

## **#MTRaleigh – Issue No. 1, Feb. 11, 2015**

Welcome to #MTRaleigh – your inside source for what’s going on in The Halls of Democracy in Raleigh and what WNC’s Senators and Representatives are up to at the General Assembly.

This is our first edition, so we’re sharing with everyone. But to keep receiving the inside news from Raleigh, you’ll need to [sign up](#) for the #MTRaleigh list.

So let’s get to it. After starting the 2015 session off on January 14 with a largely ceremonial session to elect the Speaker of the House, the General Assembly headed back to work last week. They kicked things off with...more ceremony! Gavels were handed out to committee chairmen in the House, and committee assignments were announced.

### **Committee assignments – who is doing what in Raleigh**

A lawmaker’s committee assignments can help you understand what he or she wants to do, can do (or cannot) in the legislature as well as how they rank in the political pecking order.

WNC’s most powerful lawmaker – GOP Sen. Tom Apodaca of Henderson and Buncombe counties – becomes even more powerful this year. Rep. Chuck McGrady of Henderson gets a promotion to Appropriations chair, and GOP Rep. Roger West, who represents Cherokee, Clay, Graham and Macon counties, will continue to be co-chairman of the Appropriations subcommittee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources.

[Read more about these powerful legislators and all the WNC delegation here.](#)

### **Take Action on a Bill to Reject Fracking Rules!**

Bills have been filed in the N.C. House and Senate to reject the fracking rules drafted by the Mining and Energy Commission Oil and Gas Rules. These bills could be the last chance to block the state from issuing fracking permits. Please call your Legislators today, alerting them to these bills and asking them to cosponsor it! Get contact information [here](#).

### **Coal Ash Anniversary**

One year ago 39,000 tons of toxic coal ash spilled into the Dan River. The continued regulation and clean up of coal ash still remains murky. To mark the anniversary, [The Greensboro News & Record did a multi-part series](#) on the Dan River spill. Here’s a round up of other news outlets that wrote about coal ash on the anniversary:

<http://www.wral.com/uncertainty-clouds-coal-ash-picture-one-year-after-spill/14407943/>

<http://wunc.org/post/coal-ash-spill-one-year-later>

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-nc-coal-ash-20150201-story.html#page=1>

[http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2015/01/31/5485040/duke-energys-coal-ash-leaks-persist.html#.VM\\_ivlXF8q4](http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2015/01/31/5485040/duke-energys-coal-ash-leaks-persist.html#.VM_ivlXF8q4)

### **Other Environmental News**

[Obama proposes oil drilling off the N.C. coast](#)

[New DENR head talks to the N&O](#)

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