

Recording the Legislators' Votes for the Public

by Jim Bryan

The North Carolina General Assembly installed an electronic voting system — in the Senate in 1975 and the House in 1977 — capable of recording all roll-call votes. This step toward modernization allowed newspapers to publish occasional key votes on a few controversial bills and helped citizen and corporate lobbyists to report selected votes to their members. But neither reporters nor lobbyists had the time to wade laboriously through the files of the House and Senate principal clerks or the Legislative Library and review the hundreds of recorded votes in each session. And even though the legislature's rules required that all recorded votes "shall be open to public inspection,"* interested citizens faced numerous obstacles in tracking down a specific vote, not to mention understanding the code-like jargon of "second readings," "motions to table," and "committee substitutes."

For the first time in North Carolina, reporters, lobbyists, and citizens now have a place to turn for help. In January of this year, the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research released the first issue of "How the Legislators Voted," which reported votes in the General Assembly during the 1981 budget session (October 5-10) and the 1981 first redistricting session (October 29-30). In February 1982, the Center followed with the second issue of "How the Legislators Voted," which covered the 1982 second redistricting session (February 9-11). Modeled after similar services in the *Congressional Quarterly* and other state and regional publications like the *California Journal* and *Focus Midwest*, the N.C. Center's voting report service attempts to fill an important void.

"In the tight and clubby little world of North Carolina's legislature, accountability to the home folks is hard to come by," said *The Raleigh Times* editorial entitled "On the Record at Last." That comment followed the Center's January release, which reported the votes for each of the 170 legislators on almost 200 public bills taken during the two October sessions. The Center hopes to continue the voting report service during the third redistricting session in April and the June 1982 budget session, and on a timely basis during the regular 1983 session. As *The Raleigh Times* put it, "We hope public interest will make this venture in accountability succeed."

To understand how the report works, see the

chart that follows. Six sample votes are included to show how every legislator voted and to illustrate several important steps in the legislative process. To read the chart, first see the explanation of the bill, amendment, or motion on which the vote was taken; then find the legislator's name on the alphabetical list of the House or Senate members; and finally, if the symbol in the voting columns is not self-explanatory, refer to the "Key to Symbols" above the member list.

Before becoming law, each bill must pass three separate "readings" in both the House and Senate. The first reading occurs when the bill is introduced and sent to a committee. If the committee reports the bill "favorably," it then goes to the floor of the chamber where it was introduced for a second reading. Amendments may be offered at this point. Reading 3 occurs after a bill has passed the second reading.

Each bill *usually* faces an electronically recorded vote on the second reading (R2). Amendments offered prior to the second reading may also face a recorded vote. While the R2 vote is usually the most important vote on a given bill, it is not always the most telling. For example, look in the chart at House Bill 1392 (H 1392), the revised Appropriations Act. The division within the House and Senate on such key decisions as funding for horse arena facilities and a microelectronics center is evident only through the votes on amendments offered in each chamber *prior to* the second reading. Consequently, the legislators' votes on certain amendments to H 1392 reveal their positions on more specific issues than do their votes on the bill as a whole. Likewise, the sample redistricting votes presented here cover significant amendments to the final bills that passed in February, not the R2 vote on the bills.

Citizens and legislative analysts now have a single reference document available for roll-call votes taken in the General Assembly. "How the Legislators Voted" provides the public with a new tool for retrieving and understanding the very useful data now available in this electronic age. □

Jim Bryan, a research associate at the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research, co-authored the first two editions of "How the Legislators Voted." Copies of Number 1 (January 1982) and Number 2 (February 1982) are available for \$3.00 and \$1.00 respectively. Number 3 (on the April redistricting session) and Number 4 (on the 1982 budget session) will be released in May and July, respectively. Depending on the interest expressed in these four issues — and the cost involved — the service may be offered on a subscription basis throughout the regular 1983 session.

* Rule 20 (f) of the 1981 House Rules and Rule 25 (f) of the 1981 Senate Rules.

Explanation of Votes

KEY TO SYMBOLS

Y – Voted for (aye)
 N – Voted against (no)
 A – Absent
 X – Excused absence
 R2 – Second reading
 H – House of Representatives
 S – Senate

OCTOBER 5-10, 1981 ("BUDGET") SESSION

1. H 1390 – To Authorize the issuance of \$300 million in Clean Water Bonds for construction and improvements of wastewater treatment, collection, and water supply facilities. A statewide referendum is required before the bonds could be issued. House passed on Reading 2 (R2) 100-10. Senate passed on R2, 37-10.

H 1392 – To amend 1981-82 state budget on current operations and capital improvements. After considering nine amendments, the House passed H 1392 on R2, 106-3; the Senate considered five amendments before passing H 1392 on R2 47-0. Some key votes on Amendments (A) were:

2. House A 2/Senate A 5 – To delete funds for horse show arena facilities. House motion to table (kill) amendment passed 75-37. Senate motion to table passed 31-15.
3. House A 3 – To delete funds for Microelectronics Center. House motion to table passed 82-30. (There was no comparable Senate vote.)
4. House A 5/Senate A 3 – To allow reimbursement for six Medicaid drug prescriptions per month instead of the four-prescription limit in the bill. Effective October 1, the federal share of Medicaid costs has been reduced. Consequently, the legislature reduced several kinds of Medicaid services, including prescription drugs, as a part of the Appropriations bill (H 1392). House rejected amendment 34-78. Senate rejected amendment 10-36.

FEBRUARY 9-11, 1982 ("SECOND REDISTRICTING") SESSION

H 1 – To reapportion the North Carolina House of Representatives. This reapportionment plan had received tentative approval from the U.S. Department of Justice regarding minority representation. H 1 divided a number of counties, placing parts of a single county in separate districts.

5. House A 2/Senate A 2 – To adjust the northeast House district numbers 3, 6, 7, 9, and 22 to minimize the process of dividing counties and placing parts of a county in more than one district. House rejected amendment 32-82; Senate rejected amendment 3-38.

S 2 – To reapportion the 11 Congressional districts in North Carolina. This reapportionment plan had received tentative approval from the U.S. Department of Justice regarding minority representation. The Justice Department had rejected the Congressional plan enacted by the General Assembly in 1981.

6. House A 2 – To submit the previously-enacted 1981 House Congressional redistricting plan to the Justice Department for reconsideration, and to use the 1982 plan only if the Justice Department again rejected the 1981 plan. House adopted 54-51. A 2 was then reconsidered and deleted. (No Senate vote on this amendment.)

SENATE	1	2	3	4	5	6
ALFORD (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
ALLRED (R)	Y	N	A	A		
ALLSBROOK (D)	Y	Y	N	Y		
BAKER (R)	Y	N	N	N		
BALLENGER (R)	N	N	N	N		
BARNES (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
BOGER (R)	N	N	Y	N		
CAVANAGH (R)	N	N	Y	A		
CLARKE (D)	Y	N	N	A		
COCKERHAM (R)	N	Y	Y	A		
CREECH (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
DANIELS (D)	Y	A	A	N		
DUNCAN (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
FRYE (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
GARRISON (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
GRAY (D)	Y	N	N	A		
HANCOCK (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
HARDISON (D)	A	Y	N	N		
HARRINGTON (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
HARRIS (D)	Y	Y	N	A		
JENKINS (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
*JERNIGAN (D)	Y	Y	N	*		
JOHNSON (D)	Y	N	N	N		
JORDAN (D)	Y	Y	Y	A		
KINCAID (R)	N	N	N	N		
LAWING (D)	N	Y	N	N		
MARION (D)	Y	N	N	N		
MARVIN (D)	Y	N	N	N		
MATHIS (D)	X	X	X	N		
McDUFFIE (D)	Y	Y	Y	N		
MILLS (D)	Y	Y	N	Y		
NOBLE (D)	N	Y	N	A		
PALMER (D)	Y	Y	Y	N		
*RAND (D)	*	*	*	N		
RAUCH (D)	X	X	X	N		
RAYNOR (D)	Y	A	Y	N		
REDMAN (R)	N	N	N	A		
ROYALL (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
SMITH (R)	N	N	N	N		
SOLES (D)	Y	Y	Y	N		
SPEED (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
SWAIN (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
THOMAS, J. (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
THOMAS, R. (D)	Y	Y	Y	A		
VICKERY (D)	Y	Y	Y	N		
WALKER (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
WARD (D)	Y	Y	N	N		
WARREN (D)	Y	Y	N	Y		
WHITE (D)	Y	Y	N	Y		
WRIGHT (R)	N	N	N	N		
WYNNE (D)	Y	N	N	N		

*Jernigan replaced by Rand, A. (D) on Jan. 6, 1982

HOUSE	1	2	3	4	5	6	HOUSE	1	2	3	4	5	6
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ADAMS (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	HUNT, J. (D)	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y
ALLRAN (R)	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	†HUNT, P. (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	†
ALMOND (R)	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	HUNTER, R. (D)	X	Y	Y	N	N	Y
ANDERSON (D)	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	HUNTER, T. (D)	A	A	A	A	N	Y
BARBEE (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	HUSKINS (D)	Y			N	N	Y
BARKER (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	HUX (D)	Y	Y	A	N	Y	Y
†BARNES, A. (D)	†	†	†	†	†		JAMES (D)	Y	Y	A	N	Y	Y
BARNES, R. (D)	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	JONES (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	A
+BEALL (D)	+	+	+	+	N	N	JORDAN (D)	Y	X	N	X	N	A
BEAM (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	KAPLAN (D)	Y			N	N	Y
BEARD (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	A	Y	KEESEE (R)	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y
BELL (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	A	LACEY (R)	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y
BLACK (D)	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	A	LANCASTER (D)	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N
BLUE (D)	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	LIGON (R)	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y
BONE (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	LILLEY (D)	Y			N	N	N
BRANNAN (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	LOCKLEAR (D)	A	Y	Y	A	N	A
BRAWLEY (R)	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	LUTZ (D)	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
BRENNAN (D)	A	Y	Y	Y	N	N	MCALISTER (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
BROWN (R)	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	McDOWELL (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
BRUBAKER (R)	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	MAUNEY (D)	Y			N	N	N
BUMGARDNER (D)	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	MAVRETIC (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
BUNDY (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	+MESSER (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	+	Y
BURNLEY (R)	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	MILLER (D)	A	N	Y	N	N	Y
CHAPIN (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	MORGAN (D)	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
CHURCH (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	MUSSELWHITE (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
CLARK, D. (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	NASH (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
CLARK, W. (D)	A	N	N	Y	N	A	NESBITT (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	A	Y
COBLE (R)	Y	N	N	Y	N	A	NYE (D)	Y	A	Y	N	Y	Y
COCHRANE (R)	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	PARNELL (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
COLTON (D)	A	Y	Y	N	N	N	PAYNE (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	X
COOK (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	PLYLER (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
CRAVEN (R)	Y	N	N	Y	N	A	POOVEY (R)	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
CRAWFORD (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	A	PULLEY (D)	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	
CREECY (D)	Y	Y	A	A	N	QUINN (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	A	
DIAMONT (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	RABON (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	
EASTERLING (D)	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	RADFORD (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
ECONOMOS (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	RAMSEY (D)	Speaker			N	N	Y
EDWARDS (D)	Y	N	N	N	N	N	REDDING (R)	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y
ELLIS (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	RHODES, F. (R)	N	N	N	Y	N	Y
ENLOE (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	RHODES, T. (R)	N	Y	N	Y	A	
ETHERIDGE (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	ROBINSON (R)	Y	N	N	N	Y	A
ETHRIDGE (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	SEYMOUR (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
EVANS (D)	Y	X	X	N	Y	N	SMITH (D)	X	X	X	N	N	N
FENNER (D)	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	SPAULDING (D)	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y
FOSTER (D)	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	SPOON (R)	A	A	N	A	N	
FULCHER (D)	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	STAMEY (R)	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
FUSSELL (D)	Y	A	Y	N	N	N	TALLY (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
GAY (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	TAYLOR (D)	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N
GILLAM (D)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	TENNILLE (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	A	
GRADY (D)	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	THOMAS (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	A	
GREENWOOD (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	TISON, B. (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
GUY (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	TYSON, H. (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	A
HACKNEY (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	WARREN (D)	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N
HARRISON (D)	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	WATKINS (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
HAWORTH (D)	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	WICKER (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
HAYDEN (D)	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	WOODARD (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
HEGE (R)	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	WRIGHT (D)	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
HELMS (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N							
HIATT (R)	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y							
HIGHTOWER (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	A							
HOLMES (R)	Y	N	N	N	N	Y							
HOLT, B. (D)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N							
HOLT, C. (D)	Y	N	Y	N	Y	A							
HUGHES, C. (R)	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y							
HUGHES, J. (R)	N	N	N	Y	N	Y							

†Hunt, P. replaced by Barnes, A. (D) on December 21, 1981

+Messer replaced by Beall, C. (D) on December 12, 1981