

North Carolina Legislator Profile

Mike Clampitt: House District 119
Haywood, Jackson and Swain Counties

“Clampitt said that if elected he would not support more dollars for schools.” -Sylva Herald, 12/27/13

Mike Clampitt is currently serving his first term in the NC House of Representatives for HD119 and lives in Bryson City, NC. Before finally winning election to the General Assembly in 2016, Clampitt ran unsuccessfully for public office several times. Losing twice in races for NC House and losing a 2010 bid for the Swain County Board of Commissioners.

North Carolina public schools are the largest employer in most of Clampitt’s district. Despite this, he supported bills that shortchange teachers and prioritize tax cuts for the wealthy over funding classrooms. Despite not being in office, he was an outspoken supporter of the 2013 budget, even though he was not in office. Clampitt voted for the 2017 budget which prioritized tax cuts for corporations over raising teacher pay and per pupil spending, forcing teachers to pay out of pocket for classroom supplies.

Clampitt voted to block an amendment that would have expanded access to health care for low-income, rural North Carolinians. He has the wrong priorities, voting for policies that benefit wealthy corporate interests over the people of HD119 who are working hard to make ends meet. All three counties Clampitt represents have a higher percent poverty rate than the statewide average along with a higher childhood poverty rate and a lower median income.

Clampitt voted for bills that roll back environmental protections, putting North Carolina’s natural resources and drinking water in jeopardy. He voted in favor of the “garbage juice” bill and for other bills that make it easier for large corporations to pollute North Carolina’s air, soil, and water.

Read on for more about Clampitt’s record during his first term in the NC House.



Summary

Despite public schools being the largest employer in most of his district, Clappitt supported bills that shortchange teachers and prioritize tax breaks over funding public education.

- Although Clappitt was not in office in 2013, he was an outspoken supporter of the 2013 budget that cut more than \$500 million in education funding.
- Clappitt voted for the 2017 Republican budget that siphoned funds from public education to controversial school voucher programs and failed to raise teacher salaries.
- Clappitt introduced a bill that would allow North Carolina to study breaking up large school districts like Wake County and said he would “probably support” a bill that would make Haywood County school board elections partisan.

Although the counties Clappitt represents are struggling financially, Clappitt voted for economic policies that overwhelmingly benefit the wealthy.

- Clappitt voted for the 2017 budget that favored tax cuts for the wealthy and took money from public education.
- He favors eliminating income and corporate taxes in favor of sales taxes, which would disproportionately affect the working class, as shown by the Republicans’ 2013 tax reform.

Clappitt voted to both block efforts to make healthcare more affordable and destabilize coverage for pre-existing conditions

- In 2018, Rep. Bobbie Richardson proposed an amendment that would expand Medicaid and make healthcare more affordable, but House Speaker Tim Moore ruled the amendment out of order; Clappitt and Republicans sustained the order.
- Clappitt voted to concur with the Senate’s version of H933 that eroded coverage for pre-existing conditions

Clappitt voted for bills that loosened environmental protections in North Carolina, jeopardizing North Carolina’s natural resources and drinking water.

- Clappitt voted in favor of the “garbage juice” bill and voted for S16, a bill that rolled back various environmental protections, including limiting local governments’ power over landfill permits
- Both bills protect the interest of corporations, over North Carolinian’s access to clean air, soil, and water

Despite public schools being the largest employer in Haywood and Jackson Counties, Clappitt voted for bills that shortchange teachers and prioritize tax breaks over funding public education.

Public schools are the largest employer in Haywood and Jackson Counties

Haywood County Consolidated Schools is the largest employer in Haywood County. (NC Dept of Commerce, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Largest Employers, retrieved [6/6/18](#))

Western Carolina University and Jackson County Public Schools are the largest employers in Jackson County. (NC Dept of Commerce, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Largest Employers, retrieved [6/6/18](#))

Clampitt voted for the 2017 budget that shortchanged teachers by failing to raise teacher salaries and prioritized tax cuts over funding public education

- **Clampitt voted for the 2017 Republican budget and voted to override the governor's veto.** (*S257, House Veto Override* [6/28/17](#))

Many educators, including veterans of 25 years, only saw an increase of \$30 a month, merely a tank of gas. “The newly unveiled North Carolina state budget does include increases in teacher pay, but they are neither big nor dramatic. Many educators – including veterans who have devoted 25 years or more to our state’s children – will see an increase of \$30 a month. That amounts to little more than a tank of gas, which will hardly be enough to allow teachers to quit their second or third jobs.” (Charlotte Observer, Op-Ed, [6/21/17](#))

Starting teacher pay remained at \$35,000 under the 2017 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](#))

The 2017 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](#))

The 2017 Republican budget did not include a stipend to aid teachers with out-of-pocket expenses

Republican lawmakers did not include Gov. Cooper's recommendation of a stipend to aid teachers with out-of-pocket expenses in the final budget proposal. “He also criticized lawmakers' decision to omit his proposed stipend for teachers to help buy classroom supplies, a lack of funding for teaching assistants, school nurses and school counselors and shifting more money into the Opportunity Scholarships private school voucher program.” Teachers see

through dishonest budget gimmicks," Cooper said as he was surrounded by a group of teachers at the Executive Mansion." (WRAL, 6/26/17)

Teachers across the country spent \$500 to \$1000 out-of-pocket for classroom supplies and job-related expenses last year. "According to a recent report from "Time," the Education Market Association says most teachers across the country spent \$500 to \$1,000 annually out of their own pockets for classroom supplies and job-related expenses last year. The report said that \$1.6 billion in school supply costs are shifted from parents or cash-strapped school districts onto teachers themselves."
(Gaston Gazette, 5/6/17)

Despite not being in office at the time, Clappitt said he supported the 2013 budget that cut more than \$500 million from education funding including cuts to teacher pay

The 2013 Republican budget cut more than \$500 million from education spending, increased class size, cut Master's pay and kept NC's national teacher pay near the bottom of the nation. "Here's what the Senate and House budget plan, set for a vote this week, does to N.C. schools: It cuts education spending by almost \$500 million in the next two years, including a decrease in net spending for K-12 public schools. It invites bigger and more chaotic classrooms by removing the cap on some classroom sizes and cutting funding for elementary school teacher assistants. School systems can offset those cuts if they somehow find money in their shrinking budgets, but if they don't, more than 3,850 second- and third-grade teaching assistants will be gone. It phases out extra pay for teachers who earn a master's degree, removing at least some incentive for teachers to improve themselves and their classrooms. Most critically, it continues to pay N.C. public school teachers abysmally. The budget doesn't give teachers raises next year, which guarantees that N.C. will continue to rank near the bottom of national rankings in teacher pay." (Charlotte Observer, editorial, 7/23/13)

Clappitt defended the 2013 budget's education cuts, saying he "would not support more dollars for schools." "When it comes to education, Clappitt adheres to the Republican line that the GOP-led General Assembly has helped students and not hurt them. This is in contrast to Democrats, who say education cuts in state budgets the past two years have harmed public schools and resulted in significant teacher layoffs. 'Sixty percent of the current budget is funding for schools,' Clappitt said, adding that he believes there needs to be an overhaul of the state's education system... Clappitt said that if elected he would not support more dollars for schools."
(Sylva Herald, 12/27/13)

The 2013 Republican budget cut teacher pay and did not make mathematical sense

Poor pay for NC teachers meant they were forced into other jobs or had to rely on Medicaid if they continued teaching. "Lindsay Kosmala Furst loves teaching, but leaving the profession may be a matter of survival for her family. A North Carolina teacher since 2007, Furst's income is so low that her two young daughters, ages 1 and 3, qualify for Medicaid. The Buncombe County high school English teacher sent legislators a letter Monday about her job and her family after learning that the state budget has no raises for teachers. "We never wanted to live in luxury," she wrote. "We did, however, hope to be able to take our little girls out for an ice cream or not wonder where we will find the gas money to visit their grandparents." Teachers on Monday said cuts in the state budget released Sunday amount to the legislators forsaking public education. Teacher pay will remain near the bottom of national rankings. More than 3,850

teacher assistant positions will be gone. The extra pay for teachers who earn master's degrees will be phased out..." (News & Observer, 7/22/13)

Teacher said of the budget: "It is genuinely scary. I get the feeling that our legislators have a vendetta against teachers." "Dov Rosenberg, a teacher at Rogers-Herr Middle School in Durham, said he isn't concerned about losing his job but worries for the teaching profession and the future of public education in the state. "It feels like a slap in the face when they talk about how they want to attract high quality teachers, and this budget seems to do nothing but discourage people from entering the teaching profession," he said. "It is genuinely scary. I get the feeling that our legislators have a vendetta against teachers." (News & Observer, 7/22/13)

The 2013 Republican budget was a "slap at North Carolina's teachers and public education system delivered by the budget." "The slap at North Carolina's teachers and public education system delivered by the budget. The House-Senate compromise represents a major push toward privatization, with a program allowing taxpayer money to be used for private school tuitions; an end to current teacher tenure; and again, no pay raise for the state's teachers, who already rank near the bottom in pay in the nation. Spending on teacher assistants drops a staggering \$120 million. Yevonne Brannon, a volunteer with the group Public Schools First NC, said, 'This budget reflects a very aggressive campaign to privatize public education and dismantle the teaching profession. We're just paddling backward as fast as we can go.'" (Asheville Citizen-Times, editorial, 7/23/13)

The "math simply doesn't add up" for 2013 Republican budget. "One con is the increase in spending by nearly 2.5 percent while cutting taxes for businesses and individuals. Thus, the math simply doesn't add up. Spending more while taking in less is something that has troubled our federal government for over a decade and we have seen the mess that has left. Now, it appears the state is willing to get into the same worrisome predicament." (Forest City Daily Courier, editorial, 7/23/13)

Clampitt said he would "probably support" a bill that would make Haywood County one of a handful of counties in the state where schoolboard members could run on a partisan ticket despite unanimous opposition to H265 from school board members in Madison County.

Clampitt said he would "probably support" H265, a Presnell-sponsored bill that would make Haywood one of a handful of counties in the state where school board members would run on a partisan ticket. "Last week, members of the Haywood County Board of Education were left shocked and scratching their heads after learning that House Bill 265, a local bill co-sponsored by Rep. Michele Presnell, R-Yancey, had been introduced. If passed, HB 265 could make Haywood one of a handful of counties in the state where school board members would run on a partisan ticket. The other counties in the region affected by HB 265 include Madison and Yancey. School leaders were concerned about the change, as well as the fact that Presnell introduced the bill without even having the courtesy to contact any of the elected school board leaders in her district. [...] Clampitt, (R-Swain) said Swain County has partisan races and the system works fine. "I looked at that bill and I'll probably support it," Clampitt said. "I've got about 75 bills I'm working on as far as cosponsoring, so I plead a little ignorant on this. I'd like to talk to school board, but it appears the current trend is to identify parties." Clampitt, who represents the western portion of Haywood, said Presnell didn't consult with him before adding Haywood to the bill making a total of six school board races partisan, or ask if he wanted to cosponsor it." (The Mountaineer, 3/15/17)

School board members in Madison County were unanimous in their opposition to H265.

“Current school board members are unanimous in their opposition to the bill, expressing concern that the insertion of politics in board races could have a negative impact on how schools are led. "I am extremely disappointed in the decision," said Republican board member Lori Hagan Massey. "The potential long-range impact on our students is scary to me. We need the diversity. It is healthy to have different viewpoints on the Board. If it is all Democrats or Republicans or unaffiliated, they have their own agendas. We need the diversity of all different kinds of thought and vision." Current board Chair Theresa Banks, a Democrat, also spoke out against the proposed legislation. "This change would immediately bring politics to the forefront when we've worked so hard to make the students the number one objective," Banks said. "This is not the way it should be run. I have spoken with a wide variety of friends who are both Democrat and Republican, and none of them have said it is a good idea. It's just not logical." The shift would also change the school board election calendar, meaning new board members would take over in December, in the middle of the school year. The current setup has board members beginning their term in July.” (Citizen Times, [4/5/17](#))

Despite Clappitt's district's economic struggles, he has repeatedly voted for economic policies that benefit the wealthy over working families.

The district Clappitt represents is struggling

All three counties Clappitt represents have a higher percent poverty rate than the statewide average along with a higher childhood poverty rate and a lower median income. The median income in Swain county is almost \$20,000 less than the national average. (United States Census, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, retrieved [2/20/18](#))

Poverty, Child Poverty and Median Household Income in HD119							
Year	County Name	All Ages SAIPE Poverty Universe	All Ages in Poverty Count	All Ages in Poverty Percent	Under Age 18 in Poverty Count	Under Age 18 in Poverty Percent	Median Household Income in Dollars
2016	United States	315,165,470	44,268,996	14	14,115,713	19.5	\$57,617
2016	North Carolina	9,885,985	1,523,034	15.4	490,775	21.7	\$50,595
2016	Haywood County	60,059	9,545	15.9	3,066	28.2	\$45,290
2016	Jackson County	38,489	8,051	20.9	1,728	24.2	\$44,004
2016	Swain County	14,108	2,357	16.7	796	25.4	\$38,996

(United States Census, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, retrieved [2/20/18](#))

A NC Child report showed that more than half of Haywood County children live in poverty and nearly 25 percent of children in Haywood County live in food insecure households.

“The new Haywood County Data Card produced by NC Child, a statewide advocacy group, shows that child poverty and hunger remain major problems for children. NC Child reported that more than half of the children living in Haywood County – 52.2 percent – live in poor or near-poor homes, and one-fourth – 25.3 percent – live in food insecure households. Children living in poverty are more likely to face negative education, health and economic outcomes, and children in food insecure households have higher risks to their health, safety and ability to learn, according to NC Child, the statewide advocacy group that prepared the data cards.” (The Mountaineer, [4/4/18](#))

42.7 percent of Jackson County's residents were low-income on average from 2011 to 2015. “42.7% of the county's residents were low-income on average from 2011 to 2015, meaning their incomes were less than twice the federal poverty level (\$48,500 for a family of four in 2015).” (NC Justice Budget and Tax Center, [April 2017](#))

16.2 percent of Swain County residents lived in poverty in 2015 and 48.9 percent of the county's residents were low-income from 2011 to 2015. “16.2% of county residents (2,295 people) lived in poverty and struggled to make ends meet in 2015; the state poverty rate was 16.4%.3 • 26% of children in the county (815 children) lived in poverty in 2015, compared to 23.4% statewide.4 • The poverty rate varies by race: 96% of African Americans, 41.2% of American Indians, and 45.7% of Latinos in the county lived in poverty compared to 50.7% of

Asian Americans and 15.9% of whites on average from 2011 to 2015. 5 • 48.9% of the county's residents were low-income on average from 2011 to 2015, meaning their incomes were less than twice the federal poverty level (\$48,500 for a family of four in 2015)." (NC Justice Budget and Tax Center, [April 2017](#))

Despite the economic hardship in Clappitt's district, he voted for a budget that favored tax cuts for the wealthy, did not restore child care tax credits and siphoned money away from public education.

- **NOTE: Clappitt voted for S257 and for the veto override.** (*S257 Veto Overridden, [6/27/17](#)*)

Budget favors tax cuts for the wealthy, lowering the corporate income tax rate to 2.5 percent from 3 percent. "The budget will make a series of tax cuts in 2019, a delay from earlier House and Senate tax cut proposals that would have taken effect in 2018. It will reduce the personal income tax rate from 5.499 percent to 5.25 percent and raise the standard deduction – the amount on which people pay no income taxes unless they itemize – to \$20,000 for married couples filing jointly from \$17,500. It will also lower the corporate income tax rate to 2.5 percent from 3 percent. "We are providing tax relief for middle class working families and businesses, and we're doing it in a prudent way," Dollar said." (News & Observer, 6/28/17)

As of January 2017, NC's corporate income tax is the lowest in the nation according to the Tax Foundation. "North Carolina's corporate income tax rate, which dropped to 3 percent in January, is the lowest in the nation, according to the Washington, D.C.-based Tax Foundation. The foundation is an independent tax policy research organization that analyzes state tax codes and advocates for competitive policies. In North Carolina, the business tax has been reduced each year since 2013, when the state legislature approved a number of significant changes to the tax code. The state's corporate income tax has dropped from 6.9 percent to 3 percent over the past four years, giving North Carolina the lowest corporate income tax rate of any state that levies the tax, according to the foundation." (Economic Development Partnership of NC, 1/4/17)

The 2017 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)

Governor Cooper's budget calls for the reinstatement of the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, which could help more than 200,000 families pay for child care. (Governor's Office Press Release, 6/1/17)

The Republican House & Senate budgets do not provide a child care tax credit. (Governor's Office Press Release, 6/1/17)

Clampitt favors eliminating income and corporate taxes in favor of sales taxes, which would disproportionately hurt low-income families

Clampitt supports eliminating income and corporate taxes in favor of sales taxes. “Queen and Clampitt differ, too, on their beliefs about the best tax structure for North Carolina. Queen wants to lower the sales tax and broaden the base; Clampitt wants to eliminate state personal and corporate income tax and rely primarily on the sales tax... Clampitt said that in his opinion ‘a flat tax seems to be the best way to go ... it would eliminate state and corporate income tax. A flat user fee is something everyone would pay.’” (Sylva Herald, 12/27/13)

Changing the tax code to eliminate income and corporate taxes would “let working families pay more and the rich pay less.” “The naming of proposed legislation can be a depressingly Orwellian practice in which the title is the opposite of the effect. The latest example is a state Senate proposal to change the state tax code. It's called the Tax Fairness Act. Oh, Big Brother, no, it's not. This is the Let Working Families Pay More And The Rich Pay Less Act. That title isn't as catchy, but it has the virtue of being true. If the General Assembly is going to pass some semblance of this proposal, the public ought to know what it is.” (News & Observer, editorial, 5/8/13)

A tax calculator provided by NC Senate leadership showed working families would pay more with tax reform. “The Nctaxcut.com site includes a calculator that makes the lopsided nature of this proposal clear. Using the calculator, the N&O's John Frank found that a married couple with two children making \$30,000 a year would pay an estimated \$1,000 more in taxes each year. By contrast, a single taxpayer making \$200,000 would get a \$6,000 break.” (News & Observer, editorial, 5/8/13)

Despite not being in the legislature in 2013, Clampitt supported the 2013 Republican budget that increased sales tax on prescription drugs, food, haircuts and auto repairs.

A tax reform proposal by Rucho in 2013 that shifted from income to sales tax included a 6.5 percent sales tax on prescription drugs and food. “Senate leader Phil Berger, R-Eden, joined by Sens. Bob Rucho, R-Mecklenburg, and Bill Rabon, R-Columbus, described the tax plan in broad terms at a news conference Tuesday. (A bill has yet to be seen.)... The plan's central elements include a reduction in the state's income tax over three years from the current progressive rates of 6 percent, 7 percent and 7.75 percent to a flat rate of 4.5 percent. It would also lower the sales tax from 6.75 percent to 6.5 percent and expand it to cover more than 100 services that are currently exempt. In addition, the plan would apply the 6.5 percent state sales tax to prescription drugs and food, which aren't taxed at the state level. The plan also cuts the corporate income tax and the business franchise tax and eliminates the estate tax.” (News & Observer, editorial, 5/8/13)

The Senate's tax reform proposal included new taxes on haircuts and auto repairs. “North Carolinians will pay more for hair styles, auto repairs and lawn care if a proposed tax reform bill passes... Although the bill would cut the sales tax by 3.7 percent, it expands the base by levying taxes on more services. Business-to-business transactions will not be included, but 100 previously-untaxed services -like hair salons, barbers, lawyers and accountants -would.” (Charlotte Post, 5/23/13)

Senate's tax reform bill taxed food, mortgage interest, prescription drugs and social security income. “Senate leaders on Thursday rolled out the most comprehensive proposal to

overhaul the state's tax code, eliminating dozens of loopholes, but also shutting down popular tax breaks on food, mortgage interest payments and prescription drugs that would bring in more than \$1 billion in revenue to help reduce income tax rates and the overall sales tax rate. The N.C. Fair Tax Act also taxes Social Security benefits for many retirees and extends the sales tax to more than 130 services, such as landscaping and legal help. While it closes many loopholes for businesses, it does continue some for certain sectors while bringing in roughly a billion dollars less in revenues over the next three years.” (News & Observer, 5/30/13)

AP Factcheck said, “the tax reform package also eliminates several exemptions and deductions that benefited working class taxpayers.” “It's true that the state's income tax rate is going down for every taxpayer in 2014. But that does not mean all taxpayers will actually pay less to the state government over the coming year... The tax reform package also eliminates several exemptions and deductions that benefited working class taxpayers, including a popular program that allowed families a deduction on pre-tax income into a college savings account. According to a recent analysis by the legislature's own Fiscal Research Division, a married couple with two children making \$20,000 a year will go from receiving a \$222 tax rebate in 2013 to owing \$40 next year, a net swing of \$262. At the other end of the income scale, a married couple with two children making \$250,000 will get a \$2,318 tax cut in 2014, according to the analysis.” (AP, [12/30/13](#))

Republican tax reform led to a significant tax increase for those with significant medical expenses. “A casualty of last year's massive tax reform law, the medical expense portion of the federal itemized deductions is no longer carried over to the North Carolina form... According to the General Assembly's Fiscal Research Division, ‘taxpayers with significant medical expenses will see an increase in their North Carolina tax liability.’... The research division said it had run a number of scenarios showing that senior citizens who spend the majority of their income on nursing home care or with other large medical expenses are likely to see their state tax bills go up.” (Star-News, [5/20/14](#))

Tax reform eliminated credits for child care, disability, farm machinery, education expenses and charitable contributions. “Eliminates credits for child care, permanent and total disability, property taxes paid on farm machinery, education expenses and charitable contributions for those who do not itemize their deductions.” (WRAL, [7/18/13](#))

Tax reform increased taxes on electricity and natural gas from 3 to 7 percent. “Replaces a current 3 percent franchise tax on electricity and piped natural gas with the 7 percent sales tax rate.” (WRAL, [7/18/13](#))

Republican tax reform eliminated deduction for college savings plans (529s). “Eliminates a deduction for contributions to North Carolina 529 college savings plans.” (WRAL, [7/18/13](#))

Republican tax reform allowed film tax credit to expire in 2015. “Allows the film production tax credit to expire in 2015.” (WRAL, [7/18/13](#))

Republican tax reform created a new tax on movie tickets and other amusements. “Movie tickets and other amusements, which had been taxed a lower but often unseen privilege tax rate, will now be taxed at the full sales tax rate.” (WRAL, [7/18/13](#))

Tax reform raised taxes on manufactured and modular homes. “Replaces preferential 2 and 2.5 percent tax rates for manufactured and modular homes with the state rate of 4.75 percent.” (WRAL, [7/18/13](#))

Clampitt voted to both block Medicaid expansion and destabilize affordable healthcare in North Carolina since his election to office.

In 2018, Clampitt and the Republicans of the NCGA voted to block Medicaid expansion again using a procedural vote.

In 2018, Clampitt and the Republicans of the NCGA voted to block Medicaid expansion using a procedural vote. “Rep. Bobbie Richardson, a Franklin County Democrat, argued that expanding Medicaid would improve health care in rural communities. But Moore ruled the amendment out of order because it would be "appropriating funds out of compliance with our rules," and after Richardson appealed the ruling, the House sided with Moore in a 70-42 vote. The vote was largely along party lines with Rep. Ken Goodman, a Richmond County Democrat, joining all Republicans to block further action on the amendment.” (News & Observer, [6/12/18](#); H998 A4, motion to appeal ruling of the chair, [6/11/18](#))

Rep. Bobbie Richardson proposed an amendment that would expand Medicaid under the ACA to H998, a bill meant to improve health care for rural North Carolinians. “Rep. Bobbie Richardson, a Franklin County Democrat, argued that expanding Medicaid would improve health care in rural communities. But Moore ruled the amendment out of order because it would be "appropriating funds out of compliance with our rules," and after Richardson appealed the ruling, the House sided with Moore in a 70-42 vote. The vote was largely along party lines with Rep. Ken Goodman, a Richmond County Democrat, joining all Republicans to block further action on the amendment.” (News & Observer, [6/12/18](#); H998 A4, motion to appeal ruling of the chair, [6/11/18](#))

House Speaker Tim Moore ruled the amendment out of order, Democrats attempted to appeal his ruling, but Republicans helped him sustain it, blocking Medicaid expansion. “Rep. Bobbie Richardson, a Franklin County Democrat, argued that expanding Medicaid would improve health care in rural communities. But Moore ruled the amendment out of order because it would be "appropriating funds out of compliance with our rules," and after Richardson appealed the ruling, the House sided with Moore in a 70-42 vote. The vote was largely along party lines with Rep. Ken Goodman, a Richmond County Democrat, joining all Republicans to block further action on the amendment.” (News & Observer, [6/12/18](#); H998 A4, motion to appeal ruling of the chair, [6/11/18](#))

Clampitt voted to support an amended H933, a school safety bill that was changed to destabilize health care coverage for people with pre-existing conditions

- **NOTE:** H933 passed the House unanimously on 2nd reading on [5/17/18](#), Referred to Senate Rules on [5/21/18](#), Senate amended [6/13/18](#), House failed to concur [6/14/18](#)
- **NOTE:** Clampitt voted to concur with the Senate’s version of H933 that eroded coverage for pre-existing conditions

The Senate Health Care Committee amended H933 to include insurance provisions. “Senate Republicans unveiled the new portions of House Bill 933 at a committee meeting Thursday morning, potentially clearing surprise provisions aimed purportedly at lowering the threshold for small employers to offer self-funded health plans and, perhaps most importantly, clearing less-regulated association health plans for membership organizations like the [N.C. Farm Bureau](#).” (Progressive Pulse, [6/7/18](#); H933, House failed to concur [6/14/18](#))

The legislation would allow nonprofits to offer “health benefit plans” exempt of state and federal regulation. “Legislation poised for passage in the N.C. Senate would allow nonprofits to offer “health benefit plans” that would be exempt from nearly all state and federal regulations that govern health insurance. Supporters say the measure would allow nonprofits to offer health benefit plans that would be similar to health insurance, but could be cheaper than health insurance purchased on the Affordable Care Act exchange as well as other forms of insurance. But critics worry the legislation would open the door for products that would discriminate against those with pre-existing health conditions, offer skimpy benefits, and come with few or no consumer protections. The plans would be similar to those offered in Tennessee, where premiums on the ACA exchanges have climbed precipitously, in part because of the impact of these unregulated plans.” (North Carolina Health News, [6/14/18](#); H933, House failed to concur [6/14/18](#))

Critics warned that the provisions would open the door for products that would discriminate against those with pre-existing health conditions, offer skimpy benefits, and come with few or no consumer protections. “Legislation poised for passage in the N.C. Senate would allow nonprofits to offer “health benefit plans” that would be exempt from nearly all state and federal regulations that govern health insurance. Supporters say the measure would allow nonprofits to offer health benefit plans that would be similar to health insurance, but could be cheaper than health insurance purchased on the Affordable Care Act exchange as well as other forms of insurance. But critics worry the legislation would open the door for products that would discriminate against those with pre-existing health conditions, offer skimpy benefits, and come with few or no consumer protections. The plans would be similar to those offered in Tennessee, where premiums on the ACA exchanges have climbed precipitously, in part because of the impact of these unregulated plans.” (North Carolina Health News, [6/14/18](#))

These plans would not require employers to cover a minimum set of services and allow them price-out certain preexisting conditions. “The legislation would allow nonprofit organizations that have existed for at least 10 years, and which offer membership in all 100 counties, to offer their members health benefit plans. Unlike other health insurance plans and coverage offered by employers, these benefit plans wouldn’t be required to cover a minimum set of health care services. And plans could be priced at different levels so that people with pre-existing health conditions would be charged more or else not have their pre-existing conditions covered.” (North Carolina Health News, [6/14/18](#); H933, House failed to concur [6/14/18](#))

According to the NC Justice Center, these new plans cherry-pick young, healthy enrollees and leave a sicker risk pool in the individual market, causing premiums to skyrocket. “Under the guise of improving affordability, the bill would allow for the creation of new health insurance plans that would not be subject to state and federal insurance rules. That means that these plans would be able to discriminate against North Carolinians with pre-existing conditions by either refusing to cover them or charging them higher premiums based on their medical history. Even those who are able to ‘pass’ the medical underwriting test may end up in plans that do not provide coverage for essential health care services they need, as these plans are completely exempt from existing insurance law. By cherry picking young and healthy enrollees, these new plans would leave a sicker risk pool in the individual market, destabilizing the insurance market and causing premiums to skyrocket for those in need of comprehensive coverage.” (Progressive Pulse, [6/7/18](#); H933, House failed to concur [6/14/18](#))

Despite representing an area near a coal ash dump, Clampitt voted for legislation that benefits corporate polluters like Duke Energy, further eroding access to clean air, soil and water NC

Clampitt voted for H576, which would have allowed the spraying of “garbage juice” without a permit

➤ **NOTE:** *Clampitt voted for H576 (H576 passed third reading in the House, [4/25/17](#))*

H576 would allow landfill operators to “dispose” of landfill fluids by “spraying it into the air over their property” without a permit. “House leaders are pushing ahead with a proposal to require state environmental regulators to allow the disposal of landfill wastewater and fluids that leak out by spraying it into the air over their property without a permit. The process, called aerosolization, is favored by the waste industry and by other industries that deal with large quantities of wastewater. As amended Thursday, however, it would not apply to dewatering coal ash. House Bill 576 sponsor Rep. Jimmy Dixon, R-Duplin, told the House Environment Committee on Thursday that no one is opposed to the bill, but both the state Department of Environmental Quality and environmental groups say that's not the case. According to Dixon, DEQ under former Gov. Pat McCrory's administration approved a permit for an aerosolization project at the Foothills Regional Landfill in 2013.” (WRAL, [4/20/17](#))

The aeration of leachate could threaten neighboring properties by releasing harmful chemicals into the air, creating a hazard for workers and citizens. “Although the landfill is permitted to accept only “non-hazardous” waste, no one is opening every bag and checking for pesticide containers or cleaning solvents. The leachate — or landfill juice, to be inelegant for a moment — often contains lead from electronics, mercury from batteries, bacteria and viruses from dirty diapers; antibiotics, hormones and other toxics from routine prescription and specialized chemotherapy drugs; volatile organic compounds from plastics, toner cartridges, glues and cleansers. Waste disposal companies have to get rid of this leachate, about 4 million to 30 million gallons of it each year. Yet disposal is extremely expensive. Evaporation ponds can cost upward of \$2 million, according to Republic Services, one of the nation’s largest waste disposal companies, [which made a presentation to legislators](#) earlier this year. Pre-treating the leachate, then pumping and trucking it to a hazardous waste site or wastewater treatment plant, runs another \$2 million or so, plus fees. Or these companies can take the cheaper, untested, way out. Republic owns three landfills in North Carolina that have received a state permit to spray leachate from the holding tanks into the air: Upper Piedmont, Foothills and East Carolina Municipal Solid Waste. (Charah owns a fourth landfill, the Brickhaven mine in Chatham County, which is being filled with coal ash. In March, it received a state permit to conduct a 90-day field trial.) The technology is known as [leachate aerosolization](#), invented by Kelly Houston of Cornelius, a former lobbyist and a Republican campaign donor. The theory behind the system is that the contaminants in the mist will fall to the ground, ostensibly on top of the landfill, allegedly leaving uncontaminated tiny particles to drift away.” (NC Policy Watch, [5/2/17](#))

The aeration of leachate drives the harmful chemicals into the air and creates a hazard for workers at the landfill and citizens downwind. “A scientist at USEPA responded to our request for comment with several studies showing that landfill leachates and wastewater treatment plant effluents contain large amounts of volatile perfluoroalkyl sulfonic acids (PFAs), and other harmful chemicals. The aeration of these liquid streams drives the volatiles into the air, which then presents an exposure hazard to workers at these plants and citizens downwind.

The scientist stated “I wouldn’t want to be anywhere near a leachate aeration basin. The downwind emissions would very likely contain a very wide range of toxic materials.” Aerosolization blasts leachate through a high velocity fan, turning it into droplets that evaporate or blow away, reducing leachate volumes. Critics worry that the aerosol droplets, containing toxics or bacteria, may threaten neighboring or downwind properties. A larger question is why, if the technology can be operated safely - something that the industry claims, but that has not been demonstrated to any state agency - it needs a special exemption from state permitting laws.” (Southern Environmental Law Center, retrieved [5/1/18](#))

Communities of color would be disproportionately affected by H576

Communities where over half the residents are people of color are 2.8 more likely to be near a solid waste facility, according to research published in Environmental Health Perspectives. “The adjusted prevalence odds of a solid waste facility was 2.8 times greater in block groups with ≥50% people of color compared with block groups with < 10% people of color, and 1.5 times greater in block groups with median house values < \$60,000 compared with block groups with median house values ≥\$100,000. Among block groups that did not have a previously permitted solid waste facility, the adjusted hazard of a new permitted facility was 2.7 times higher in block groups with ≥50% people of color compared with block groups with < 10% people of color.” (Environmental Health Perspectives, 07/09/07)

Scientists: “Solid waste facilities are disproportionately located in communities of color and low wealth.” Solid waste facilities present numerous public health concerns. In North Carolina solid waste facilities are disproportionately located in communities of color and low wealth. In the absence of action to promote environmental justice, the continued need for new facilities could exacerbate this environmental injustice.” (Environmental Health Perspectives, 07/09/2007)

Clampitt voted for S16, a business regulatory reform bill that “imposes limitations on local governments’ power over landfill permits” and loosens water quality rules

➤ **NOTE:** *Clampitt voted for S16 (S16, veto overridden [10/5/17](#))*

Senate Bill 16 “loosens water quality rules and imposes limitations on local governments’ power over landfill permits, changes that the Democratic governor called dangerous in his veto message.” “SB 16, titled “Business Regulatory Reform Act of 2017,” is a 16-page grab bag of deregulation provisions. It loosens water quality rules and imposes limitations on local governments power over landfill permits, changes that the Democratic governor called dangerous in his veto message.” (News & Observer, [9/29/17](#))

S16 is a “16-page grab bag of deregulation provisions. It loosens water quality rules and imposes limitations on local governments power over landfill permits, changes that the Democratic governor called dangerous in his veto message.” “SB 16, titled “Business Regulatory Reform Act of 2017,” is a 16-page grab bag of deregulation provisions. It loosens water quality rules and imposes limitations on local governments power over landfill permits, changes that the Democratic governor called dangerous in his veto message.” (News & Observer, 9/29/17)

Environmental groups were concerned about a provision in S16 “that would prevent cities from requiring better stormwater control when properties are redeveloped.”

“Environmental groups expressed concern with a provision that would prevent cities from requiring better stormwater control when properties are redeveloped, even if the property was originally "grandfathered in" with little or no runoff control when current stormwater runoff laws were passed. Another provision adds back-up lights to the list of lights covered by the state vehicle safety inspection, but it also requires the Department of Transportation and the Department of Environmental Quality to examine whether vehicle safety and emissions inspections should be required less frequently than once a year.” (WRAL, [6/14/17](#))

Environmental groups were concerned that retrofit opportunities would be lost, “making it harder to achieve clean water standards.” “Environmental groups were concerned, saying retrofit opportunities would be lost, making it harder to achieve clean water standards. Another section of the bill broadened an exemption from coastal stormwater rules for residential projects.” (WRAL, [8/3/17](#))

Clampitt is not in favor of wind and solar panel farms

Clampitt was not in favor of wind or solar panel farms, saying they take away “land for food.” “The topic of climate change was raised after a panelist said Duke Energy has acquired more natural gas to expand its power plants and invested heavily into fossil fuel. “Every time we put a wind or solar panel farm, we take away land for food, land that has potential for hay for cattle,” said Clampitt. “Point being, the technology is not here at this time to put all our eggs in one basket...common sense needs to prevail.”” (Smoky Mountain Times, [10/20/16](#))

Clampitt represents part of Buncombe County, where there is a coal ash site and accepted \$1,000 in campaign cash from Duke Energy in 2018

There is a coal ash site in Buncombe County called Asheville Steam Electric Generating Plant. “Duke Energy pleaded guilty and agreed to pay \$102 million in fines and restitution in 2015 after three U.S. Attorneys charged the utility with violating the Clean Water Act. They charged the corporation with releasing pollution at its Dan River steam station in Rockingham County, the Cape Fear steam electric plant in Chatham County, the Asheville steam electric generating plant in Buncombe County, the H.F. Lee steam electric plant in Wayne County, and the Riverbend steam station in Gaston County.” (North Carolina Health News, [2/18/18](#))

3,000,000 tons of coal ash was used as a filler at the Asheville Regional Airport. “The Department of Environmental Quality gave Duke Energy what's called a notice of violation. The violations involve coal ash being used as filler at the Asheville Regional Airport. Duke Energy says the airport has 3,000,000 tons of coal ash. "Up to now we've been pretty pleased. We've watched Duke closely, like I said, and we really haven't seen a lot of big issues," said French Broad Riverkeeper Hartwell Carson. At one of the airport sites with coal ash, DEQ says the soil covering the coal ash eroded, leaving the coal ash exposed. DEQ and Duke says the coal ash did not leave the site, or get into the river.” (WLOS, [12/2/15](#))

Clampitt accepted \$1,000 in campaign contributions from Duke Energy Corp. PAC in March 2018. (NCSBE, retrieved [9/21/18](#))

###

