

“CAUCUS OPERATIONS”

Frederick Aikens

Chief of Staff

Office of the Democratic Leader, NC Senate

(Senator Dan Blue)

ORGANIZATION

Role of experienced legislators

- Leader Daniel T. Blue Jr.
- Whip Senator Terry Van Duyn
- Subject matter experts

STAFF SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE

- Democratic Leader's staff
- Use of interns
- Role and use of the Centralized/Professional Staff

A TYPICAL SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS (SDC) MEETING

Calendar review

- Committee meetings scheduled
- Bills in committee
- Bills on the calendar for votes today
- Developing consensus on calendared bills
- Other key issues or legislation being proposed

INFLUENCE OF OUTSIDE INTEREST GROUPS

- NC Policy Watch
- Chamber of Commerce
- Common Cause
- Progress NC
- NC Conservation League
- State Innovations Exchange (SIX)
- Democracy NC
- NCAE

ROLE OF THE GOVERNOR'S STAFF

- Regular communication with the Governor's senior staff
- Invitation to attend Caucus meetings
- Messages from the Governor
- Departmental Liaisons & Department specific issues

COORDINATION WITH PRESIDENT PRO-TEM & STAFF

- Improvements needed – onus is on them
- Somewhat better recently
- Good coordination with Rules Chair
- Need more coordination on Appropriations & Finance matters
- Special Sessions called by the Leadership
- Committee process for Appropriations is lacking

CONFIDENTIALITY OF CAUCUS DISCUSSIONS

- SDC members are bound by their word
- If can't support a caucus position, Senators let the Leader and the Caucus know
- No penalty for violations

Contact Information

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