

I've Been Robbed!!! (And so have YOU!!) & Taxpayers Bill of Rights!!

Editor's Note: *The incumbent County Commissioners and their CCGOP Rogue Republican sycophants and Sign Stealers (SS) don't want you voters to hear anything about their challengers. They want YOU to believe that Robert A. and others he recommends, don't know what is going on. Robert A. is in the process of republishing some of his relevant election-related articles from years ago. You can clearly see that Robert A has been RIGHT all along.*

I've Been Robbed!!

By Frances

After recently reading information pertaining to our state budget, I came to a stunning realization, I'd been robbed!

And so, have you. **How?** Our wallets are literally being raided by Governor Mike Easley and by the liberal tax and spend crowd currently in control in Raleigh.

North Carolina has the highest individual and corporate tax rates in the southeast. With an individual tax rate of (8.25 percent) and a corporate tax rate of (6.9 percent) we rank among the most highly taxed states in the nation and are currently listed as number nine for our income tax rates and at number twelve for sales tax.

We're also taxed on things we don't always think about. Such as spirituous liquor, telecommunications services, satellite usage, and cigarettes. The cigarette tax alone has increased 600 percent in the last couple of years.

North Carolina is in a tax and spend crisis mode with the

liberals increasing spending by 21 percent in the last few years. This year with a \$2.4 billion surplus they proposed another nine percent spending increase for next year.

I wanted to know how much of this tax and spend is truly necessary for our state government, schools, and programs to continue and how much is **wasted**? Getting a direct answer from any government agency can be difficult. But in my search to uncover the truth of the tax and spend frenzy, I ran across some things that absolutely disgusted me.

Pork Barrel Spending:

Pork barrel politics as defined by Wordnet Dictionary – “A derogatory term used to describe government spending that is intended to enrich constituents of a politician, in return for their political support in the form of campaign contributions or votes. Typically, it involves funding for government projects whose, economic or service benefits are concentrated but whose costs are spread among taxpayers. The way pork barrel spending usually passes is that an individual will add it onto an Appropriations bill at the last minute”.

Pork barrel spending is also generally:

- Not specifically authorized.
- Not competitively awarded.
- Serves only local or special interests.

Just, how much pork was there in the NC budget? A LOT! Guilford County, NC received \$2 million for the effort to build an Atlantic Coast Conference Hall of Champions in Greensboro; The High Point Furniture Market will receive \$1.2 million to help with transportation costs and \$750,000.00 to help with marketing the trade show. The Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum will get \$1.5 million for renovations and the biggest **OINKER** of them all was \$400,000.00 for a Teapot Museum in Sparta, NC.

The Teapot Museum has attracted a lot of attention at both a state and national level. The Museum also received a \$500,000.00 grant through the Federal Housing and Urban Development budget. A pork barrel spending watchdog group called "**Citizens Against Government Waste**" gave the museum special recognition creating the "Tempest in A Teapot" award specifically for this piggish spending.

Locally, **Wes Westmoreland**, the Candidate for North Carolina Senate expressed his disgust over pork barrel spending. In an effort to enlighten taxpayers about just how their money is being used he has created "The Teapot Express" (a trailer truck) in which to collect teapots to take to the Sparta, Teapot Museum.

Non-Profits/Nonsense

North Carolina also provides state funding for certain non-profit agencies. Some of those do necessary tasks such as Volunteer Fire Departments. In 2003, \$601,654,532.93 dollars went to non-profit organizations. And, of that amount \$53,898,791.23 went to **out of state** organizations. You read that correctly folks! Your state government is sending huge amounts of your money out of this state. And, all the while needs for highway construction, road repair, schools, etc. for our own citizens are all too often being ignored. Just where did some of that money go? Yale University received \$145,000.00. The Virginia Dept. of Transportation received \$906,000.00 and Banaras Hindu University got \$115,000.00.

And, this is only naming a few places where mine and your tax dollars actually ended up. A grand total of 8,514 records for non-profit organizations can be located and viewed at www.ncauditor.net. Our state government's taxation and spending practices have long been shrouded in mystery with the average citizen really having no idea as to how their money was actually being used. Considering the fact that some of those in a position of power voted to create another \$1.3 billion dollar deficit this year due to their wasteful and

misappropriated spending, it's time for us all to call an end to the foolish use of taxpayer dollars and **remove anyone who approves of such practices from office.**

Solutions

A **Taxpayer's Bill of Rights** or TABOR as it is commonly known could have prevented so much wasteful spending. The Americans for Prosperity Foundation has released studies showing that had NC adopted a constitutional amendment implementing TABOR in 1995 we would currently have over \$2 billion dollars in The Rainy-Day Fund and taxpayers would have received over \$1.4 billion dollars in tax rebates. But each time those members of the NC Senate who were concerned enough about the taxing and spending practices proposed a bill to implement A Taxpayer's Bill of Rights for NC, it's been voted down.

This election cycle the Americans for Prosperity Group in North Carolina encouraged

Candidates to demonstrate their support for responsible budgeting, by signing, the 2006 Candidate Taxpayer Pledge. That Pledge reads as follows.

A TAXPAYER'S BILL OF RIGHTS AMENDMENT:

STATE LAWMAKER PLEGE

Whereas, I believe in fiscal discipline and that government should not pose an unnecessary burden on taxpayers;

Whereas, I believe that government should not grow faster than the state;

Whereas, I believe that government should be beholden to the people;

Whereas, I support the following principles:

Annual state, spending growth should be limited to the rate

of population growth and inflation.

Excess revenues collected above this limit should be used to create a Budget Stabilization Fund, an

Emergency Fund and refunded to the taxpayers through broad-based tax cuts and rebates;

Tax increases should only be enacted by the people's vote or a legislative supermajority.

Therefore, I _ of the _ District of North Carolina pledge to support A Taxpayer's Bill of Rights.

So far 69 signatures have been collected by those Candidates who are willing to support responsible spending by enacting TABOR. Of those (69) candidates (64) are Republicans and five are Democrats. **Local Candidates Tim Moore, Debbie Clary and Wes Westmoreland** have all either signed or stated their intent to support such an amendment. It's long past time for the people of our state to know that those in a position to enact such measures are going to do so. A change in mentality and oftentimes **a change in leadership** are required to move things forward in the right direction.