

## Update: NC Racial Justice Act

Our Peace and Earth Committee has been actively supporting this effort to acknowledge the inherent racism in our judicial system, especially with regard to the Death Penalty, and to declare a moratorium on capital punishment. Below is an update on the legislation. You can read more about the Racial Justice Act [in this brief document](#)

The Racial Justice Act was heard the week of 05/11/09 in both the Judiciary I Committee in the NC Senate and the Judiciary I Committee in the NC House. Both committees supported the Racial Justice Act, and as a result, the bill moved to the floor in both the NC House and the NC Senate. (Sen. Nesbitt is the chair of the Senate J1 Committee)

The Senate heard the Racial Justice Act first, and Sen. Phil Berger proposed several bad amendments, one of which was a proposal to restart executions immediately. These amendments passed overwhelmingly, but Sen. Nesbitt did not support these amendments.

The Senate ultimately voted in support of the Racial Justice Act with the bad amendments attached.

The same week Judge Donald Stephens issued his ruling about the Council of States decision to approve lethal injection protocol without considering the people on death row who will be killed by lethal injection. Stephens ruled in favor of the Council of State, clearing the way for executions to restart. An appeal to his decision is likely.

The Senate passed the Racial Justice Act on third reading with an additional amendment to limit the range of statistical evidence to judicial districts. The bill and amendments moved to the House, where it was referred back to the House J1 Committee. The House J1 Committee is planning to strip the bill of the bad amendments and send it back to the Senate for another vote.

## **Asheville Monthly Meeting | Update: NC Racial Justice Act**

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If Friends want to take action, it would be great to send Sen. Nesbitt a note or email thanking him for his continued support of the Racial Justice Act. His email is [Martin.Nesbitt@ncleg.net](mailto:Martin.Nesbitt@ncleg.net) or you could send a note to Senator Martin L. Nesbitt, JR, NC Senate, 300 N. Salisbury Street, Room 300-B, Raleigh, NC 27603-5925. Thank you for your help.