

First video in Speak NC series spotlights role of NC school nurses

The weekly videos from Together NC document individuals, families, and groups who rely on state services

RALEIGH (April 1, 2011) – A campaign documenting the positive impact of state programs and services on families and communities throughout North Carolina launches today with a [poignant video featuring a school nurse](#) from Richmond County

To have healthy children in the classroom, North Carolina needs school nurses. These health professionals provide a range of services, including health screening, emergency care, health counseling and treatment for chronic health conditions. Michele Weatherly, a nurse at Rockingham Middle School, speaks about the role she and other nurses play in student health.

“For some kids, especially those that don’t have Medicaid or private insurance ... I might be the most consistent health professional that they see,” says Weatherly in the video.

With state legislators considering millions of dollars in cuts to public education and public health, North Carolina is in jeopardy of losing hundreds of school nurses. Of NC’s 1,231 school nurses, 70 percent are funded by local school districts.

Currently, North Carolina’s nurse-to-student ratio is one nurse for every 1,185 students, which is 32nd in the country. This is worse than South Carolina (13th), Tennessee (24th), and Virginia (25th). The Centers for Disease Control recommends that the nurse-to-student ratio be no less than 1:750.

The video is first in a series produced by Together NC. The videos highlight North Carolina residents who benefit from vital public investments. The videos are available on the new [Speak NC](#) website. [Speak NC](#) aims to show the human impact of state programs and services that touch thousands of North Carolinians every year.

Each Monday, [Speak NC](#) will post a new video that documents how an individual, family, or group of people benefits from various state services. Many of these services are at risk of severe cuts, as state legislators meet at the General Assembly and strategize how to balance the state budget.

“Missing from our state budget debate was a real sense of how state services impact real people, their families, and communities amidst all the numbers,” said Louisa Warren, a coordinator of Together NC. “Speak NC is about changing that and bringing forth the voices of North Carolinians to speak for themselves about how public investments have enriched their lives and paved the way for economic opportunity.”

Together NC invites citizens to watch the stories on [Speak NC](#) and share them with friends, family, and local legislators to demonstrate how many of these programs provide crucial aid to families and bolster local economies.

Visit Speak NC at www.speaknc.org

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Together NC is a collection of more than 115 non-profit organizations, service providers, and professional associations who have come together to promote wise choices for shared prosperity for all North Carolinians. For more information, visit www.togethernc.org

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