



the LEGISLATIVE column

by PAUL FOGLEMAN, *Publisher*

TWO MEMBERS in the last session of the North Carolina General Assembly have moved up to the U.S. Congress. **U.S. Rep.**

Patrick McHenry, at 29 the youngest member of Congress, and **U.S. Rep. Virginia Foxx**, who served three terms in the state senate, now are working with large constituents and large staffs.

McHenry was one of the first members of the Congressional freshman class to draw an office assignment and ended up on the second floor of the Cannon Building in the same area with **Rep. Sue Myrick and Rep. Charles Taylor**. His main district office is in the Inform Inc. building at Fourth Street and First Avenue NW in Hickory.

Foxx is on the fifth floor of the Cannon Building and will have district offices in Clemmons and Boone. She represents the 5th District previously led by new **Senator Richard Burr** who maintained an office in downtown Winston-Salem.

Rep. Foxx and Rep. McHenry have significant hosiery manufacturing in their districts and worked with the hosiery lobbyists in the General Assembly.

THE HOSIERY ASSOCIATION'S Domestic Manufacturers Committee petition to limit import of socks from China was accepted the week before the 2004 elections. It just got under the wire, it appears.

Hours before the January 1 arrival of major changes in global trade rules, a federal court ordered the Bush Administration to suspend consideration of several petitions that would have imposed new limits on import of Chinese-made apparel.

The petition submitted by the hosiery committee argued the dramatic increases in shipments of cotton and man-made fibers socks amounted to "market disruption." The Committee for Implementation of Textiles Agreements (CITA) agreed.

The injunction was issued by Judge Richard Goldberg of the U.S. Court of International Trade. The U.S. Association of Importers of Textiles and Apparel, a trade group representing large hosiery mills and dozens of major U.S.

retailers hailed the ruling as "very significant." The group had filed a lawsuit in late December to block the administration from acting on the petitions that followed the socks document.

To implement the socks petition, U.S. trade authorities are required to call a meeting with Chinese trade officials to set limits that curb import increases to 7.5 per cent of that in the previous year.

Jim Schollaert, a lobbyist for American Manufacturing Trade Action Coalition which represents the domestic hosiery committee, condemned the ruling. "The Court in this case has turned a blind eye to the tremendous damage to domestic manufacturers and their communities," Schollaert argued.

THE 2005 LEGISLATURE in Raleigh has been in session only a few days and members are awaiting committee assignments. With the Democrats controlling the leadership, there will be changes from the 50-50 leadership pattern implemented by co-speakers. Still, **House**

Speaker Jim Black is expected to keep former **Co-Speaker Richard Morgan** and some of his key GOP supporters in leadership roles.

The bipartisan flavor of the 2003-2004 sessions impressed many state leaders. With a tobacco tax, lottery, and \$1 billion budget hole on the agenda, key players in both parties will be needed to come together.

ROLF BLIZZARD WHO WAS chief of staff to **Senate President Pro Tem Marc Basnight** in the previous session of the General Assembly is back – as the chief lobbyist for North Carolina Citizens for Business and Industry.

Blizzard played a key role in the last-minute approval of appropriations for the Hosiery Technology Center, working with **Sen. Basnight and Sen. David Hoyle**. **Blizzard** is vice president of Governmental Affairs for NCCBI. **President Phil Kirk** said **Blizzard** was his top choice for the position. He replaces **Leslie Becquava** who accepted a position with a Raleigh public relations firm.

hosiery day

SLATED MARCH 31

North Carolina hosiery manufacturers and suppliers will visit the State Legislature Wednesday, March 30.

This year the Hosiery Day at the Legislature will spotlight the new partnership with the Center for Applied Textiles Technology based in Belmont. The hosiery center is partnering with the Belmont Center for tests involving yarn suppliers.

A study undertaken at the request of the General Assembly recommends closer working relationships between the two centers which receive state funds.

The Carolina Hosiery Association has sponsored the Hosiery Day at the Legislature for more than 10 years. A breakfast for senators and representatives and visits to the offices of legislators who represent communities where hosiery manufacturers are based are part of the format.

The event is coordinated by Paul Fogleman and Inform Inc., lobbyist for the hosiery industry and the hosiery center.