Coalition also invested a significant amount of time and effort on legislation to revise the rules regulating billboards. The "Billboard Bill," as it came to be known, generated a lot of interest and discussion. While we are not happy with the expanded cut zones and other changes in the final legislation, we appreciated the efforts of a number of legislators who advocated for our members' concerns. Speaker Tillis, Majority Leader Stam, Rep. Brubaker, Rep. McGrady, Sen. Stein and Sen. Kinnaird represented their constituents well in fighting to keep local control over billboards in our cities.

Our Coalition also marked several important successes during this session. We supported the Metro Chiefs in their successful efforts to add synthetic marijuana to the list of controlled substances. That change will keep more drugs off our streets and keep our communities safer.

In addition, Rep. Faircloth introduced our gang nuisance bill, which would give law enforcement additional tools in the fight to keep gangs out of our communities. Specifically, the bill would allow law enforcement to bring a civil action against gangs operating in North Carolina under the state's public nuisance laws. A judge would then have broad powers to work to break up the gang by prohibiting members from associating with one another and taking other actions. The bill breezed through committees and the House floor unanimously, thanks to Rep. Faircloth's leadership. It is now awaiting action in the Senate in the short session.

The Metropolitan Mayors Coalition will continue to build on these successes and work with our legislators to address the critical issues facing our cities – and our state. The challenges that North Carolina faces can only be addressed if we all work together to find positive, meaningful solutions.

Agenda Continued from Page 1

- Support the continued state appropriations for life sciences;
- Preserve local government ability to engage and lead in communication public enterprises; and
- 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.

The members of the Coalition also stated their support of:

- Passing legislation to extend from 2012 to 2014 the implementation requirements for the Jordan Lake wastewater rules;
- Asking President Obama to consider North Carolina's Richmond-Petersburg-Raleigh portion of the South East High Speed Rail Corridor (SEHSR), which extends south from Washington, DC to Richmond, Hampton Roads, Raleigh, Charlotte and cities throughout the southeast, when reallocating any high speed rail funds;
- Opposing any unnecessary cuts to the UNC and Community College System;
- Preserving local control over new billboards and billboard conversions; and
- Protecting North Carolina's current film incentives.

The group re-elected Durham Mayor Bill Bell, chair; Salisbury Mayor Susan Kluttz, vice chair; Greensboro Mayor Bill Knight, treasurer; and Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines, past chair. They also elected at-large Executive Committee members Charlotte Mayor Anthony Foxx, Concord Mayor Scott Padgett, Wilmington Mayor Bill Saffo, High Point Mayor Becky Smothers and Apex Mayor Keith Weatherly.

Redistricting Continued from Page 1

is the GOP's approach toward compliance with the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which requires minority voting rights in about 40 counties to be given enhanced consideration due to historical discrimination. Even with limited details available, Guilford County appears to be representative of the overall approach taken by the GOP majority.

The current Guilford County delegation in the state House consists of six members, two Republicans and four Democrats, two of whom are elected from majority-minority districts. Based on 2010 census, the county will continue to have six seats in the House; however, the newly-drawn maps appear to create three stronger majority-minority districts in place of the current four Democratic-leaning districts. A higher concentration of African-American and Democratic voters in these districts would ensure a greater likelihood of producing African-American representation. At the same time, the remaining portions of the county appear more favorable to Republicans, creating an opportunity for the GOP to pick up a third House seat in Guilford County. A similar approach is used in other areas of the state.

If this is the case, it may foreshadow the beginning of a significant political transition in North Carolina politics. Rural districts will be fewer and further between and increasingly held by Republicans. African-American lawmakers will make up a growing percentage of the Democratic caucus in the state legislature. And representation from North Carolina's largest urban centers will continue to increase, as will the political influence of our state's growing metropolitan areas.

The North Carolina FreeEnterprise Foundation provides innovative educational programs, non-partisan political research, and objective analysis to foster informed civic involvement, develop an understanding of the free enterprise economy, and strengthen North Carolina's prosperous business environment.

Metro Mayors In Action



Mayor Tony Chavonne celebrates Fayetteville's All-America City designation.



Governor Bev Perdue updates the Metro Mayors on the state budget during their Greensboro meeting.



Boone Mayor Loretta Clawson and Governor Bev Perdue during a meeting of the Governor's Local Government Advisory Council.



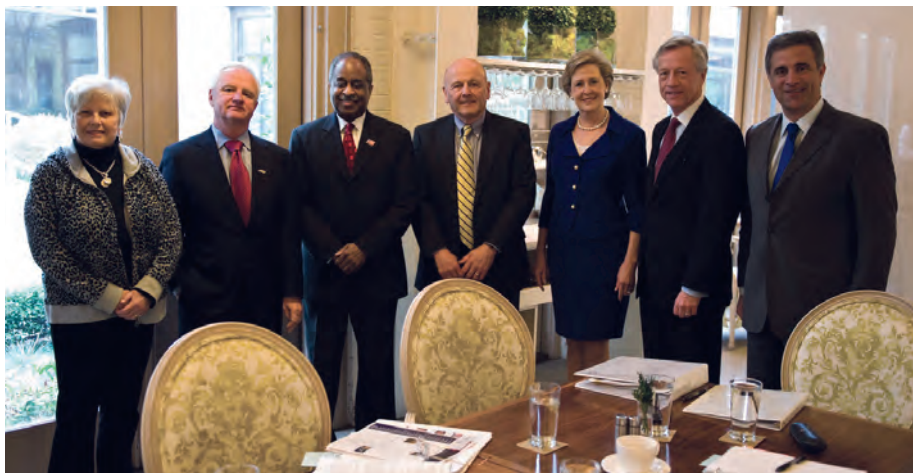
Durham Mayor Bill Bell greets President Obama during the president's visit to Durham in June.



U.S. Senator Kay Hagan discusses federal legislation at the Metro Mayors meeting.



Gastonia Mayor Jennie Stultz is honored for her service at the U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting in Baltimore. USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran and USCM President Elizabeth B. Kautz presented the award to Stultz, who has served as mayor for more than 11 years.



Members of the Metro Mayors Executive Committee – Mayors Smothers, Padgett, Bell, Knight, Kluttz, Joines and Saffo – at the Metro Mayors meeting in Greensboro.



Chapel Hill Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt receives a Climate Protection Award at the U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting.

Moving Forward on Transportation

In this busy legislative session, we made great progress in the area of transportation, which is so critical to our cities, our economy and our state. That success is a testament to the fairness of the leadership in the General Assembly and our strong relationship with the N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT). The N.C. Metropolitan Mayors Coalition appreciates the efforts of both legislative leaders and NCDOT to advance important transportation needs.



We enjoyed building great relationships with the members of the committees managing transportation appropriations and transportation oversight. The new chairs are open and accessible; they understand cities' needs and are interested in our suggestions. While we do not necessarily agree on everything they proposed, we appreciate their basic philosophy – put the money where the congestion is, rather than letting politics drive the decisions.

Those relationships helped us to influence the outcome of the debate surrounding high speed rail. While we understand and agree with the need for robust legislative oversight of federal grants that commit the State to future funding, we also wanted to ensure that North Carolina received the money already awarded to the State. Thanks, in part, to the efforts of the Metro Mayors, including testimony before the committee by Mayors Bell, Foxx and Swain, the final compromise legislation enabled North Carolina to keep the stimulus funds for high speed rail. We also appreciate the timetable changes we lobbied for with NCDOT that will allow for ongoing discussions regarding future rail grants.

The Metro Mayors Coalition was part of a broad coalition, including representatives from transportation, businesses and cities, that worked together to educate the legislature on the impact of capping the gas tax. As you know, a cap would slow needed road construction and halt progress

on improving our transportation infrastructure. Thanks to the efforts of the group, the bills introduced never gained any momentum. However, we anticipate continued debate about capping the gas tax, so we will need to remain vigilant.

Our hard work on preserving the Mobility Fund also yielded results. I participated in the NCDOT group working to create the formula for the new Fund and acted in concert with NCDOT to communicate with the General Assembly on the stakeholder group actions. We found a formula that both the General Assembly and our workgroup could support: 80 percent travel time savings and 20 percent multimodal divided by the cost to the Mobility Fund. As a result, the legislature released the funds to be programmed, and NCDOT will be announcing the application process shortly.

Our members know how important Powell Bill funding is to maintaining and improving roads in our cities. We worked closely with the Transportation Appropriations Committee and NCDOT to reshape their initial proposal on the Powell Bill. Our work helped move the date of the second payment from May 1 to January 1, and we helped to secure an exception for small cities to hold funds longer than the new five-year restriction.

One of the most important keys to our success on transportation issues this session was strengthened communication and quick action. I hope you enjoyed the regular email updates and news articles I distributed during session. Our live Twitter feed from the transportation committee meetings has also been well received, with nearly 3,000 tweets sent and more than 400 followers. Your responsiveness to our requests for action made all the difference. Legislators regularly reported that they were hearing from you and that is why we have this good news to report.

Thank you for your hard work this session, and I look forward to more success as we work with the General Assembly and NCDOT to provide North Carolina's cities the transportation funding and support they need.

City News

Metro Mayors Represented at U.S. Conference of Mayors

The U.S. Conference of Mayors recently wrapped up its 79th Annual Meeting in Baltimore, and North Carolina was well represented. Charlotte Mayor Anthony Foxx was elected as an advisory board member, and Gastonia Mayor Jennie Stultz was honored for her service on the advisory board. In addition, Durham Mayor Bill Bell received an honorable mention in the 2011 City Livability Awards Program, which recognizes mayoral leadership in developing and implementing of programs that improve the quality of life in America's cities. Chapel Hill Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt received an honorable mention in the Mayors' Climate Protection Awards recognizing mayors for innovative practices that increase energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Fayetteville Wins All-America City Award

Fayetteville recently earned its third All-America City designation from the National Civic League. It was one of just 10 cities nationwide to capture the honor.

"Everyone, it's a great honor to be here tonight, representing an All-America City in Fayetteville, North Carolina," Mayor Tony Chavonne said at the announcement in Kansas City, Missouri. "We are very proud of that."

Fayetteville's bid focused on its patriotic spirit and a good economy benefiting from growth at Fort Bragg. The Army chorus participated in the city's pitch, and the police chief carried the American flag while the fire chief held the city's flag.

Asheville's Youth Leaders Earn Scholarships

The 30 students in the City of Asheville Youth Leadership Academy (CAYLA) have earned more than \$175,000 in college scholarships to help them finance their higher education. In addition to the \$2,000 scholarship awarded by the city to each CAYLA participant, the 16 CAYLA seniors have been recognized by many other foundations and organizations, including the Paddison Family Foundation, Building Bridges of Asheville, the Rotary Club and Mission Hospital. CAYLA places Asheville high school students in summer internships and then continues to engage the students year-round in community service projects and other leadership opportunities.

Greensboro Museum Honored

The Greensboro Historical Museum's Voices of a City exhibit has been awarded the 2011 Leadership in History Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH). The organization cited the exhibit for "excellence in the collection, preservation and interpretation of local history."

Monroe Preserves History

The City of Monroe has partnered with Downtown Pioneers, LLC to renovate the 50,000-square-foot Monroe Hardware Warehouse building – a piece of the city's history – and revitalize the city's downtown. Once totally complete, the mixed-use rehab will house restaurants and retail on the ground level with upper floor residential apartments. Each residential

Continued on Page 5

City News Continued from Page 4

apartment includes stainless appliances, granite counters and bath and hardwood floors. There are 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units available with 26 units total. The project is a Federal, State and Mill Rehab Tax Credit Project.

Raleigh Recognized for Sustainability

The City of Raleigh was named a winner of the 2011 Siemens Sustainable Community Awards. Nearly 90 communities from 40 states applied for the award, and Raleigh was one of three winners, serving as the gold standard for local-level sustainability planning. The goal of the awards program is to recognize U.S. communities that are taking proactive steps to improve quality of life, be a steward of the environment and increase the ability to sustain a successful community for generations to come.

Concord Honors Service of SFC Donnie Shue

In April, Concord held a procession and ceremony to honor U.S. Army Special Forces member Sergeant Donnie Shue, who went missing in Laos in November 1969 and whose remains were recently returned to North Carolina. Shue grew up in Concord and moved to Kannapolis before entering the Army in 1967. Mayor Scott Padgett and the Concord City Council presented Shue's sisters Peggy Hinson and Betty Jones with Keys to the City. It is estimated that more than 3,000 members of Rolling Thunder, Patriot Guard Riders, and other groups participated in the procession on motorcycles. In addition, two U.S. Army North Carolina National Guard AH-64D "Apache" helicopters joined the procession convoy from the air. The ceremony included several musical performances and special presentations from government and veterans groups.

Carrboro Celebrates 100 Years

The Town of Carrboro marked the 100th anniversary of its incorporation on March 3rd with a special celebration at the Century Center. In 1911, the town was called Venable, after then-president of the University of North Carolina, Francis P. Venable, a chemistry professor from 1880 to 1930 and president of the university from 1900 to 1914.

Gov. Perdue Visits Huntersville to Talk Jobs

Gov. Perdue visited Huntersville twice this spring to announce new jobs in the area. In May, Perdue toured Saertex, which plans to add 178 jobs over the next three years. The German-based company manufactures technical fabrics used by the wind-energy, aerospace, civil engineering, automotive and ship-building industries. In April, Perdue attended the groundbreaking of ABB's new high voltage cable factory, which will employ 100. The new facility will supply high-voltage and extra high-voltage transmission cables to carry electric power underground.

Durham Recognized for Innovations in Immigrant Integration

Durham was one of 20 cities nationwide recognized by the National League of Cities' Municipal Action for Immigrant Integration for responding to immigration challenges in the absence of a national immigrant integration policy. According to the authors of the report, "Local governments have a central role as key partners for developing and implementing immigrant integration programs in cities and towns across the U.S.... The 20 cities in this report are meeting these challenges and are providing good examples of how other cities can create their own immigrant integration programs."

Greenville Named a City of the Future

Greenville was recently named one of the "American Cities of the Future" by fDi Magazine. Greenville made the top 10 in four categories, three of which were top 5, in the first ever ranking. Greenville ranks as 4th Overall Micro City of the Future, 4th Micro City for Economic Potential,

5th Micro City for Foreign Direct Investment Strategy and 6th Micro City for Human Resources.

High Point Wins National Distribution Award

Expansion Solutions Magazine named High Point a winner of its 2010 Awards of Excellence in the distribution warehousing category. The award recognizes areas that have "made exceptional progress in economic development by successfully recruiting, retaining, and growing businesses" in that industry sector. This is the third year in a row that High Point has received the award.

Reader's Digest Highlights Cary

Reader's Digest, the world's most read magazine, presented the Town of Cary with a \$1,000 "stimulus" check as part of its "We Hear You America" campaign/RV tour designed to support quality of life initiatives during budget cutbacks. The magazine selected 100 cities based on reader input and recent accolades and spent a day in each winning city.

U.S. Chamber Honors Raleigh's Economic Sustainability

Raleigh was awarded the U.S. Chamber of Commerce 2011 Siemens Sustainable Community Awards for "a range of factors including its commitment to developing a 'green economy.'" The award was presented at the U.S. Chamber's National Conference on Corporate Community Investment in Philadelphia. It comes with a prize of \$20,000 for the City of Raleigh to purchase trees to further enhance its sustainability, air purity and quality of life.

Burlington Mayor Makes Career Change

Burlington Mayor Ronnie Wall recently announced his retirement from the Alamance-Burlington School System, for which he was employed for 32 years in multiple different capacities. He has accepted a new position as the president of the United Way of Alamance County and will begin work there on August 1, 2011.

Rocky Mount Helps with Storm Response

Rocky Mount Public Utilities provided mutual aid assistance to the Chattanooga Electric Power Board, one of the many areas affected by the tornadoes that swept through the southeast. Rocky Mount sent a team of nine linemen, five trucks and a trailer to assist with restoring power to businesses and households.

[Continued on Page 6](#)

2011 Metro Mayors Winter Meeting

December 1-2, 2011

Charlotte, NC

City News Continued from Page 5

Accolades

- The City of Asheville Water Resources Department recently received continued certification, meeting requirements and conditions of the International Organization for Standardization. This means the department achieves and demonstrates sound environmental performance by controlling the impacts of activities, product (water) and services on the environment.
- The City of Concord was named a Champion for Clean Air by the Center for the Environment at Catawba College. The awards recognize the Champions' extraordinary commitments toward reducing harmful emissions during 2009 and 2010.
- Richard Lewis, aviation director at Concord Regional Airport, has been selected as the founding president of the newly established General Aviation Airport Coalition (GAAC).
- The Concord Housing Department was recently certified as a "High Performer" by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Housing Department received a final score of 100 percent on the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) evaluation conducted by HUD for fiscal year 2010.
- Durham Station Transportation Center, the City of Durham's multimodal center built in 2009, received top honors at the *Triangle Business Journal's* prestigious SPACE Awards.
- The City of High Point received 5th place in the Digital Cities Survey award in the category of 75,000-124,999 population conducted by the National League of Cities. The survey recognizes municipalities that successfully incorporate information technology into operations to better serve constituents and businesses.
- The Town of Cary was named the second safest city in the nation by population and eight safest city overall by *CQ Press*. Cary was the highest-ranked municipality in North Carolina and in the southeast; this was the town's twelfth consecutive year on the list.
- The League of American Bicyclists included Raleigh in its latest round of Bicycle Friendly Communities as part of the observance of May as National Bike Month.

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