



Representative McLawhorn's News from Raleigh

April 11, 2008

This week Gov. Easley announced the recipients of the Energy Efficiency Reserve Fund grants. Legislators helped create the grant program and set aside \$5 million for this fiscal year. This investment will save us about \$3.2 million a year in utility costs. I want to use this opportunity to tell you about this fund and some of the work we are doing between sessions on energy and environmental issues.

Thank you for your interest in state government and for allowing me to share this information with you. Please let me know if there is anything I can do for you.

Energy Efficiency Reserve Fund

More than 200 groups applied for the Energy Efficiency Reserve Fund grants administered by the State Energy Office. All of the 58 projects awarded grant funds will help us use our natural resources and tax dollars more efficiently. A full list of the recipients and a description of individual projects can be found at www.energync.net. The fund was established at the request of Speaker Joe Hackney and included in the budget for the first time this year. I was among the supporters of this program.

Recipient	Grant amount (\$)	Estimated yearly savings (\$)
Department of Administration	425,000	203,000
Department of Commerce	150,000	30,000
Department of Consumer Services	740,000	524,000
Department of Crime Control	125,000	41,000
Department of Cultural Resources	25,000	15,000
Department of Environment and Natural Resources	220,000	84,000
Department of Health and Human Services	530,000	419,000
Department of Juvenile Justice	125,000	166,000
Department of Transportation	190,000	40,000
Appalachian State University	120,000	62,000
UNC-Chapel Hill	210,000	130,000
UNC-Charlotte	195,000	98,000
Elizabeth City State University	55,000	34,000
East Carolina University	125,000	125,000
Fayetteville State University	105,000	45,000
UNC-Greensboro	65,000	36,000
North Carolina A&T	160,000	99,000
North Carolina Central University	185,000	111,000
North Carolina State University	215,000	115,000
UNC-Pembroke	75,000	46,000
Western Carolina University	125,000	93,000
Winston-Salem State University	150,000	93,000
North Carolina School of the Arts	120,000	40,000
North Carolina School of Science and Math	85,000	11,000

UNC-TV 85,000 70,000
Wake Tech Community College 150,000 93,000
Piedmont Community College 120,000 40,000
Central Carolina Comm. College 15,000 3,000
Martin Community College 25,000 5,000
Mitchell Community College 25,000 8,000
Central Piedmont Comm. College 50,000 17,000

Joint Select Committee on the Agricultural Drought Response

The Joint Select Committee on Agricultural Drought Response met last month and made several key recommendations to be presented to the General Assembly in May. The committee voted unanimously to appropriate \$12 million to assist a number of farmers hurt during the recent drought. Of this amount, \$1.5 million will provide a cost-share program to help some 300 farmers drill new wells and re-drill old ones and \$1 million will help 150 farms clean out or construct farm ponds. The committee recommended that \$8 million be used for pasture renovation for 1,600 farms and another \$1 million to educate consumers on water conservation and to conduct a campaign to preserve the economic viability of the green industry.

The committee was pleased to announce that in mid-April, \$6 million will be available immediately for pasture renewal. The planting season has already begun and seed, fuel and fertilizer costs have skyrocketed since last year.

Members of the committee were especially thankful for the work of private financiers as well as the Rural Center for its assistance in relief efforts. According to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, the drought has caused an estimated \$600 million to \$700 million in damage to North Carolina agribusiness.

Legislative Commission on Global Climate Change

The Legislative Commission on Global Climate Change is still receiving input from various interest groups as it looks toward making recommendations for legislative action in its May meeting. Members anticipate adopting a goal of capping carbon emissions at 80 percent of 1990 levels by 2050, with interim goals, such as stabilizing emissions, by 2015. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report says these steps are necessary to avert irreversible climate change.

The commission is also hoping to recommend legislation enacting stricter efficiency standards for all government buildings and any buildings that receive government funding. Members will also take some measures to begin adapting to the changes in climate and sea level rise that are already occurring. The commission also hopes to recommend that North Carolina adopt California's clean cars standard. Mobile sources are responsible for more than 30 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, and cleaning those up are the quickest and easiest achievable reductions.

The commission agreed to accept the recommendations of the Climate Action Plan Advisory Group (CAPAG). CAPAG's 56 recommendation focus on residential, commercial, and industrial areas, energy supply, transportation and land use, agriculture, forestry and waste management, and cross cutting. A draft of the full report can be found at <http://www.ncclimatechange.us/capag.cfm>.

Environmental Review Commission

The Environmental Review Commission evaluates actions of all boards, commissions, departments, and agencies of state and local government related to the environment and protecting the environment. Recently the commission discussed the management of low-level radioactive waste, the controlled releases from Falls Lake, and the development of a proposed recycling program for fluorescent lamps.

The commission also studied pending legislation in similar states, drought conditions, and the Governor's recommendations to response to droughts. Members of the commission discussed changes to the federal ozone standard and what those changes mean for North Carolina. The commission also reviewed the implementation of several environmental laws in North Carolina including Promote Renewable Energy/Baseload Generation (S.L. 2007-397), the Energy Conservation in State Buildings legislation (S.L. 2007-546, Sec. 2.1(c)) and the Swine Methane Capture Pilot Program (S.L. 2007-523, Sec. 4)