Subject: PENC Legislative Update May 27, 2015

Dear PENC Members:

There is a lot going on at PENC with the summer conference approaching and an active legislative session. The weekly update is the vehicle to remain informed about PENC and activity in the legislature.

- **Summer Conference!**
  - The full agenda is published on our website at [www.penc.org](http://www.penc.org). Please register by June 10th, but the earlier the better to help our conference team get accurate numbers to the hotel for meals and meeting rooms.

- **Volunteer opportunities!**
  - Help shape the future of PENC. Join the Transition Team embarking on a four-week strategic planning session, now through June 12th. Email shwoolard@charlottenc.gov to get started.
  - Newly-formed Conference Committee - email Tom Bach at bacht@concordnc.gov.
  - Sedimentation Control Commission - email Neil Deans at neil.deans@kimley-horn.com.
  - NSPE PAC – position needs to be filled by the end of June - email Neil Deans at neil.deans@kimley-horn.com.

Neil Deans, PE
2014-2015 PENC President

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PENC Legislative Update

Early Friday morning, the House approved of their $22.2 billion budget with bipartisan support, giving 2% raises to teachers and state employees, fully funding public schools, universities, and Medicaid. In addition, the budget does not raise taxes but does increase Department of Motor Vehicles fees by 30% to pay for road improvements after an original proposal of a 50% increase.

The House debated a total of 53 amendments late into the evening Thursday night and in the early hours of Friday morning. Included in the budget was an extension of the Renewable Energy Investment Tax Credit (included on page 320 of the budget) for two years. In 2016, the 35% credit remains and in 2017 the credit decreases to 20%. The REITC would expire at the end of 2017. One of the most controversial budget amendments,
however, was one to eliminate the Renewable Energy Investment Tax Credits entirely at the end of the year. This particular amendment failed 38-77. You can see how members voted on this amendment [here](#).

While the House was working diligently on the budget this week, the Senate worked on a number of issues including SEPA reform, which would require an environmental assessment for publicly funded projects. The bill, H795 passed in committee in addition to it’s second reading on the Senate floor.

A bill that would put a freeze on the Renewable Energy Portfolio Standards (REPS) and weaken other policies passed two committees last week including a highly [controversial](#) voice vote in Senate Finance Committee. The bill was on a fast track to be passed, however, since the controversial vote has since been slowed and has not been heard on the Senate floor yet.

[Here is a link to HB332](#)

[Here is a link to the House Budget that passed Friday](#)

[Here is a link to the SEPA reform bill](#)

**This week**

On Tuesday, we expect HB795, SEPA Reform to be heard for it’s third reading on the Senate floor. Now that the budget has been sent to the Senate, we expect to see their version, likely to be drastically different than the House proposal, to be released as early as this week but certainly in the coming weeks.

**In Case You Missed It...**

PENC Member JD Solomon was appointed to the Environmental Management Commission via [HB892](#).