



# 2018 Session in Review

Where Legislators Stood on North Carolina's Jobs Agenda

# 2018 Session in Review

As the state's leading business advocacy group, the NC Chamber is relentlessly focused on growth. For us, that means listening to your concerns about the issues impeding your progress, identifying solutions and policies that will spur economic development and job creation, then fighting for those ideas at the North Carolina General Assembly.

Each year, our government affairs team works with our volunteer leadership and members to develop the Jobs Agenda, which details the key pieces of legislation we'll be watching in the year ahead.

After the Jobs Agenda is delivered to each lawmaker at the beginning of session, we continue to advocate for these and other policies, taking special note of the lawmakers who go out of their way to introduce, support and pass pro-growth bills. When legislators adjourn, we count the votes and name that year's Jobs Champions in an annual publication called How They Voted.

But North Carolina's political and legislative landscapes are changing, and the 2018 short session was a little different.

For example, even though it's long been tradition for each political party to outline their policy priorities in the state's budget, lawmakers have recently been rolling increasingly more bills into the final budget. This effectively ensures that a legislator could take one "easier" vote on the budget, often along party lines, instead of a number of votes that might have been more politically challenging or revealing.

And because there's a vast range of different policies in the budget, the NC Chamber has never counted or scored it in this publication. While we would of course prefer to hold lawmakers accountable to NC's job creators by detailing every vote on business policies, as we've done in the past, we quickly realized that a 2018 How They Voted would only share a fraction of legislators' actions this year.

As such, it's time for our traditional How They Voted to change. Before the 2019 legislative session begins, we'll be soliciting input from our members and other stakeholders to determine the most effective way to hold lawmakers accountable to the business community. In the meantime, however, there were still some legislators this session who took brave votes, crossed party lines or championed the policies we need to keep the state moving. This special edition of How They Voted will recognize those leaders, review our accomplishments and look forward to the future.

When we develop each year's Jobs Agenda, we start with the framework established by North Carolina Vision 2030: a forward-looking, data-driven and business-led plan to continue our state's unparalleled growth. Developed in 2012 with input from NC Chamber members and put into action under the guidance of the NC Chamber Foundation starting in 2013, North Carolina Vision 2030 focuses on the four key issue areas identified by our members as those most important for our state's continued economic competitiveness.



#### **Education & Talent Supply**

North Carolina must develop and maintain a first-rate, leading talent pipeline by aligning education and workforce development systems that are effective, agile, accountable and flexible, and that consistently produce a competitive, diverse, world-class workforce.



#### **Competitive Business Climate**

While North Carolina is appearing at or near the top of an increasing number of noteworthy business climate rankings, we cannot be complacent as other states are constantly working to be more competitive. North Carolina must continually strive to position its business climate more competitively in order to attract new investment and create and retain more good jobs for North Carolinians.



#### **Entrepreneurship & Innovation**

North Carolina must consistently foster innovation and entrepreneurship that leads to capital formation, investment, employment and good jobs. Creating the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship necessary to be a world-class jobs leader will require a high degree of economic freedom with minimum government interference, regulation and taxes.



#### **Infrastructure & Growth Leadership**

North Carolina must identify ways to continue investing in the development and maintenance of sound physical infrastructure, including transportation (roads, railroads and ports), water and sewer, energy and broadband/advanced communications to meet the demands of population and economic growth.



# Key Victories

## Senate Bill 711 NC Farm Act of 2018

Contributing more than \$84 billion to the economy every year and employing 17% of our state's workforce, the agricultural industry has long been integral to North Carolina's growth and success. North Carolina's farmers and agricultural businesses deserve legislation that supports their continued growth and protects against troubling legal practices, which is why we successfully encouraged the General Assembly to override Governor Cooper's veto and pass this important bill.



Sen. Brent  
Jackson



Sen. Don  
Davis



Sen. Michael  
Woodard

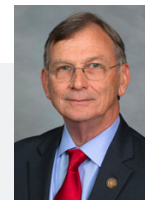


Rep. Jimmy  
Dixon

*Thank you to Sens. Brent Jackson, Don Davis, Michael Woodard and Rep. Jimmy Dixon for standing up for North Carolina's farmers and agricultural businesses!*

## House Joint Resolutions 1099 and 1100 Industrial Commission Appointments

North Carolina needs a workers' compensation system that works for injured employees and their employers, which is why parties with vested interests on all sides of the workers' compensation system and leaders from both political parties have worked in collaboration to foster a fair and balanced system. While the appointment of Myra Griffin to the North Carolina Industrial Commission was supported by the broad-based business community, Robert Harris' nomination would have sharply shifted the balance of the Commission. The ramifications of this shift on employees, employers and the state's overall competitiveness would have been steep, as it could have unraveled the progress made in recent years to restore balance in a no-fault system. It is for that reason that the NC Chamber made the unprecedented decision to oppose his nomination.



Sen. Bill  
Rabon



Rep. David  
Lewis

*Thanks to Sen. Bill Rabon and Rep. David Lewis for understanding the importance of the right advocates in each seat on the Industrial Commission and standing up for North Carolina's employers.*

## Senate Bill 622 Business Corporation Act Revisions

If North Carolina is to remain competitive in the years to come, the state must continue attracting and retaining corporate headquarters. Senate Bill 622 modernized the North Carolina Business Corporation Act, making North Carolina's already strong business climate even more business friendly. The law's provisions also make North Carolina more competitive with Delaware, a state known for its favorable corporate law.

*Thanks to these leaders who championed this important legislation.*



Sen. Tamara  
Barringer



Sen. Paul  
Newton



Rep. Chuck  
McGrady

# Key Victories

## Bipartisan Vote

### Senate Bill 470

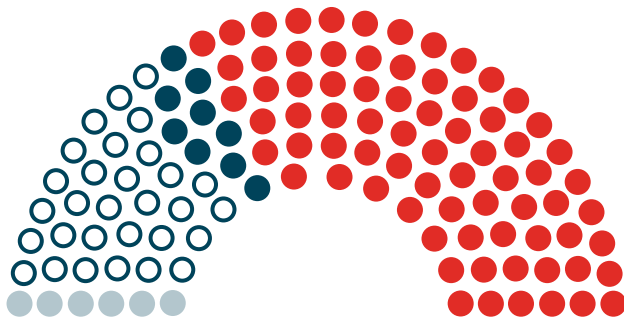
### Personal Injury Bankruptcy Trust Claims

For far too long, personal injury attorneys have taken advantage of North Carolina's legal system, peddling frivolous lawsuits at the expense of businesses across the state. Senate Bill 470 puts an end to some of those abuses by establishing transparency and fairness in North Carolina's costly civil liability and bankruptcy trust system.

This *bipartisan* legislation is a step in the right direction to strengthen North Carolina's legal climate – a necessity if the state is to continue attracting and retaining investment.

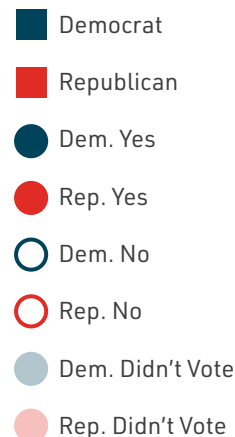
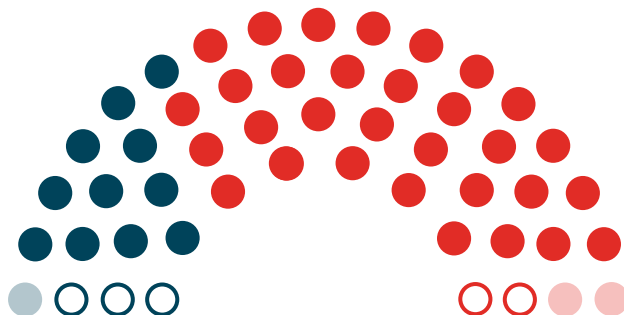
#### House Vote Count

78-30



#### Senate Vote Count

42-5



## Thank You

Sen. Dan **Blue**  
Sen. Ben **Clark**  
Sen. Don **Davis**  
Sen. Joel **Ford**  
Sen. Jeff **Jackson**  
Sen. Michael **Lee**  
Sen. Paul **Lowe**  
Sen. Floyd **McKissick**  
Sen. Gladys **Robinson**  
Sen. Erica **Smith**  
Sen. Terry **Van Duyn**  
Sen. Mike **Woodard**  
Rep. Gale **Adcock**  
Rep. Chaz **Beasley**  
Rep. Mary Ann **Black**  
Rep. Duane **Hall**  
Rep. Howard **Hunter**  
Rep. Ken **Goodman**  
Rep. Holly **Grange**  
Rep. Rodney **Moore**  
Rep. Brian **Turner**  
Rep. Michael **Wray**

# Key Victories

## Bipartisan Vote

### Senate Bill 758 The Build NC Bond Act of 2018

As business' connection to the global economy, North Carolina's transportation infrastructure networks are integral components of our state's competitive future. It is critical that these networks have the funds needed to make desperately needed improvements. Senate Bill 758 makes that possible by creating an alternative financing mechanism that will allow NCDOT to tackle North Carolina's most pressing transportation infrastructure projects.

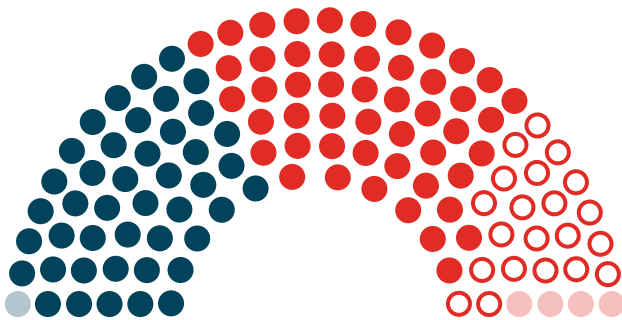
This bill passed with overwhelming bipartisan support: a major victory for North Carolina.



While SB 758 passed with overwhelming bipartisan support, **Senator Kathy Harrington** and **Representative John Torbett** carried the legislation through the North Carolina General Assembly and fought for its passage. **Thank you!**

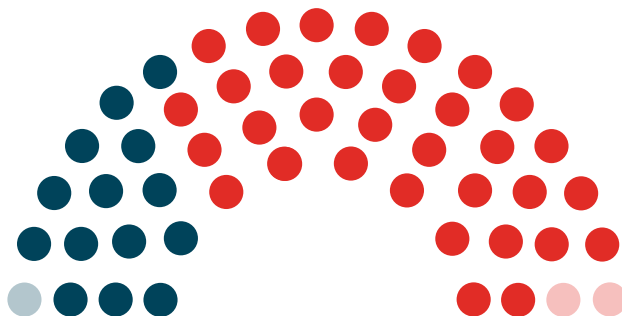
#### House Vote Count

94-21



#### Senate Vote Count

47-0



- Democrat
- Republican
- Dem. Yes
- Rep. Yes
- Dem. No
- Rep. No
- Dem. Didn't Vote
- Rep. Didn't Vote

# 2019 Legislative Agenda

*The following is an abbreviated version of the NC Chamber's 2019 legislative agenda.  
For the full agenda, please visit [ncchamber.com/agenda](https://www.ncchamber.com/agenda)*

## Education & Talent Supply

- Maintain strong academic standards that prepare our students for a competitive workforce
- Encourage 75% enrollment rate for eligible children in the North Carolina Pre-K program to help meet 3rd-grade reading proficiency goals
- Support both college and career advising programs, including the Career and College Promise Program
- Advocate for apprenticeships and other career and technical education
- Coordinate with the NC Community College System to expand access to training and education, examine funding methodologies and explore regionalization
- Support efforts to recruit high-quality teachers, especially methods inspired by the private sector

## Competitive Business Climate

- Cap, reduce and eliminate the state franchise tax over the next five years
- Decouple from the Internal Revenue Code section 163(j) limit deduction on interest expense and reverse the 2018 franchise tax expansion on small businesses
- Support association health plans and value-driven health care
- Oppose legislation that expands the number of health insurance mandates imposed on NC businesses
- Continue to oppose the elimination of Certificate of Need (CON) while working to advance CON reforms that reduce cost to the healthcare system and business
- Advance tort and civil liability reforms, especially those that provide certainty and protection from frivolous nuisance lawsuits
- Defeat legislation that erodes balanced reforms to workers' compensation laws and fight to protect balance on the North Carolina Industrial Commission

## Infrastructure and Growth Leadership

- Advocate for policy recommendations outlined in the NC Chamber Foundation's regulatory competitiveness and water studies
- Streamline the contested case process to promote efficiency and predictability for businesses to simplify and accelerate project delivery
- Identify additional, diversified revenue sources to stabilize infrastructure investments, especially recommendations in the NC Chamber Foundation's transportation study

## Entrepreneurship and Innovation

- Work to establish a research and development grant program for early-stage and start-up businesses
- Promote policies that encourage angel investing and venture capital investment
- Identify and promote qualified opportunity zones and general investment in non-urban and distressed areas



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