



The Senate Connection

Connecting Davie and Rowan Counties with news from the
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Week 24 Legislative News and Updates

Republican leaders highlighted a report from the legislature's Program Evaluation Division; that report documented \$635 million in tax dollars was wasted on community mental health services because of poor tax planning and lax monitoring by the state Department of Health and Human Services. ("Report: \$635 million slipped away." *News and Observer*, 7/7/09)

Unfortunately, that is not an isolated incident of waste; other discoveries of waste and mismanagement in state government programs include:

-\$152.4 million in cost overruns in Department of Transportation

-\$100 million overrun in Department of Public Instruction Computer Program

-Millions of dollars in compensation for victims of crime diverted to government accounts

Governor Perdue and Legislative Democrats are ready to pass a tax increase of \$1 billion or more on North Carolina families and small businesses. Those tax increases that would not be necessary if they handled taxpayer money with better care.

Democrats in state government have wasted nearly a billion dollar through mismanagement and incompetence. For them to ask struggling North Carolinians to pay a billion dollar more in tax increases while Democratic leaders are asleep at the switch is beyond belief. Teachers, taxpayers, and the disabled, sick, and elderly should not be forced to pay the price for Democratic mistakes and mismanagement.

Also this week, Democrats in the North Carolina Senate pushed though two bills Senate Bill 488 and Senate bill 489 to reduce sentencing lengths for some repeat felons. Under the legislation, a convicted rapist with a prior record could face a prison term more than two years shorter than under the current law. The argument advanced in favor of the legislation was to avoid costs to the state to build additional prisons to house convicted criminals.

Protecting law-abiding citizens is the first obligation of government. This week, Senate Democrats failed in the primary responsibility. This is what you get from years of spending every dime in sight while ignoring the need for additional prison space. Now instead of cutting waste and inefficiency in state government, Democrats chose to shorten prison sentences and give dangerous criminals an early return to North Carolina's communities.

