

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE LEGISLATIVE BUILDING
16 W. Jones Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-1030



January 28, 2016

Senator Tom Apodaca
Chairman
Legislative Research Commission
North Carolina Senate
16 W. Jones Street, Room 2010
Raleigh, NC 27601-2808

Representative David Lewis
Chairman
Legislative Research Commission
N.C. House of Representatives
16 W. Jones Street, Room 2301
Raleigh, NC 27601-2808

Dear Senator Apodaca and Representative Lewis:

Pursuant to G.S. 120-30.13, Senator Apodaca has been designated as the Senate Cochair of the 2015-2016 Legislative Research Commission ("Commission" or "LRC"). Representative Lewis has been designated as the House Cochair of the Commission.

As you prepare your agenda for the Commission, pursuant to G.S. 120-30.17, we authorize the Commission to appoint Study Committees to study the matters outlined in this letter. Each of you shall serve as an ex officio member of each Study Committee. The Cochairs and appointees to each Committee are also identified. Please restrict each Study Committee to a maximum of four meetings unless additional meetings are pre-approved by our offices.

Unless directed otherwise in this letter, the Commission may make an interim report of the recommendations of its Study Committees, including recommended legislation, to the 2016 Session of the 2015 General Assembly and shall make a final report to the 2017 General Assembly. Committees that are required to or choose to submit a report for the 2016 Regular Session of the 2015 General Assembly must submit their reports to the Commission on or before April 15, 2016. Final reports are due to the Commission on or before December 16, 2016.

Authorized Joint Study Committees

Committee on Access to Public Lands

The LRC Committee on Access to Public Lands shall examine the ways in which the public land management plans affect opportunities to engage in outdoor recreational activities, including, but not limited to, hiking, horseback riding, boating, sport shooting and archery, bird watching and wildlife watching, camping, swimming, hunting, trapping, and fishing and make recommendations for increasing the public's opportunities to access public land for those purposes.

Senate Members		House Members	
Sen. Apodaca	Ex Officio	Rep. Lewis	Ex Officio
Sen. Newton	Chair	Rep. Dixon	Chair
Sen. McGinnis		Rep. Malone	
Sen. Brent Jackson		Rep. Presnell	
Sen. Rabon		Rep. McGrady	
Sen. Waddell		Rep. Willingham	

Committee on Savings Reserve Account

The LRC Committee on Savings Reserve Account shall study methods for increasing the amount of funds transferred to the Savings Reserve Account. As part of its study, the Committee shall do all of the following:

1. Examine potential costs and benefits of requiring one or more of the following to be transferred periodically to the Savings Reserve Account:
 - a. Growth in General Fund revenue in excess of a benchmark growth rate.
 - b. A particular percentage or dollar amount of General Fund revenue each fiscal year.
 - c. Some portion of growth in the sources of revenue identified pursuant to subdivision of this subsection each fiscal year.
 - d. Interest earned on special funds.
2. Identify specific sources of State revenue that are especially volatile.
3. Consider how the timing of transfers to the Savings Reserve Account affects the amount transferred and the stability of the General Fund.
4. Determine the appropriate target balance of the Savings Reserve Account, if different from the goal set forth in G.S. 143C-4-2.
5. Any other matters the Commission deems relevant to its efforts to increase the amount of funds in the Savings Reserve Account.

The Committee shall submit its report to the Commission on or before April 15, 2016. The Commission shall report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the 2016 Regular Session of the 2015 General Assembly.

Senate Members		House Members	
Sen. Apodaca	Ex Officio	Rep. Lewis	Ex Officio
Sen. Brent Jackson	Chair	Rep. Dollar	Chair
Sen. Brown		Rep. McGrady	
Sen. Harrington		Rep. Arp	
Sen. Rucho		Rep. Stam	
Sen. Clark		Rep. Richardson	

Committee on Municipal Service Districts

The LRC Committee on Municipal Services Districts shall study the feasibility of authorizing property owners within a municipal service district to petition for removal from that municipal service district. The Committee may consider any issues relevant to this study.

The Committee shall submit its report to the Commission on or before April 15, 2016. The Commission shall report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the 2016 Regular Session of the 2015 General Assembly.

Senate Members		House Members	
Sen. Apodaca	Ex Officio	Rep. Lewis	Ex Officio
Sen. Wade	Chair	Rep. Davis	Chair
Sen. Rabon		Rep. Robinson	
Sen. Hartsell		Rep. Hardister	
Sen. Wells		Rep. Blust	
Sen. McKissick		Rep. Terry	

Committee on Homeless Youth, Foster Care and Dependency

The LRC Committee on Homeless Youth, Foster Care and Dependency shall study the presence of, and issues facing, homeless juveniles in North Carolina, along with related issues of juvenile and family law pertaining to abuse, neglect, dependency, and foster care in the State. In conducting the study, the Committee may consider:

1. Actions that can be taken to address the need of homeless juveniles for appropriate shelter, access to medical care, and other necessary supports, and to reduce the homeless juvenile population in North Carolina.
2. Current state law affecting homeless juveniles, and approaches taken by other states and federal law to address issues facing homeless juveniles.
3. Factors that impact juvenile homelessness, including, but not limited to, abuse, neglect, dependency, and foster care determinations.
4. The State’s current laws regarding juvenile guardianship and the impact of any federal laws on the issues of juvenile guardianship.

5. The manner of supervision, or lack thereof, in the state's current system governing juvenile guardianship.
6. Any other issues the Committee deems relevant.

Senate Members		House Members	
Sen. Apodaca	Ex Officio	Rep. Lewis	Ex Officio
Sen. Barringer	Chair	Rep. Stevens	Chair
Sen. Tucker		Rep. Bryan	
Sen. Soucek		Rep. Jordan	
Sen. Bryant		Rep. Pendleton	
Sen. Robinson		Rep. Lucas	

Committee on Regulatory and Rate Issues in Insurance

The Committee shall study the equity of property insurance rate making in North Carolina. In so doing, the committee may (but is not limited to) review the feasibility of making property insurance data available to the public, reviewing roles and responsibilities of the N.C. Insurance Underwriting Association, reviewing consent to rate practices, catastrophe modeling and other issue the Committee deems appropriate.

The Committee may also examine regulatory and insurance issues associated with challenge and aerial courses operating within North Carolina, including:

1. Whether any counties or a city in the State and/or federal law regulates challenge or aerial adventure courses and the content of any such ordinances.
2. Types of insurance coverage recommended for challenge and aerial adventure courses and the costs and availability of such coverage.
3. Protections available under existing law to challenge course and aerial adventure industry operators and participants.
4. Costs associated with safety inspections of challenge course and aerial adventure industry equipment, gear, and operations.
5. A review of other states' laws, ordinances, and regulations for challenge and aerial adventure courses.
6. Any training requirements, certifications, and standards recommended for challenge course and aerial adventure industry employees.
7. Strategies for addressing the safe operations of challenge and aerial adventure courses.
8. Any other issues the Committee deems relevant.

Senate Members		House Members	
Sen. Apodaca	Ex Officio	Rep. Lewis	Ex Officio
Sen. Lee	Chair	Rep. Tine	Chair
Sen. Hise		Rep. Millis	
Sen. Brown		Rep. Collins	
Sen. Cook		Rep. Brawley	
Sen. Ford		Rep. Jackson	

Committee on Barriers to Small Business Access to Credit and Capital

The LRC Committee on Barriers to Small Business Access to Credit and Capital shall examine the obstacles facing small businesses in their efforts to obtain necessary capital and credit, and the impact of those barriers upon the businesses and the larger economy. As part of the study, the Committee may consider:

1. Nature and source of obstacles facing small businesses seeking capital and credit.
2. Current lending trends/data as it pertains to small North Carolina businesses.
3. Impact of these barriers on variables such as job creation and retention in North Carolina.
4. How state-chartered banks and credit unions determine credit eligibility/availability for small businesses.
5. Strategies to incentivize state-chartered banks and credit unions to open additional capital and credit opportunities.
6. Any other issues the Committee deems relevant.

The Committee shall submit its report to the Commission on or before April 15, 2016. The Commission may report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the 2016 Regular Session of the 2015 General Assembly.

Senate Members		House Members	
Sen. Apodaca	Chair; Ex Officio	Rep. Lewis	Chair; Ex Officio
Sen. Brown		Rep. Ross	
Sen. Ford		Rep. Watford	
Sen. Clark		Rep. Zachary	
Sen. Wells		Rep. R. Johnson	

We will look forward to reviewing the Commission’s report regarding the study results, as well as any recommended legislation, prior to dissolution of the Commission on January 15, 2017 pursuant to G.S. 120-30.11. Please let us know if we or our staff may be of assistance.

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,



Sen. Phil Berger
President Pro Tempore of the Senate



Rep. Tim Moore
Speaker of the House of Representatives