

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 9, 2007

**Contact: Chris Fitzsimon (919) 573-4643, cfitzsimon@ajf.org or
Rob Schofield (919) 573-4655, rschofield@ajf.org**

The Latest *Carolina Issues Poll* from N.C. Policy Watch Finds that Voters Oppose Senate's Tax Break for the Rich

Raleigh, N.C. – North Carolina voters strongly oppose a plan favored by state Senate leaders to cut income taxes on the 60,000 wealthiest North Carolinians, but support extending the quarter cent sales tax hike first adopted in 2001, according to the latest edition of the *Carolina Issues Poll* released Monday by N.C. Policy Watch.

“These results provide convincing evidence that state lawmakers need to rethink some of the positions they are staking out in the negotiations over the budget,” said N.C. Policy Watch Director, Chris Fitzsimon. “In particular, voters are unhappy with the Senate’s idea of cutting taxes on the rich.”

When asked if they would support a proposal to cut the income tax on the wealthy, 66% said “no,” while only 24% said “yes” – a ratio of almost three-to-one.

Voters voiced strong support (72% “yes” and 20% “no”) for *raising* taxes on the wealthiest North Carolinians in order to bring their overall tax responsibility (i.e., the share of their incomes paid in state and local taxes combined) in line with lower and middle income taxpayers.

Support for keeping an extra quarter cent on the state sales tax (a rate that had been scheduled to “sunset” at the end of June) was also strong. When given the choice of a \$45 per household annual tax cut or \$200 million reduction in spending on state services, voters favored holding onto the tax by a margin of 63% to 30%.

The poll also gauged voter attitudes on other state tax issues including and earned income tax credit and proposals to tax real estate transfers and realtor fees, as well as the issue of public subsidies for private colleges and universities.

The *Carolina Issues Poll* is published quarterly by NC Policy Watch, North Carolina’s leading provider of commentary and analysis on state public policy issues. It was conducted by the private firm of Public Policy Polling. 504 North Carolina voters were surveyed on July 5. The survey has a margin of error of $\pm 4.3\%$.

Complete results are attached and can be found at www.ncpolicywatch.com. These include exact question wording and crosstabs broken down by gender, party affiliation, race, and age.

If you have technical questions about the poll, you may contact Justin Guillory at (888) 621-6988 or (919) 744-6312.

###