



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

MACHELLE SANDERS  
SECRETARY

June 25, 2017

To: Kristi Jones, Governor's Chief of Staff  
From: Machelles Sanders, Secretary of DOA

RE: Senate Bill 257 Policy Concerns

Passage of Senate Bill 257 lacks responsibility and fails to realize the Governor's vision. I have concerns about the immediate and long term implications. There appears to be a lack of quality decisions and strategic insight reflected in the budget. **Passage of SB 257 will hurt vulnerable residents, the economy, and state government operations.**

#### Government Operations

- In order to plan for our future, the Department of Administration takes seriously the responsibility of **maintaining all statewide property and facilities so that our state's assets do not further deteriorate.** Sufficient funding and resources are required to ensure effective, optimal building maintenance programs. Additionally, building maintenance is required to maximize aesthetic and economic value of the state's asset portfolio. Importantly, sufficient maintenance is required to increase the health and safety of the occupants.

Many state buildings are in desperate need of repair and renovation. For example, our own Administration Building needs asbestos abatement and roof repair. **However, despite our attempts to educate leaders and share these needs, it would appear our requests fell on deaf ears.**

- We advocated for \$1.5 Million to fund a **Capitol Area Master Plan** to make smarter use of state property while we assess property needs across the board, and zero-in on the Capitol area. A Master Plan, as you know, has not been conducted in over 10 years. Master Plan funding would provide DOA the capability to make smarter, more informed decisions about the use of state property, implement space and utilization standards, as well as take a broader look at all state property **ensuring effective asset management, in the best interest of taxpayers and North Carolina's strategic outlook.**

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## Advocacy Programs

- SB 257 moves the **Human Relations Commission** from the Executive Branch to Office of Administrative Hearings as of the budget effective date. This transfer includes a 20% reduction to staffing. It is unclear how important community relations work can continue in a robust and tangible manner because of the elimination of the Director and Administrative personnel.
- The reduction to **Attorney General legal services** will have an adverse impact on the timeliness of state contract reviews, state property matter reviews, and civil actions against the Department/ State. It is expected that this reduction will also impact legal resources that assist the Commission of Indian Affairs on tribal recognition committee work and other legal matters involving American Indian issues.
- **The elimination** of the \$1.50 court fee to be transferred to the State Bar / **Legal Aid is expected to hurt vulnerable residents.** The Department's Advocacy programs work with citizens who are impacted by domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and other family disagreements that result in the need for child custody court review. **Per the Legal Aid's website, nearly 75% of their clients are women and they specifically note the network's role in assisting victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking in their efforts to seek safety and economic stability.** The client based served by the Department and its network of stakeholder grantees expect to be without the legal resources to fill these gaps in safety. Additionally, Legal Aid represents citizens involved in housing disputes such as predatory foreclosure and other housing and public discrimination – these are topics covered by the Human Relations Commission's Fair Housing law program.

Attached you will find DOA's specific 2017 priorities for Budget Conference. Thank you for your consideration.