



The Senate Connection

Connecting Davie and Rowan Counties with news from the
Office of Senator Andrew Brock

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◆ **House Budget news:**

This week in Raleigh at the North Carolina General Assembly the House budget negotiations dominated legislative news. Closed door meeting of House Democrats, produced a \$785 million tax package that would raise the state sales tax, increase income taxes, and franchise taxes. It would also add sales taxes on warranties, certain services, amusement and movie tickets, and digital downloads. Senate and House Republican leaders hosted a news conference Tuesday to address those and other issues.

“We’re in a recession and North Carolina’s families are facing financial challenges. This is no time to be raising taxes. The Democrats’ axe and tax approach mirrors the national Democrat strategy of never let a good crisis go to waste. They have used the economic crisis to scare or threaten with ill advised draconian to educate and other priorities and then propose major tax increases at the eleventh hour to fix the problem they created in the first place,” said Republican Leader Phil Berger (R-Rockingham).

Republican pleas for Democrat state leaders to curtail spending and prepare for economic downturns have been ignored for years. Democrat budgets have increased nearly 50% over the past 8 years, a rate much faster than both population growth and inflation would justify. A final state budget needs to be in place by the end of

June or a continuing resolution (a temporary stop gap spending plan) will be required in order to continue essential government function beginning July



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◆ **Recent News on The Easley Scandal:**

The ever growing Easley scandals and cover-ups continued all week in the news. Former first lady Mary Easley was finally fired from her \$170,000 a year position at NC State. The Chancellor, James Oblinger, resigned. In lights of a particularly generous severance package provided to resigned University Provost Larry Nielson, many people began asking questions about whether paying large sums of money to people who resigned is an appropriate use of public funds. Senator Berger called the prospect of generous severance packages for Easley, Oblinger or the former NCSU Provost “completely and totally unacceptable.”

“Facts are stubborn things. Chancellor Oblinger misled the public about the circumstances of Mary Easley’s hiring and the details of the resignation of former Provost Larry Nielsen. In the kindest reading of the situation, Mary Easley received her job as a result of an unethical political power play by her husband, former Gov. Mike Easley.”

◆ **Government Corruption Continued:**

House Republicans offered an amendment to the House budget to stop University administrators from collecting higher administrative salaries after resigning from those posts.

Democrats, who control the State Senate, State House and governor’s mansion, continue to stonewall efforts to have open investigations. With their continued silence and failure to lead, Governor Perdue and Democratic legislative leaders exhibit more concern about covering up politically embarrassing and damaging scandals than determining why they happened in the first place.

“I renew the call for Gov. Purdue and Legislative Democrats to join a bi-partisan effort with republicans to hold legislative oversight hearings seeking to end corruption in State Government by the determining how Mary Easley’s contract was agreed to and how the State Highway Patrol “lost” more than a year of Mike Easley’s travel records,” said Berger.

