

The pace of things has been slow during the opening days of the 2007 session of the North Carolina General Assembly. The primary cause of the slowness is the difficulty in making committee appointments. House and Senate leaders continue to work on the number and composition of committees, and it could be another week or so before this work is completed. I will report to you promptly when committee appointments are announced.

**SB 26 (= HB 25) - Funds for Healthy North Carolinians** were introduced this week by Sen. Bill Purcell (D-Laurinburg) and Rep. Jennifer Weiss (D-Cary). This legislation would appropriate \$4.3 million for each of the next two fiscal years to support one full-time professional in each county to work on public health issues of physical inactivity, poor nutrition and tobacco use.

Note as well that the General Assembly's Fiscal Research staff will conduct a joint House and Senate briefing on February 7 on mental health issues. The briefing will be in room 643 of the Legislative Office Building. This will no doubt be discussion of funding priorities for mental health initiatives, but I will monitor this briefing to determine if **mental health parity** is addressed.

That should do it for this snowy morning. Things will accelerate briskly when committees begin deliberating, and I shall keep you advised of all developments.

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