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Senate, House Budget Agreement Provides Largest Teacher Pay Raise in North Carolina History

Raleigh, N.C. – House Speaker Thom Tillis (R-Mecklenburg) and Senate Leader Phil Berger (R-Rockingham) held a joint press conference Tuesday to announce details of the \$21.25 billion budget agreement reached between Senate and House conferees this past weekend.

The budget will provide public school educators an average seven percent raise – averaging \$3,500 per teacher. The \$282 million investment will be largest teacher pay raise in state history – moving North Carolina from 46th to 32nd in national teacher pay rankings.

It will also preserve teacher assistant positions, protect classroom funding and continue to give superintendents broad flexibility to tailor classroom spending to their districts' needs.

“Making positive and historic changes to the status quo isn’t easy – and we commend our Senate and House colleagues for their hard work, patience and perseverance in crafting a plan that provides the largest teacher pay raise in state history without raising taxes,” said Senate Leader Berger and Speaker Tillis. “Investing \$282 million in pay raises will make North Carolina competitive nationally and encourage the best and brightest teachers to make a long-term commitment to their profession, our students and our state.”

In addition to the teacher pay raise and preservation of classroom funds, the budget agreement will:

- Reform and replace an archaic 37-step teacher pay system with a six-step schedule and a transparent compensation package;
- Preserve current Medicaid eligibility;
- Provide most state employees a \$1,000 pay raise and five bonus vacation days;
- Increase pay for step-eligible Highway Patrol Troopers between five and six percent;
- Maintain funding at current levels for the state’s university system; and

- Fulfill the commitment to extend supplemental pay for teachers with Master's degrees who have completed at least one course in a graduate program as of August 1, 2013.

The budget will also boost early-career teacher pay by 14 percent over the next two years to \$35,000 – making North Carolina a leader in the Southeast and fulfilling a promise made by state leaders in February.

The full budget compromise bill will be posted to the North Carolina General Assembly website at www.ncleg.net on Wednesday.

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