

# North Carolina Legislator Profile

## John Bradford: House District 98 Mecklenburg County

**“I voted to restore common sense regulations for North Carolina citizen’s rights to privacy in bathrooms and changing facilities.” – Rep. John Bradford, after voting for HB2 (The Herald Weekly, 03/31/16; The Southern Pines Pilot, 05/21/16)**

In this Real Facts Legislator Profile, we focus on Representative John Bradford, the Republican from House District 98. Before joining the General Assembly, Bradford was elected to the Cornelius Town Board in 2011. While there, he sought to cancel elections and have the town board elected every three years instead of two.

Bradford was one of the co-sponsors of HB2. One year later, he co-sponsored a failed HB2 repeal bill that would make local anti-discrimination measures subject to a public referendum.

Bradford has shown time and again that he believes tax cuts are more important than public education. Bradford said, “spending more in education will not magically solve the problems we are facing” and “we need to continue holding everyone accountable and find ways to cut bureaucratic and unnecessary expenses that we incur outside the classroom.” He voted for the 2017 Republican budget that continues the trend of cutting taxes for the wealth few rather than raising per pupil spending. Bradford said “we need to financially reward our best and brightest educators” but voted for the Republican budget that gives beginning teachers no raise, and only a 0.6% raise to experienced teachers and per pupil spending has actually gone down in the budgets he voted on.

### Summary:

#### **Bradford sponsored HB2 then co-sponsored the failed “compromise” HB186**

- John Bradford co-sponsored House Bill 2 “to restore common sense regulations for North Carolina citizen’s rights to privacy in bathrooms and changing facilities,” he said.
- Gov. Cooper compared the HB186 to “putting the Civil Rights Act to a popular vote in cities in the South during the 1960s”

#### **Bradford repeatedly paid his taxes late but voted against tax relief for working families.**

- John Bradford and his companies have paid their property taxes late at least four times and were assessed at least \$206 in interest due to these late payments.

#### **Bradford prioritizes tax cuts over funding public education**

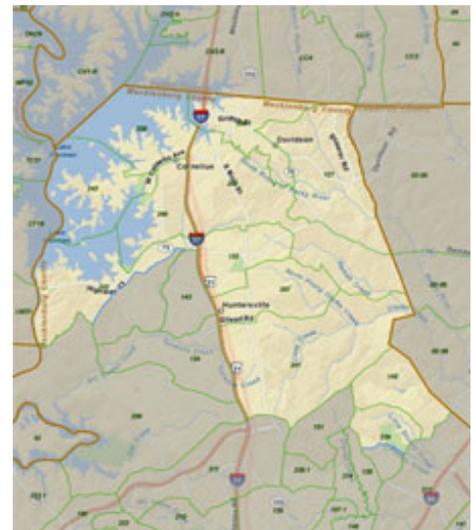
- Bradford said, “Spending more in education will not magically solve the problems we are facing.”
- Bradford voted for the 2017 Republican budget that prioritizes tax cuts over funding public education.

**As a Cornelius town commissioner, Bradford supported cancelling elections and having a private contractor build and operate the I-77 toll lanes, which he now opposes.**

**Rep. John Bradford**



**House District 98**



**John Bradford supported House Bill 2 then co-sponsored HB186 to repeal HB2 while pre-empting local bathroom ordinances and making local anti-discrimination measures subject to a public referendum.**

**John Bradford supported House Bill 2 “to restore common sense regulations for North Carolina citizen’s rights to privacy in bathrooms and changing facilities,” he said.** John Bradford co-sponsored House Bill 2. He said after he voted for the bill, “I voted to restore common sense regulations for North Carolina citizen’s rights to privacy in bathrooms and changing facilities.” Bradford continued, “I believe privacy and safety within public accommodations are paramount for everyone. This bill creates statewide consistencies in the regulation of employment and public accommodations, and it passed the N.C. House with bi-partisan support, 83-24. Many people, mostly those not understanding or even reading the bill, will attempt to confuse the matter by trying to make the bill about discrimination and inequality.” (The Herald Weekly, 03/31/16, and The Southern Pines Pilot, 05/21/16)

**It is estimated that HB2 cost NC between \$450 million and \$630 million**

**It is estimated that HB2 will cost North Carolina more than \$3.76 billion in lost business over a dozen years.** “The Associated Press used dozens of interviews and multiple public records requests to determine that North Carolina’s “bathroom bill” will cost the state more than \$3.76 billion in lost business over a dozen years.” (Associated Press, [3/27/17](#))

**According to estimates, HB2 cost North Carolina between \$450 million and \$630 million.** “We ruled that claim Mostly False. Our research, plus interviews with economists and analysis of other studies, has shown HB2 probably cost the state between \$450 million and \$630 million. Others have cited a \$500 million loss. The law has also cost North Carolina a minimum of 1,400 jobs.” (PolitiFact, [3/7/17](#))

**Due to HB2, the NBA pulled the 2017 All-Star game from Charlotte, costing the city upward of \$100 million.** “But that wasn’t even the biggest financial hit North Carolina took from a sports organization. In July, the NBA’s concerns with the law spurred the league to move its 2017 All-Star Game from Charlotte to New Orleans. The loss of the marquee weekend means Charlotte will miss out on upward of \$100 million, according to the Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority, using estimates from previous All-Star games in similarly sized markets.” (Business Insider, [9/21/16](#))

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**Bradford co-sponsored legislation to repeal HB2 while pre-empting local bathroom ordinances and making local anti-discrimination measures subject to a public referendum.**

**Bradford co-sponsored legislation to repeal HB2 while pre-empting local bathroom ordinances and making local anti-discrimination measures subject to a public referendum.** “Bradford is among the co-sponsors of HB186, a bill that would repeal HB2 while pre-empting local bathroom ordinances and making local anti-discrimination measures subject to a public referendum. Last week Bradford, along with Charlotte Republican Rep. Andy Dulin, helped bring business leaders from Mecklenburg County and across the state to the General Assembly in a show of support for the idea of a compromise. “John has taken the ball and run with it,” said Bill Russell, president Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce. Gary Salamido, a vice president of the N.C. Chamber, said it helps that Bradford, who owns a property management company, comes from the business world. “He’s been a leader on a lot of issues,” he said. “He’s not afraid to handle the tough ones.” (Charlotte Observer, [3/8/17](#))

- **“Bradford voted for HB2 a year ago. Now he believes lawmakers “over-reached” just as the Charlotte City Council did in passing its anti-discrimination ordinance. “I don’t think anyone saw what was coming,” Bradford said.”** (Charlotte Observer, [3/8/17](#))

**The bill would have required 30 days’ notice before local ordinances can be decided with a 90-day period before it can take effect and a referendum on the ordinance if 10 percent of registered voters petition to override the ordinance.** “On Tuesday, Mecklenburg Republicans John Bradford and **Andy Dulin** hosted a press conference at the Legislative Building in Raleigh. Bradford and Dulin are among the co-sponsors of a bill introduced last week that would repeal HB2 while also requiring 30 days’ notice before a local government can decide on local ordinances, followed by a 90-day period before it takes effect. During those 90 days, a referendum on an ordinance would be held if 10% of the number of registered voters in the most recent municipal election petition to override the ordinance.” (Charlotte Business Journal, 2/28/17)

**H186 was criticized by gay rights groups as well as NC Values Coalition, the conservative group that supported HB2.** “The bill comes after Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper proposed his own compromise, one brushed aside from Republicans who control the General Assembly. But HB186, co-sponsored by Rep. Chuck McGrady, a Hendersonville Republican and one of the GOP’s House leaders, is believed to have more support, even though it’s been criticized by gay rights groups and the N.C. Values Coalition, a conservative group that supports HB2.” (Charlotte Business Journal, 2/28/17)

**Gov. Cooper compared the measure to “putting the Civil Rights Act to a popular vote in cities in the South during the 1960s”**

**Gov. Cooper said the call for referenda on local ordinances would be like “putting the Civil Rights Act to a popular vote in cities in the South during the 1960s.”** “Cooper responded to McGrady’s bill on Sunday in a post on Medium by saying he is willing to work with lawmakers to repeal HB2, but also insisted that allowing for referenda on local LGBT ordinances would be damaging and continue to hurt the state’s national reputation. “It would be like putting the Civil Rights Act to a popular vote in cities in the South during the 1960s,” Cooper said of the referendum provision. “Except today, it would come with the perils of modern campaigns. Which is my second concern. Imagine the endless campaigning - months of one side demonizing the other about whether LGBT citizens have rights. Toxic 30-second TV ads. Nasty mail filling up your mailbox. And North Carolina is still in the national news for all the wrong reasons.” (Charlotte Business Journal, 2/28/17)

**John Bradford thinks wealthy individuals and corporations should not pay income taxes. Bradford paid his property taxes late four times.**

**John Bradford opposes reinstating the earned income tax credit.** John Bradford, in 2014, said he would not reinstate the earned income tax credit. (Starting at Minute 12 of [www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPF2-EJJinM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPF2-EJJinM))

**John Bradford thinks wealthy individuals and corporations should not pay income taxes.** John Bradford, in 2014, said, “there’s no doubt we need to take...[the] personal income tax and our corporate income tax to zero.” (Starting at Minute 13 of [www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPF2-EJJinM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPF2-EJJinM))

**John Bradford is against tax incentives for the film industry.** John Bradford is “against” film incentives. “While Bradford said he would support incentives that generate return on the state’s investment, he said that the film incentives were causing the state to lose money. ‘We need to know that the incentive is going to generate one more dollar of profit, he said. ‘If we can prove that, then I’m all for it.’” (Davidson News, 10/22/14)

**John Bradford and his companies have paid their property taxes late at least four times and were assessed at least \$206 in interest due to these late payments.**

**The 2006 property taxes a property Bradford and his wife owned from 2005 to 2006 were paid on January 16, 2007; this was 10 days after the due date and \$97.97 in interest was assessed against the property due to late payment.** (Property Tax Records for 17535 Springwinds Drive, 2006)

**On February 24, 2010, the 2009 property taxes were paid for 1109 Ashford Street; a property Bradford and his wife owned from 2007 to 2013.** This was 49 days after the due date of January 6, 2010 and \$33.76 in interest was assessed against the property due to late payment. All other property taxes for this property were paid on time and in full from 2007 to 2013. (Mecklenburg County Property Tax Records for 1109 Ashford Street, 2009)

**On February 24, 2010, the 2009 property taxes were paid for 6528 Rockwell Boulevard West; this was 49 days after the due date of January 6, 2010 and \$37.08 in interest was assessed against the property due to late payment.** All other property taxes for this property were paid on time and in full from 2007 –2013. (Mecklenburg County Property Tax Records for 6528 Rockwell Boulevard West, 2009)

**On February 24, 2010, the 2009 property taxes were paid for 6532 Rockwell Boulevard West; this was 49 days after the due date of January 6, 2010 an \$37.61 in interest was assessed against the property due to late payment.** All other property taxes for this property were paid on time and in full from 2007 to 2013. (Mecklenburg County Property Tax Records for 6532 Rockwell Boulevard West, 2009)

**Bradford prioritizes tax cuts for the wealthy few over funding public education.**

**Bradford said, “Spending more in education will not magically solve the problems we are facing.”** “[Charlotte Observer] Would you consider raising taxes for education? [Bradford] The state’s education budget represents 57 percent of our annual \$22B budget. That means 57 cents of each and every tax dollar collected in NC is already being allocated to education. I do not believe raising taxes is the solution. Spending more in education will not magically solve the problems we are facing. I believe we need to maximize our kid’s experience in the classroom and we need to financially reward our best and brightest educators. This means we need to continue holding everyone accountable and find ways to cut bureaucratic and unnecessary expenses that we incur outside the classroom.” (Charlotte Observer, [10/18/16](#))

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**Starting teacher pay remains at \$35,000 under the Republican budget.** “Under the teacher pay plan, teachers with 17 to 24 years of experience would see some of the biggest raises. Starting teacher pay would remain at \$35,000, but teachers at most experience levels would get a raise.” (News & Observer, [7/1/17](#), S257, Vetoed [6/27/17](#), Senate Veto Override [6/27/17](#), House Veto Override [6/28/17](#))

**Bradford voted for the 2017 Republican budget that prioritizes tax cuts for the wealthy and well connected over funding public education.**

**The Republican budget continues the trend of cutting taxes rather than raising per pupil spending.** “This budget will cut individual income tax rates to 5.25 percent from 5.499 percent and the corporate rate to 2.5 percent from 3 percent in the second year, costing the state \$900 million annually when fully implemented. This means that the legislature will eventually have cut \$3.5 billion annually in all its tax cuts –money that could have gone for services. North Carolina, for example, ranks 41st nationally in per pupil spending for public education. Here is a question for lawmakers: Which is most likely hindering industrial recruitment and economic development in small-town North Carolina –high taxes or poor schools?” (News & Observer Editorial, [6/24/17](#), S257, Vetoed [6/27/17](#), Senate Veto Override [6/27/17](#), House Veto Override [6/28/17](#))

**Bradford supports school vouchers and voted for the 2017 Republican budget that allocates money to the voucher program.**

**John Bradford supports school vouchers.** John Bradford, in 2014, said, “I’m supportive of a voucher program.” (Minute 25 of [www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPF2-EJjinM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPF2-EJjinM))

**Budget allocated \$45 million to the controversial voucher program and stipulates that the state will add \$10 million more to the program annually.** “The budget gives \$45 million this year for the controversial voucher program which allows parents to send their children to private schools using taxpayer-funded scholarships. Cooper has strongly criticized the program, saying those schools lack accountability. The budget says the state will add \$10 million more to the voucher program annually, until it hits \$145 million in the 2027-28 school year.” (News & Observer, [8/8/17](#), S257, Vetoed [6/27/17](#), Senate Veto Override [6/27/17](#), House Veto Override [6/28/17](#))

**Vouchers “siphon funds away from the underfunded public school system and sends those tax dollars to private schools without accountability and transparency measures.”** “Proponents of school vouchers say that the program enables low-income families to opt out of failing public schools to attend private institutions that offer better educational environments. But critics of the program say that the vouchers siphon funds away from the underfunded public school system and sends those tax dollars to private schools without accountability and transparency measures that ensure students are indeed getting a better education. The Opportunity Scholarships law also fails to ensure that private schools receiving tax dollars do not discriminate against students on the basis of religion or sexual identity.” (WRAL, [1/27/17](#))

**As a Cornelius town commissioner, Bradford tried to cancel elections and to have a private contractor build and operate the I-77 toll lanes he now opposes.**

**When John Bradford was a Cornelius town commissioner he voted in support of extending the two-year term to which he was elected to three years, cancelling elections.**

**John Bradford “was first elected to the Cornelius Town Board in 2011, and won re-election” in 2013.** He was elected to the state House in 2014 after being endorsed by the NRA. (Davidsonnews.net, 12/18/13, 09/30/14, and 12/16/14)

**Cornelius Town Board members, in May 2012, “voted 3-2 to withdraw their request that the state legislature approve a bill allowing for a 1-time shift to a 3-year term for Cornelius Commissioners elected in 2013.** Commissioners voted unanimously in favor of the bill text in March [2012], but some...heard...from citizens who are not in favor of the decision and requested the topic be revisited.” At the time of these votes “Cornelius Commissioner terms...[were] 2-years, and elections fall on odd-numbered years. Extending next term by one year would align town elections with national elections.”

John Bradford “heard from citizens who prefer the ‘intimacy’ of voting separately for their local government, he said. Commissioner Jeff Hare and others also heard from citizens who do not agree with the switch, they said.” (Davidson News, 05/22/12)

**When John Bradford was a Cornelius town commissioner he supported having “a private contractor build and operate toll lanes on Interstate 77,” but as a state legislator he opposes the project and has “asked the governor to cancel” it, since he now says it will cause “irreparable harm.”**

**John Bradford, in 2015, asked the governor to cancel the project adding toll lanes on Interstate 77.** John Bradford, in 2015, asked the governor to cancel the project adding toll lanes on Interstate 77 “alongside general-purpose lanes in both directions from Mooresville to Charlotte.” He “Said the traffic problem only lasts about 13 of the proposed 26 miles, and suggested starting with wider lanes in that stretch.” Opponents of the toll lanes “say the deal is bad financially for the state and drivers and won’t reduce congestion.” John Bradford “says there are no realistic alternate routes for drivers to avoid the toll.” (Real Estate Monitor Worldwide, 11/19/15, Wilmington Star-News, 06/02/16, and Greensboro News & Record, 06/02/16)

**John Bradford said “communities and businesses will suffer irreparable harm” from the toll project.** “In a letter to [Governor] McCrory, four Republicans,” including John Bradford, “warned that if the toll project goes forward, ‘communities and businesses will suffer irreparable harm.’” “They pointed to what they called new information uncovered since...2014. Among other things, they said the new lanes would be built below the standards required to accommodate trucks and heavy vehicles. They said the project could help some businesses and hurt others because the design provides no ingress or egress points at some exits. And they said the state’s potential liability in case the company goes bankrupt will be considerably higher than once believed.” (Charlotte Observer, 11/13/15)

**However, when John Bradford was “a Cornelius town commissioner...[he] voted for the tolls.** When John Bradford was “a Cornelius town commissioner...[he] voted for the tolls, though he unsuccessfully tried to delay the project for more study.” In May 2013 he “voted to back the state’s \$550 million plan to have a private contractor build and operate toll lanes on Interstate 77 from the Brookshire Freeway in Charlotte to Exit 36 in Mooresville.” John “Bradford said there’s really no choice. With roads ranked by priority, it could be 25 years before the state would widen the interstate.” (Charlotte Observer, 05/07/13 and 11/01/14)

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