

North Carolina Legislator Profile

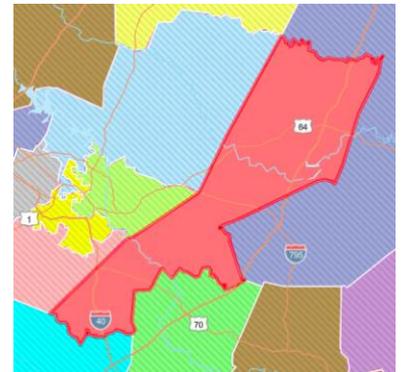
**Rick Horner (R- Johnston, Nash)
Senate District 11**

"Not everyone up here was screaming bloody murder," Horner said when asked about the tensions between lawmakers and educators." (Rocky Mount Telegram, 5/17/18)

Sen. Rick Horner (R-Johnston, Nash) is currently serving his second term in the North Carolina Senate. Prior to his election to Senate, Horner served as a board member of the Nash Rocky Mount Public Schools Board for over fourteen years.

Since his election in 2016, Horner has made inconsistent claims about his support for health care access and education. Horner said the state should "take a serious look" at Medicaid expansion, but provided no further information on his position. Horner supported the 2019 budget, which failed to expand Medicaid. The 2019 Republican budget would have cut DHHS's budget by \$42 million.

Horner said he wants to bring urgency, accountability, and quality to education in North Carolina but as a lawmaker his votes did not support these claims. **Horner, whose wife is a teacher, campaigned on teacher pay and said, "we need to listen to teachers," but criticized the teacher rally and failed to follow through with his votes.** Horner was the primary sponsor of a bill requiring school districts to repeal discipline policies that warned about racial disparities.



Summary

Horner supported the 2019 budget, which failed to expand Medicaid. Medicaid expansion would have brought health care to more than half a million North Carolinians and would not have required a tax increase.

- Despite saying NC should “take a serious look” at Medicaid expansion, Horner supported the 2019 budget, which failed to expand Medicaid.
- More than half a million North Carolinians would gain access to affordable health care if the state expanded Medicaid, 90 percent of which is paid for by the federal government.
- The 2019 Republican budget would underfund Medicaid by more than \$60 million and include a \$15 million cut to Medicaid.
- The 2019 Republican budget would have cut DHHS’s budget by \$42 million.
- Horner called Medicaid an “entitlement” and said it was therefore impossible to underfund.

Horner said he wants to bring urgency, accountability, and quality to education in North Carolina but as a lawmaker, his votes have not supported these claims.

- Horner, whose wife is a teacher, campaigned on teacher pay and said, “we need to listen to teachers,” but criticized the teacher rally and failed to follow through with votes.
- Horner sponsored a bill to pay teachers for advanced degrees but failed to push it across the finish line and supported a budget that did not include pay bumps for teachers with advanced degrees.
- Horner has made conflicting statements about teacher pay and has advocated for higher teacher pay but has also criticized teachers who have rallied for more funding and voted for budgets that did not provide adequate funding for the education system.
- Horner was the only member to vote against a bill that would limit class size.
- Horner was the primary sponsor of a bill requiring school districts to repeal discipline policies that warned about racial disparities.

Horner claimed to care about health care access but supported the 2019 Republican budget which failed to expand Medicaid to more than 500K North Carolinians and made cuts to Medicaid.

*Despite saying NC should “take a serious look” at Medicaid expansion, Horner supported the 2019 budget, which failed to expand Medicaid. **More than half a million North Carolinians would gain access to affordable health care if the state expanded Medicaid, 90 percent of which is paid for by the federal government.** The 2019 Republican budget would underfund Medicaid by more than \$60 million and include a \$15 million cut to Medicaid. **The 2019 Republican budget would cut DHHS’s budget by \$42 million.** Horner called Medicaid an “entitlement” and said it was therefore impossible to underfund.*

Despite saying NC should “take a serious look” at Medicaid expansion, Horner supported the 2019 budget, which failed to expand Medicaid.

Horner is in his second term in the NC Senate representing district 11. (ncleg, retrieved [11/21/19](#))

Horner said the state should “take a serious look” at Medicaid expansion, but provided no further information on his position. “Health care remains a challenging cost for many families to manage. Horner said the state should “take a serious look” at Medicaid expansion. During the Affordable Care Act’s rollout, the federal government offered to pay 90 percent of the cost to add more North Carolinians to the state’s Medicaid rolls.” (The Wilson Daily Times, 8/16/16)

HEADLINE: “New General Assembly budget includes many health care features, but no Medicaid expansion.” (NC Health News, [6/26/19](#))

Governor Cooper called on Republican leaders to expand Medicaid in the budget as part of a compromise plan. “After several weeks of negotiations between the North Carolina Senate and the House of Representatives, the two chambers came together Tuesday to present a compromise budget they’ll be sending to Gov. Roy Cooper for his signature. But it’s likely Cooper will be vetoing it. For months, the governor has signaled that he would veto any state spending plan which does not contain provisions to expand the Medicaid program to cover hundreds of thousands of additional low-income workers [who would become eligible under expansion](#). That likelihood loomed large over Tuesday’s press conference, where Republican leaders of the House and the Senate stood together and criticized Cooper for not negotiating with them around the \$24 billion spending plan.” (NC Health News, [6/26/19](#))

More than half a million North Carolinians would gain access to affordable health care if the state expanded Medicaid, 90 percent of which is paid for by the federal government.

Between 500 and 600 thousand North Carolinians would gain access to affordable health care if the state expanded Medicaid. “Cooper called the Republican decision to begin consideration of Medicaid expansion “a good step forward” but short of his proposal that would expand Medicaid to between 500,000 and 600,000 working North Carolinians.” (AP, [7/9/19](#))

The federal government pays for 90 percent of the costs to expand Medicaid. “Now that Congressional efforts to repeal or replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA) have abated, North Carolina and the other 17 states that have not expanded Medicaid can consider whether to do so going forward. The ACA’s established funding will pay for 90 percent of the costs of expanding Medicaid to cover people in households with incomes at or below 138 percent of the federal poverty level.” (News & Observer, Editorial, [4/20/18](#))

The 90 percent of federal government funding stays permanent unless lawmakers vote to change or repeal the legislation. “Under the health-care law, the federal government will pay 100

percent of the cost of expansion in 2014, 2015 and 2016. Then the federal match is pared back to 95 percent in 2017, 94 percent in 2018, 93 percent in 2019 and then 90 percent in 2020 and beyond. It would stay at the 90 percent level unless the lawmakers change or repeal the legislation. So, rather than getting \$1 back for every \$2 spent, states would get \$9 back for every \$10 spent. (This is a simplified version of a complex formula. The Kaiser Family Foundation in 2013 issued a report with all of the details.)” (Washington Post, 1/14/14)

The 2019 Republican budget would underfund Medicaid by more than \$60 million and include a \$15 million cut to Medicaid.

The 2019 Republican budget would include a \$15 million management flexibility cut to Medicaid. “The budget proposal they approved earlier this month introduced a Medicaid rebase nearly \$40 million lower than the Governor’s budget. It also includes a management flexibility cut of \$15 million that may result in the need for reductions in administrative oversight at a critical moment in the transformation of the Medicaid system in our state. Last year, the General Assembly underfunded the rebase by nearly \$28 million.” (NC Policy Watch, [5/20/19](#); H966, vetoed, [6/28/19](#))

The 2019 Republican budget would fund the Medicaid rebase by nearly \$40 million less than the Governor’s budget. “The budget proposal they approved earlier this month introduced a Medicaid rebase nearly \$40 million lower than the Governor’s budget. It also includes a management flexibility cut of \$15 million that may result in the need for reductions in administrative oversight at a critical moment in the transformation of the Medicaid system in our state. Last year, the General Assembly underfunded the rebase by nearly \$28 million.” (NC Policy Watch, [5/20/19](#); H966, vetoed, [6/28/19](#))

- **The Medicaid rebase is the revised estimate for the cost of Medicaid in the upcoming year.** “Each year, legislators work with the Office of State Budget and Management to “rebase” Medicaid, that is, revise what the estimate is for the upcoming year’s spending.” (NC Health News, [7/2/18](#))

According to DHHS, the 2019 Republican budget would underfund Medicaid by more than \$60 million and leave at least \$120 million of federal funding on the table. “The budget includes deep cuts to the Medicaid program, and does not fully fund enrollment growth. According to the state Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS), the budget underfunds Medicaid by more than \$60 million, leaving at least \$120 million of federal funding on the table. This will undermine the monumental task of transitioning to Medicaid managed care.” (NC Policy Watch, [6/27/19](#))

The 2019 Republican budget would cut DHHS’s budget by \$42 million.

The 2019 Republican budget would cut \$42 million in recurring funds for DHHS over two years. “Cohen also sharply criticized the legislature for cutting out \$42 million in recurring administrative funds over the coming two years. Additionally, she said that as the budget stands right now, the Medicaid budget is \$63 million short.” (NC Health News, [6/28/19](#); H966, vetoed, [6/28/19](#))

DHHS Secretary Mandy Cohen called the cuts “dramatic” and “irresponsible.” ““It’s dramatic. It’s irresponsible,” she said. “It’s not like we’re trying to manage some really trying times. No one has given me an answer in this building about why are we doing this cut? “We’re not in a recession. Why are they doing it this year... other than to play games?” Cohen said.” (NC Health News, [6/28/19](#); H966, vetoed, [6/28/19](#))

Horner called Medicaid an “entitlement” and said it was therefore impossible to underfund.

Horner said it wasn't possible to underfund Medicaid because it is considered an entitlement.

"Gailliard argued he believes there is a deeper issue because the House underfunded the present Medicaid program by approximately \$64 million and the Senate underfunded the program by approximately \$100 million. Horner was quick to rebut, but in a respectful tone, saying, "You cannot underfund Medicaid. It's an entitlement. You don't know what the bill is going to be. You can underfund the budget, but you pay for it when you settle up at the end of the year." (Rocky Mount Telegram, 6/8/19)

Horner campaigned as an education leader and advocate for teachers but failed to follow through on these promises.

*Horner said he wants to bring urgency, accountability, and quality to education in North Carolina and consistently campaigned as an education advocate. **Horner, whose wife is a teacher, campaigned on teacher pay and said “we need to listen to teachers, but criticized the teacher rally and failed to follow through with votes. Horner sponsored a bill to pay teachers for advanced degrees but failed to push it across the finish line and supported a budget that did not include pay bumps for teachers with advanced degrees. Horner has made conflicting statements about teacher pay and has advocated for higher teacher pay but has also criticized teachers who have rallied for more funding and voted for budgets that did not provided adequate funding for the education system. Horner was the only member to vote against a bill that would limit class size. Horner was the primary sponsor of a bill requiring school districts to repeal discipline policies that warned about racial disparities to align with views held under the Trump Administration.***

Horner said he wants to bring urgency, accountability, and quality to education in North Carolina and consistently campaigned as an education advocate.

Horner served on the Nash Rocky Mount Public Schools Board for fourteen years. “Horner served on the board for 14 years. “Very clearly the needs are there,” Horner said. “The economy has presented the perfect timing.” “The borrowers today will look like very smart people tomorrow,” he added.” (The Nashville Graphic, 9/25/19)

Horner called quality education the “key to sustained success in the state.” “Quality education is key to the sustained success of our state,” Horner said in a statement. “Our rural communities face completely different challenges than our metropolitan areas and that's why is was so important to hear their perspective.” (Spring Hope Enterprise & The Bailey News, 4/25/19)

Horner expressed his desire to “bring urgency and accountability” to preparing students when appointed as the co-chairman of the Senate’s education committee. “Second-term state Sen. Rick Horner will take a lead role in shaping policy for North Carolina public schools as co-chairman of the Senate’s education committee. Horner, R-Nash, joins Sens. Deanna Ballard, R-Watauga, and Jerry Tillman, R-Randolph, in chairing the Committee on Education and Higher Education. Senate leader Phil Berger announced the appointment on Thursday. “This is the opportunity of a lifetime for me to substantially affect education policy in our state,” Horner said in a Thursday evening statement. “I'm looking forward to working for and with the school districts across this state to bring urgency and accountability to this critically important but very basic task of preparing our young people to run the place.” (The Wilson Daily Times, 1/12/19)

Horner called quality education the “key to sustained success in the state.” “Quality education is key to the sustained success of our state,” Horner said in a statement. “Our rural communities face completely different challenges than our metropolitan areas and that's why is was so important to hear their perspective.” (Spring Hope Enterprise & The Bailey News, 4/25/19)

During his 2017 campaign, Horner said that North Carolina should become number one in education in the Southeast. “In describing education as a priority, Horner points out that he is married to a teacher, spent nine years on a school board and is currently on the board of trustees of Wilson Community College. North Carolina’s teacher pay has come under fire in recent years, and state education funding ranks second to last in the Southeast, based on National Education Association data. Horner pointed to recent teacher pay raises as a step in the right direction and said he thinks lawmakers can take money from other states programs and funnel it to education. “I don't think anyone in North Carolina wants to be average in anything,” Horner said. “Our goal should be to reach number one in the Southeast and number 20 in the nation in teacher pay and not stop until we get there. ...

When I was on the school board, I could always find money and ask the county to match it. Most people will go along with that." (The News & Observer, 10/3/16)

Horner, whose wife is a teacher, campaigned on teacher pay and said, "we need to listen to teachers," but criticized the teacher rally and failed to follow through with votes.

Horner's wife is a teacher. "Rick has been married to Patricia Harbaugh Horner (ECU) of Westfield, New Jersey for 31 years. Patricia is a second-grade teacher at Wells Elementary in Wilson." (NC State Senate, retrieved [11/21/19](#))

Horner said, "we need to listen to teachers." "We just need to listen to teachers a little more and for people to do a little more. He spoke about needing teachers in the classrooms and not keeping vacancies. There's a lot of stuff, he said. People in Raleigh are trying; they just don't know." (NC Policy Watch, [1/30/17](#))

Horner insinuated that the teacher rally had a low turnout. "N.C. Sen. Rick Horner, R-Nash, said anything that gets folks talking about education is a good thing. "I hate the kids missed school," said Horner, who served several terms on the Nash-Rocky Mount Board of Education. Educators definitely were able to express their concerns and discontent, but the overall participation was underwhelming, Horner said. "We have 100,000 educators and 10,000 showed up," Horner said. "If this were a primary (election), they'd call it low turnout." Horner said there's been a lot of misunderstandings between lawmakers and educators. "Not everyone up here was screaming bloody murder," Horner said." (Rocky Mount Telegram, 5/17/18)

The 2019 Republican budget would give teachers an average raise of just 3.9 percent over the next two years. "Budget writers say teachers would get an average raise of 3.9% over the next two years. The raises would start July 1. In the [Senate budget, the average teacher raise](#) would have been 3.5% over two years. In the House, teachers would have gotten an average raise of 4.6%, but the pay scale wouldn't change until Jan. 1." (News & Observer, [6/25/19](#); H966, vetoed, [6/28/19](#))

Gov. Cooper's budget included an 8.5 percent raise for teachers. "Cooper spokesman Ford Porter said that the governor proposed months ago an 8.5 percent teacher raise over two years, but GOP lawmakers have not responded. The governor remains willing to work to find a compromise that can pass and he can sign, Porter said, but legislative Republicans must come to the negotiating table." (WRAL, [10/8/19](#))

Horner sponsored a bill to pay teachers for advanced degrees but failed to push it across the finish line and supported a budget that did not include pay bumps for teachers with advanced degrees.

The 2019 Republican budget would not include pay bumps for teachers with advanced degrees. "It doesn't include the House's proposal to restore extra pay for teachers who have advanced degrees. The compromise budget, lawmakers said, is focused on giving raises to highly experienced teachers after previous budgets focused more on raises for beginning teachers." (News & Observer, [6/25/19](#); H966, vetoed, [6/28/19](#))

Horner sponsored S28, a bipartisan bill to pay teachers more for advanced degrees. "Some North Carolina teachers might get rewarded with extra money for their master's degree after state lawmakers cut off the benefit to educators who weren't already in the program. Senate Bill 28 filed Wednesday would restore master's pay for teachers as long as they get their degree in the subject that they're teaching. The bill has quickly gotten bipartisan support as a way to recognize teachers while being more narrowly tailored than what was previously offered. "It can definitely have some good impact and I don't think the fiscal impact will be large," said Sen. Danny Britt, a Republican from Robeson County, and one of the bill's two primary sponsors. Sen. Rick Horner, a Nash County Republican who was

recently named Senate Education Committee co-chairman, is the bill's other primary sponsor.” (News & Observer, [2/7/19](#); S28, referred to the Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate, [2/7/19](#))

Horner was the only member to vote against a bill that would limit class size.

➤ **NOTE:** H13, signed by Gov. Cooper [4/27/17](#).

Horner was the only member that voted against a bill that would limit class sizes because he “wanted them to leave the allotments alone and work on class overcrowding.” “Other legislation zoomed through the General Assembly this week, including House Bill 13. Martin was a co-sponsor of that bill to limit class sizes, which was filed shortly after the session started in January and moved to the Senate in February with no opposition. On Tuesday, it was put up for a vote among senators and Horner's was the lone vote cast against it. "I think we've got to do something to get class size down, but we have to do it reasonably," he said, noting that the filing of a report was the only repercussion for failing to meet the improved student-teacher ratio. "That is not what I wanted. I wanted them to leave the allotments alone and work on class overcrowding. I wanted to address it from the top down with over 800 classes in the state over the 24-student mandate." Despite objection from the former Nash-Rocky Mount school board member, the bill passed and was signed into law Thursday by Gov. Roy Cooper.” (The Wilson Daily Times, 4/29/17)

Horner was the primary sponsor of a bill requiring school districts to repeal discipline policies that warned about racial disparities.

➤ **NOTE:** S476, Conference Committee Appointed [10/31/19](#)

Horner was the primary sponsor of S476, a bill requiring school districts to repeal discipline policies based on guidance from the Obama Administration that warned about racial disparities in suspensions. “The state Senate voted 21-16 along party lines last week to pass a bill requiring school districts to repeal discipline policies based on guidance from the Obama Administration that warned about racial disparities in suspensions. The bill requires districts to replace those discipline policies with new ones based on "local standards of conduct," although they can also readopt their current policies. "It requires school districts to reset their discipline policies in light of the fact that the ruling in 2014 from the Education Department has been rescinded by the current administration," Sen. Rick Horner, a Wilson Republican and one of the bill's primary sponsors, said. "All it requires is that local boards repeal the policies based on criteria that is no longer valid. "It gives the local boards complete leeway if they want to implement the policies that were in place." (The News & Record, 4/26/19; S476, Conference Committee Appointed [10/31/19](#))

Horner said S476 could be described as a reset of discipline policies in the state’s public schools. “Sen. Rick Horner, R-Nash, said Senate Bill 476 can be described as a reset of discipline policies in the state’s public schools. On Jan. 8, 2014, the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education issued guidance to public K-12 schools about administering school discipline without discriminating on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Local school districts were required to implement rules complying with the guidance. In 2018 the ruling was reversed. Horner said the bill allows local school districts to re-evaluate disciplinary policies in light of the reversal.” (Carolina Journal, [4/11/19](#); S476, Conference Committee Appointed [10/31/19](#))

###