

North Carolina Women United

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N | W O M E N
C | U N I T E D

LEGISLATIVE
REPORT
CARD

2013
LONG
SESSION

North Carolina Women United







NC Women United (NCWU) is a coalition of progressive organizations and individuals committed to advancing public policies that support the full economic, legal and social equality of women. NCWU works to achieve its mission through legislative advocacy, community organizing, and grassroots activism.

This is a Report Card on the 2013 Long Session of the NC General Assembly. This Legislative Report Card reflects legislative priorities that are key to promoting women's equality. These priorities have been identified by NCWU's member organizations and by the 2013 NC Women's Legislative Agenda, an outgrowth of NCWU's biennial local Women's Agenda Assemblies.








The "NCWU Response" indicator reflects NCWU's position on the **legislative and/or budget status** of each legislative item. There is a process in the NCGA by which at least one legislative chamber must vote on a bill by a chosen date, known as "crossover." If a bill fails to meet crossover, the bill is "dead" for the rest of the session unless a procedural tactic brings it back. Keeping a bill from reaching crossover can also be a form of advocacy for or against a bill. For bills on this Report Card that are still "alive," legislative status will be noted as "pending." Our response, however, is our evaluation of the outcome of the bill as it relates to the full equality of women. For example, if we wanted the bill to pass and it did not, that is a "negative" for this session. For more information, visit www.ncwu.org.




To see the text of a bill or to find the vote history for a bill, please visit www.ncleg.net.






NCWU
Response:  positive  negative   mixed


Increase Economic Self-Sufficiency	Legislative Status	Budget Status	NCWU Response
<p>Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) - Lawmakers eliminated the EITC—which is a pro-work, anti-poverty tax credit that goes to people that work but earn low wages. NC is the only state to do this in nearly 30 years; can be restored in Short Session. <i>HB 82</i></p>	Enacted	N/A	
<p>Maintaining Child Care Subsidies - Lawmakers eliminated and replaced \$5.1 million in state funding for child care subsidies with federal block grant funding. The impact is budget neutral—failing to dedicate state funding to make progress against the 30,000-plus waiting list of families seeking affordable child care. <i>SB 402</i></p>	Enacted	Can be restored in FY15 budget during the Short Session	
<p>Restoring GF Appropriations to the NC Housing Trust Fund - Lawmakers reduced state funding for the Housing Trust Fund by nearly \$900,000 down to \$7 million at a time when 1 in 2 Tarheel households pay at least 30 percent of their income on rent. <i>SB 402</i></p>	Enacted	Can be restored in FY15 budget during the Short Session	
<p>Enhancing Support for Workforce Training - Lawmakers eliminated the Displaced Homemaker Program¹ (which provides important workforce development services to people with barriers to self-sufficiency) and also eliminated state funding for the Women’s Business Center (which provides entrepreneurs with technical and financial assistance). Lawmakers provided \$4.8 million for the NC Back to Work program (which helps unemployed workers get training and credentials for jobs in high-growth industries). <i>SB 402</i></p>	Enacted	Subject to the FY15 budget process in the Short Session	
<p>Expanding Work-Family Policies - Lawmakers “killed” the Equal Pay Act, sending it to the Rules Committee rather than allowing members to vote on this legislation that can expand women’s and family economic security. <i>HB 602</i>. Lawmakers also failed to take up the Caregivers Relief Act that would provide workplace support for caregivers who provide direct care to certain family members where such leave is not afforded by federal law. <i>HB 99/SB535</i> Both are still eligible for consideration in the Short Session.</p>	Pending; still eligible for consideration	N/A	
<p>Support for Safety Net Programs during Weak Recovery - Lawmakers quickly passed legislation to reduce both benefits and eligibility for the state’s unemployment insurance system. This bill also rendered NC ineligible to receive federal unemployment benefits for its long-term unemployed citizens; NC was the first state to lose this funding. <i>HB4</i></p>	Enacted	N/A	

¹ This funding was diverted to the NC Domestic Violence Fund.

Expand/Protect Access to Health Care	Legislative Status	Budget Status	NCWU Response
<p>Ensure the Effective Implementation of the Affordable Care Act - Lawmakers blocked the Medicaid expansion and the establishment of a state-run health insurance marketplace. Expansion would have provided coverage to approximately 250,000 more NC women and would have been fully funded by the federal government for the first three years (at funding level of 90% in subsequent years). A state-run health insurance marketplace would have created jobs and provided the state more freedom to tailor a marketplace to its citizens' needs. <i>SB4</i></p>	Enacted	N/A	
<p>Protect Access to Reproductive Health Care - Lawmakers added provisions to an unrelated bill to: set new, potentially overly burdensome, standards for clinics providing abortion care; prohibit women from obtaining abortion coverage through the federal health exchange; strip comprehensive health care from city/county employees; and allow <i>any</i> health care clinic employee to refuse participation in abortion services without any referral or exception. <i>SB353</i></p>	Enacted	NCGA allocated \$100,000 for extra clinic inspectors but awaiting federal funding	
<p>Protect Access to Reproductive Health Care - Lawmakers allocated \$250,000 in taxpayer money to fund fake clinics ("Crisis Pregnancy Centers") that regularly use deceptive tactics and provide misinformation to women seeking medical care and information. <i>SB402</i></p>	Enacted	Subject to FY15 budget process in the Short Session	
<p>Reproductive Justice - After years of debate, lawmakers set aside \$10 million dollars to compensate victims of the state's forced sterilization program. Out of the 7,600 NC citizens believed to have been involuntarily sterilized between 1929 and 1974, it is estimated that 1,500 are still alive and eligible to apply for compensation. <i>SB402</i></p>	Enacted	Subject to FY15 budget process in the Short Session	
<p>Protect Healthy Living Curriculum in Comprehensive Sex Education - Lawmakers introduced legislation to require public health curricula include scientifically inaccurate information on the safety of abortion care. <i>SB132</i></p>	Enacted	N/A	
<p>Provide State Licensure and Regulation of Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) - Lawmakers failed to act on legislation to provide more options for women who choose to give birth in out-of-hospital settings by licensing and decriminalizing CPMs; this is a critical safety issue for women who want to expand their birthing options. <i>SB106 and SB107</i></p>	Pending	N/A	
<p>Increase Home and Community Care Block Grant Funding - Lawmakers cut the funding to this grant by \$137,000, despite a waiting list of thousands for the services provided in the umbrella Social Services grant. Cuts were also made to the State In-Home Services, Adult Day Care, adult protective services and guardianship funds. <i>SB402</i></p>	Enacted	Can be restored in FY15 budget during the Short Session	

End Violence Against Women	Legislative Status	Budget Status	NCWU Response
<p>Clarify and Enhance Statutes relating to Violence Against Women - Lawmakers introduced legislation to amend statutes: on breaking and entering, making it a felony to do so with the intent to terrorize or injure the occupant (<i>HB25</i>); on civil no-contact orders to require hearings at 10 and 30 days for granted and denied orders, respectively (<i>SB409</i>); that would allow consent Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO) to be enforceable if both parties consent to terms of DVPO, without requiring the findings of a court (<i>HB209</i>); and to provide notification to the District Attorney's office if a DV abuser fails to complete the abuser treatment program or otherwise does not follow court orders to comply with judgment. If the defendant is on probation, the probation officer is notified (<i>HB24</i>). They also renewed legislation to support a DV Fatality Review Team in Mecklenburg County and create ones in Alamance, Pitt and Wake Counties. These teams provide useful data on DV fatalities that can help prevent future fatalities. <i>HB456 and SB288</i></p>	Enacted	N/A	
<p>Support Legislation that would Address and End Human Trafficking - Lawmakers introduced the Safe Harbor Bill, protecting all minors from prosecution of charges of prostitution. The bill also places higher penalties on those soliciting prostitution from a minor (<i>SB683</i>); and legislation to require all sex trafficking offenders to register with the state; this bill was watered down to exclude labor traffickers (<i>SB122</i>).</p>	Enacted	N/A	
<p>Support Legislation that would Address and End Human Trafficking - Lawmakers introduced legislation to create a state-level Human Trafficking Commission. The NC Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NCCASA) was a cofounder of the 2004 NC Coalition Against Human Trafficking and helped develop the language for legislation to create this commission. Lawmakers fail to appoint NCCASA to the Commission, potentially omitting a crucial perspective to ending human trafficking which includes a comprehensive approach to addressing conditions that create vulnerabilities to trafficking in addition to addressing needs for victim services and harsher punishments for purchasers of trafficking victims. NCWU feels that while creating a commission is a good first step, this omission is a significant negative. <i>SB683</i></p>	Enacted	N/A	

Increase Civic Participation and Equality	Legislative Status	Budget Status	NCWU Response
<p>Protect voter rights and build a strong, healthy civic life - Lawmakers introduced sweeping election law changes, including: requiring very specific voter ID; ending pre-voter registration for 16 and 17-year olds; cutting early voting period by 7 days; eliminating same-day registration, straight ticket voting, and out-of-precinct voting; and allowing for more partisan poll watchers and challenges to voters. Many of these provisions disproportionately affect women and people of color. <i>HB589</i></p>	Enacted	\$1 million appropriation for each year of the biennium to provide free voter IDs	
<p>Prevent racial profiling and protect civil rights - Lawmakers introduced legislation to ban international law such as Sharia Law and Jewish law in NC courts, despite no instances of this occurring in NC courts and concerns about the constitutionality of such a law (<i>HB522</i>); to ban sex-selection abortion, imposing heavy fines on physicians found to perform an abortion based on the gender of the fetus. This bill creates a wide net of who can bring a lawsuit against an abortion provider believed to have participated in such a procedure. There has been no evidence sex-selection abortions have been occurring in NC, and this law may encourage racial profiling by physicians of women from cultures where sex-selection abortion is known to be an issue (<i>HB716</i>); and to repeal the state's Racial Justice Act, a landmark piece of legislation that in 2009 made NC the first state to pass a law to address racial bias in capital punishment cases (<i>SB306</i>).</p>	Enacted	N/A	
<p>Prevent racial profiling and protect civil rights - Legislators introduced the RECLAIM NC Act, an Arizona-type immigration enforcement measure that, among other things, would require proof of immigration status whenever asked by law enforcement. The potential for racial profiling and impact on the civil rights of all living in North Carolina are troubling. <i>HB786</i></p>	Enacted (state study looking at potential impacts of certain provisions)	N/A	
<p>Ensure a sound basic education - Lawmakers passed a budget that underfunds public education, resulting in: teaching workforce layoffs; stagnant teacher pay; increased classroom sizes; disincentives for teacher improvement; and cuts to vital pre-education programs. There is also a transfer of public funds to private schools in the form of a voucher program beginning in FY2015. <i>SB402</i></p>	Enacted	Can be restored in FY15 budget during the Short Session	
<p>Support policies that protect all North Carolinians from discriminatory employment practices - Lawmakers failed to act on legislation to include sexual orientation and gender identity in non-discrimination policies for state/teacher employment (<i>HB647</i>) and state employment; this protection is needed and overdue (<i>HB429</i>).</p>	Pending	N/A	

<p>Enhance open, ethical government - Lawmakers introduced sweeping election law changes, including: ending NC's pioneering "Stand By Your Ad" law; reducing campaign money disclosure requirements; increasing the amount of corporate money allowed to flow into campaigns; raising campaign contribution limits; and immediately ending public financing options for campaigns. <i>HB589</i></p>	<p>Enacted</p>	<p>N/A</p>	
<p>Budget and Tax Policy Section</p>	<p>Legislative Status</p>	<p>Budget Status</p>	<p>NCWU Response</p>
<p>Lawmakers approved a budget that falls far short of what's needed in several areas of the budget—education, in particular—to meet the needs of thriving children, families, and communities. This is in-part due to lawmakers' decision to pass a tax plan that drains available revenues that can be invested in the building blocks of a strong economy. In addition to drastically reducing revenues, the tax plan shifts taxes away from the wealthiest towards everyone else. Further rate reductions are scheduled over the next few years, but lawmakers can stop these further cuts in the Short Session.</p>	<p>Enacted</p>	<p>Can be restored during the Short Session</p>	