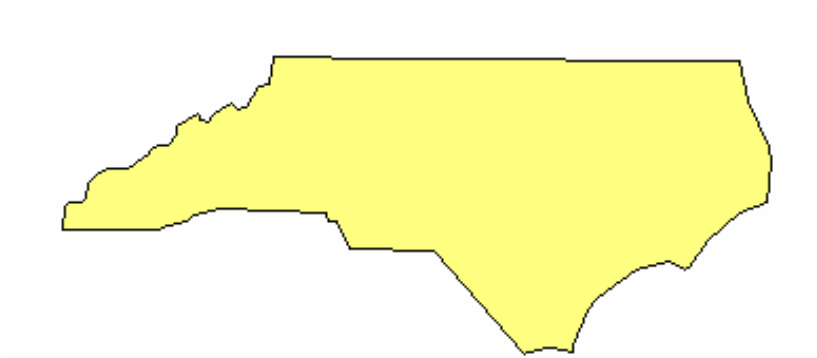


# **State Handbook of Economic, Demographic, and Fiscal Indicators 2006**

## **North Carolina**



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# Introduction

The *State Handbook of Economic, Demographic, and Fiscal Indicators 2006* represents the sixth edition of the state handbook series. We produce a new updated handbook biennially. It is an easy-to-use reference book for anyone in search of up-to-date information about state economic, demographic, and fiscal conditions. Policymakers, public officials, and policy analysts will find useful data on such topics as population, poverty rates, per capita state personal income, state and local revenues, expenditures, tax rates, and property tax relief programs. Gender and age comparisons are provided for some of the data. Throughout the book we use the most current data available.

This handbook facilitates state-by-state and state-national comparisons, which can serve a variety of purposes. For example, a state's tax burden can be compared with the national average or with that of other states in the region. Per capita state personal income, unemployment, and median household income can be used to assess how residents in one state fare vis-à-vis those in another.

## *State Economic, Demographic, and Fiscal Summaries*

This part of the book features economic, demographic, and fiscal summaries of the entire United States, each state, and the District of Columbia, along with summaries for the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Most of the book's information is presented in this section. Users will find statistics on several major economic indicators, such as state personal income, median household income, and employment, as well as on population and poverty, distribution of household income, revenues, expenditures, tax rates, and debt ratio measures.

A section on state-specific property tax relief summarizes homestead exemptions and credits, circuit breakers, and tax deferral programs, all of which are defined in the source notes and explanations section at the end of the book. We did not include all of the property tax rates, because they can vary within states, and because data on the varying rates are not easily available. In addition, nominal rates often do not equal effective rates.

Homestead exemptions are reductions in the amount of assessed property value subject to taxation. When reporting homestead exemptions, we note the assessed property value; however, the value of the tax reduction depends not only on the assessed property value but also on the fractional assessment level. For example, the fractional assessment percentage in Alabama is 10 percent for residential property, so the *reported* exemption value of \$4,000 translates into an exemption of \$40,000 in fair market value (\$4,000 divided by 0.1). For this reason, assessed values must first be converted into fair market values before comparing homestead exemptions among states.

The section on state and local general revenues and expenditures shows revenues and expenditures per capita and as a percentage of state personal income, as well as average annual changes from 1992 to 2002. The year 2002 was the most current year that we could obtain revenue and expenditure data from the U.S. Census Bureau. Comparisons can be made between each state and the national average of the amounts spent on expenditure programs. State and local debt information is provided on a per capita basis and per \$1,000 of personal income. The composition of short-term and long-term debt is also presented.

We have made some changes in the contents of the economic, demographic, and fiscal summaries since the 2003 *Handbook*. First, we now provide more current information on poverty rates by age and gender and the percent of households by age and income, thanks to the new American Community Survey (ACS) by the Census Bureau. The ACS features a much larger sample size (about 800,000 households that will increase to 3 million households in 2005) than the Current Population Survey (CPS) (about 100,000 households). State data are available on a more timely basis; instead of having to wait for the decennial census, users can obtain new data yearly.

Since we are now collecting poverty rate data from the ACS instead of the CPS, we no longer report the poverty rate in the economic indicators table (the first table in the state summaries). This is because we cannot make a 10-year comparison of state poverty rates until ACS has 10 years of poverty data.

Second, we added health and long-term care state income tax exemptions and credits. We describe only those state tax exemptions and credits that are more generous than what are available on the federal return. Therefore, we exclude tax exemptions, e.g., medical savings account deductions, which are found in federal adjusted gross income. Further, we exclude state itemized deductions, since we only want to describe tax exemptions and credits that benefit all taxpayers, not just those who itemize. Therefore, all the state health and long-term care tax provisions described here are available to all state filers, whether they itemize or not. Finally, since we are only interested in the general population, we exclude state health and long-term care tax breaks that are targeted specifically for self-employed persons.

Third, we described how the state tax income base is related to the federal income tax base, such as federal adjusted gross income. The state income tax base may be unrelated to the federal base; it may link to federal adjusted gross income (AGI), federal taxable income, or to federal gross income. If state taxable income is unrelated to federal income, we say that the state's income tax base is not directly related to federal income.

Fourth, we highlighted the minimum income levels at which taxpayers must file their state income taxes. Fifth, because some states have local expenditure limits which may affect the amount of property taxes collected, we describe how localities limit the growth of their expenditures.

### *Tables and U.S. Maps*

The handbook provides tables and maps of selected state economic, demographic, and fiscal data (found primarily in the economic, demographic, and fiscal summaries part). This presentation of the data makes it easy to compare any or all states and the District of Columbia on such economic indicators as per capita income or gross state product. The tables provide state rankings for easy comparisons. We do not include Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands because the data are either unavailable or not as current as state data, in the tables.

### *Data Sources and Explanations*

Data sources and explanations of concepts or terms can be found in this part of the handbook. Most of the information in the handbook comes from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, including poverty rate by age group and household income by age group from the American Community Survey, median household income from the Current Population Survey, population estimates by age group based on decennial census data, and revenues and expenditures from the Census of Governments.

We collected economic data, such as per capita income and gross state product, from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and employment data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. In addition, we obtained tax rate and property tax relief information from a survey of state and local government offices, such as state legislative offices and state and local assessors' offices.

For Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, we collected household income, poverty rate, and population data from U.S. decennial census data. Employment data came from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (Puerto Rico) and the Virgin Island's Bureau of Economic Research. Per capita income came from Puerto Rico's Department of the Treasury and the U.S. Census Bureau (Virgin Islands). Tax rates, general revenue, and general expenditure data came from Puerto Rico's Department of the Treasury, the Virgin Islands Office of Management and Budget (revenues), the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (income tax data), and the Virgin Islands Bureau of Internal Revenue (miscellaneous tax data).

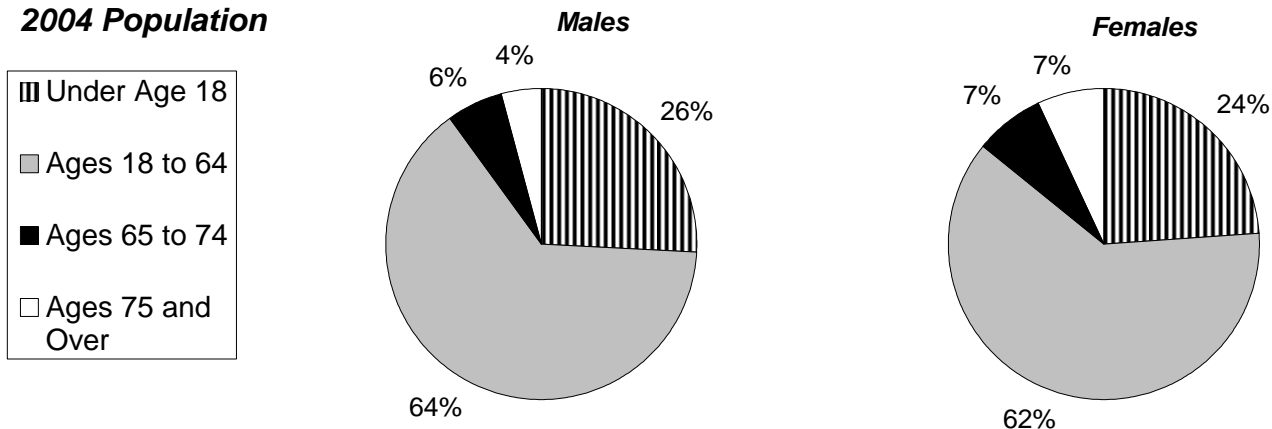
As state and local economic conditions and demographic patterns change, policymakers may consider adjusting their policies on taxes and spending programs. These adjustments become more difficult when economic and demographic changes depart from historical trends. It is our belief that this publication will contribute to more informed public policy decisions by identifying significant economic, demographic, and fiscal changes.

# North Carolina

<b>Economic Indicators</b>	1994		2004		Average Annual Change 1994-2004	
	NC	US	NC	US	NC	US
	Per Capita Income.....	\$20,400	\$22,172	\$29,303	\$33,041	3.7%
Median Household Income .....	\$30,114	\$32,264	\$40,365	\$44,389	3.0%	3.2%
Gross State Product (in millions).....	\$179,574	\$6,865,513	\$336,398	\$11,665,595	6.5%	5.4%
Full- and Part-Time Positions (in thousands).....	4,227	145,224	4,974	170,104	1.6%	1.6%
Employed Persons (in thousands) .....	3,511	123,060	4,021	139,251	1.4%	1.2%
Unemployment Rate.....	4.4%	6.1%	5.5%	5.5%	n/a	n/a

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

## 2004 Population



<b>Population and Poverty</b>	Population				Poverty Rate	
	1994	2004	Percentage Change 1994-2004		2004	
	NC	NC	NC	US	NC	US
Total Population.....	7,060,959	8,541,221	21.0%	12.8%	15.2%	13.1%
Males.....	3,424,044	4,198,851	22.6%	13.8%	13.0%	11.6%
Under Age 18.....	899,339	1,082,630	20.4%	7.8%	21.4%	18.3%
Ages 18 to 64.....	2,174,438	2,694,659	23.9%	16.7%	10.6%	9.6%
Ages 65 to 74.....	225,880	248,783	10.1%	1.6%	6.1%	6.5%
Ages 75 and Over.....	124,387	172,779	38.9%	28.8%	6.3%	6.8%
Females.....	3,636,915	4,342,370	19.4%	11.9%	17.4%	14.5%
Under Age 18.....	861,083	1,035,862	20.3%	8.1%	22.4%	18.6%
Ages 18 to 64.....	2,238,485	2,695,821	20.4%	14.6%	15.8%	13.6%
Ages 65 to 74.....	293,935	306,444	4.3%	-3.6%	11.1%	9.7%
Ages 75 and Over.....	243,412	304,243	25.0%	19.6%	20.2%	13.3%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

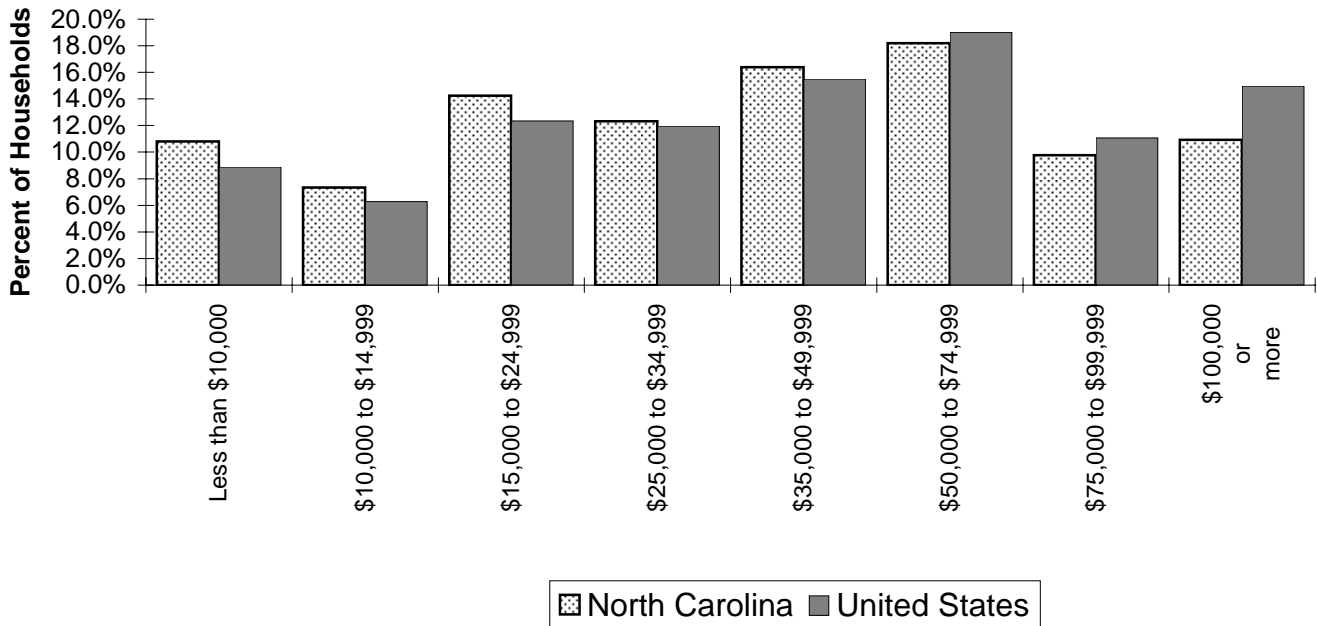
# North Carolina

**Percent Distribution of Households by Age of Householder and Income, 2004**

Age of Householder	Less than \$10,000	\$10,000 to \$14,999	\$15,000 to \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$34,999	\$35,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$74,999	\$75,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 or more	All Households
Under 25 years.....	24.8%	11.1%	21.9%	14.7%	18.2%	6.6%	1.7%	0.9%	100.0%
25 to 44 years.....	7.8%	5.6%	13.1%	12.0%	18.1%	21.4%	11.1%	10.9%	100.0%
45 to 64 years.....	8.9%	5.3%	10.7%	11.3%	15.4%	20.8%	12.0%	15.7%	100.0%
65 years and over.....	16.0%	13.3%	20.7%	14.0%	14.2%	10.7%	5.5%	5.5%	100.0%
North Carolina (all ages) ..	10.8%	7.3%	14.3%	12.3%	16.4%	18.2%	9.8%	10.9%	100.0%
United States (all ages)....	8.9%	6.3%	12.3%	12.0%	15.5%	19.0%	11.1%	15.0%	100.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

**Percent of Households by Household Income Bracket, 2004**



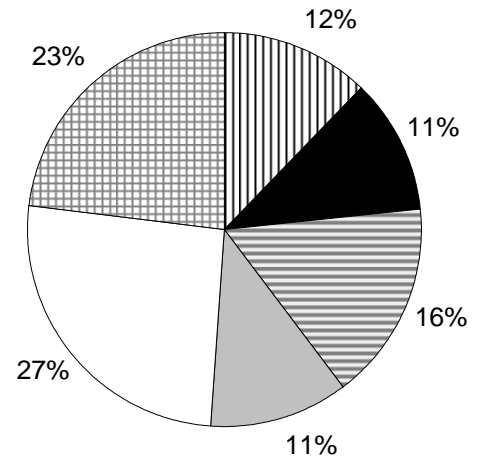
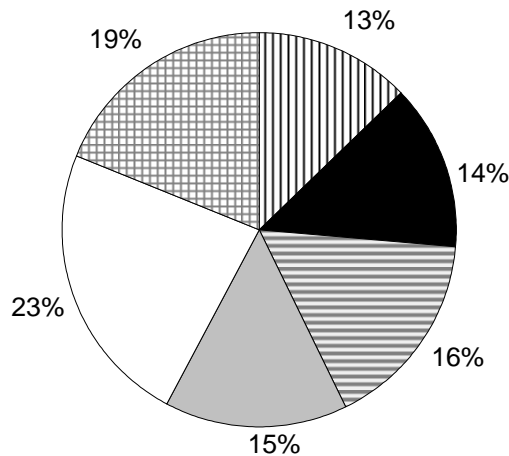
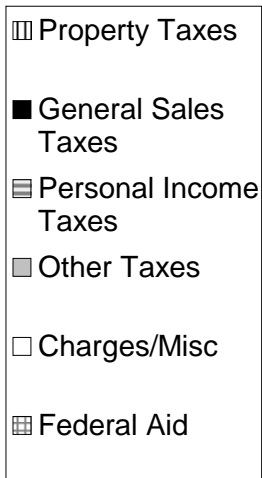
# North Carolina

<b>State and Local General Revenues, FY 2002</b>	General Revenues (millions)	Per Capita		Percent of Personal Income		Average Annual Revenue Change 1992-2002	
		NC	US	NC	US	NC	US
		Total General Revenues.....	\$44,165	\$5,313	\$5,851	19.6%	19.3%
Own Sources.....	\$33,924	\$4,081	\$4,599	15.1%	15.2%	6.6%	5.2%
Taxes.....	\$22,576	\$2,716	\$3,143	10.0%	10.4%	5.9%	4.9%
Property Taxes.....	\$5,422	\$652	\$969	2.4%	3.2%	6.8%	4.5%
General Sales Taxes.....	\$4,909	\$591	\$774	2.2%	2.6%	5.0%	5.4%
Personal Income Taxes.....	\$7,265	\$874	\$705	3.2%	2.3%	7.3%	5.8%
Other Taxes.....	\$4,980	\$599	\$695	2.2%	2.3%	4.2%	4.3%
Charges/Miscellaneous.....	\$11,348	\$1,365	\$1,456	5.0%	4.8%	8.1%	5.7%
Federal Aid.....	\$10,241	\$1,232	\$1,252	4.5%	4.1%	9.5%	7.2%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2002 data are the most current available.)

**1992 General Revenue**

**2002 General Revenue**



# North Carolina

## I. Personal Income Tax (2004)

### State Income Tax Base

North Carolina's income tax base is linked to federal taxable income.

### Filing Requirements

Taxpayers must file if their federal gross income exceeds the minimum filing thresholds.

### Minimum Filing Income Thresholds

Under age 65 ..... \$5,500 (single); \$11,000 (married, filing jointly;  
both spouses are under age 65)  
Age 65 or older ..... \$6,250 (single); \$12,200 (married, filing jointly;  
both spouses are age 65 or older)

### Rate Structure

Single		Married, Filing Jointly	
<u>Taxable Income</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Taxable Income</u>	<u>Rate</u>
First \$12,750	6.0%	First \$21,250	6.0%
\$12,750 - \$60,000	7.0%	\$21,250 - \$100,000	7.0%
\$60,000 - \$120,000	7.75%	\$100,000 - \$200,000	7.75%
Over \$120,000	8.25%	Over \$200,000	8.25%

### Public Pension Exemption\*

North Carolina state and local retirees and federal retirees who worked for five years or more as of August 12, 1989, receive a full pension exemption off their defined benefit plan. This benefit also applies to the state's 401K and 457 plans if the retiree contributed to the plan prior to August 12, 1989. Other government retirees receive up to a \$4,000 exemption per taxpayer.

**Private Pension Exemption\*** ..... \$2,000 exemption per taxpayer

\*Total private and public exemptions may not exceed \$4,000 per taxpayer for those retirees who did not qualify for the full public pension exemption.

**Social Security Benefits** ..... Full exemption

Sources: AARP 2005 telephone survey of state legislative staff, state departments of revenue, state controllers' offices, state assessors' offices, and state treasury offices.

# North Carolina

## Standard Deductions and Personal Exemptions Combined

Under age 65 .....	\$5,500 (single); \$10,000 (married, filing jointly)*
Age 65 or older .....	\$6,250 (single); \$11,200 (married, filing jointly; both spouses are age 65 or older)*

\*Personal exemptions for these figures are for taxpayers whose federal adjusted gross income is less than \$60,000 (single) or \$100,000 (married, filing jointly). Personal exemptions are less for taxpayers with higher incomes.

**Local Income Taxes** ..... None

## II. General Sales Tax Rates (2004)

State .....	4.5%*
Combined state/local tax rates .....	6.5% to 7.0%**

\*The state tax rate will change to 4.0% on July 1, 2007.

\*\*Only Mecklenburg County has a combined rate of 7.0%; the other counties have a combined rate of 6.5%.

## III. Miscellaneous Tax Rates (2004)

Corporate income (highest marginal rate).....	6.9%	On all taxable income
Gasoline (per gallon) .....	\$0.271	(starting July 1, 2005)
Cigarette (per pack of 20) .....	\$0.05*	
Beer (per gallon).....	\$0.532	

\*The cigarette tax rate will be \$0.30 per pack (September 1, 2005) and \$0.35 per pack (July 1, 2006).

## IV. Real Property Tax Relief Programs (2005)

### Homestead Exemption or Credit

#### Requirements

#### Benefits

Homeowners age 65 or older or disabled with disposable income below \$18,000 .....	Exempt on the first \$20,000 of assessed value or 50% of the assessed value (whichever is greater)
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Disabled veterans.....	\$38,000 assessed value
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**Circuit Breaker** ..... None

**Deferral Program** ..... None

Sources: AARP 2005 telephone survey of state legislative staff, state departments of revenue, state controllers' offices, state assessors' offices, and state treasury offices.

# North Carolina

## V. Real Property Tax Limits, Caps, or Freezes (2005)

Counties or cities are subject to a property tax rate cap of \$1.50 per \$100 of appraised real property value. However, with voter approval, counties and cities may levy a higher property tax rate.

Sources: AARP 2005 telephone survey of state legislative staff, state departments of revenue, state controllers' offices, state assessors' offices, and state treasury offices.

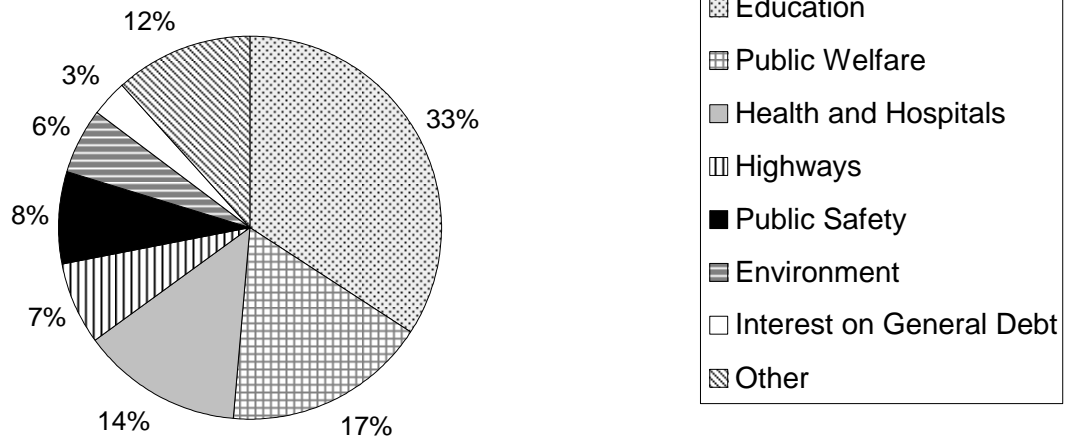
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<b>State and Local General Expenditures, FY 2002</b>	General Expenditures (millions)	Per Capita		Percent of Personal Income		Average Annual Expenditure Change 1992-2002	
		NC	US	NC	US	NC	US
		State/Local Direct General Expenditures	\$44,540	\$5,359	\$6,026	19.8%	19.9%
To State/Local Government	\$44,540	\$5,359	\$6,011	19.8%	19.9%	7.5%	5.9%
Education*	\$15,262	\$1,836	\$2,065	6.8%	6.8%	6.3%	6.2%
Public Welfare	\$7,657	\$921	\$971	3.4%	3.2%	9.6%	6.1%
Health and Hospitals	\$6,087	\$732	\$508	2.7%	1.7%	8.5%	5.2%
Highways	\$3,017	\$363	\$401	1.3%	1.3%	6.6%	5.5%
Public Safety*	\$3,457	\$416	\$545	1.5%	1.8%	7.0%	6.3%
Environment	\$2,563	\$308	\$356	1.1%	1.2%	7.7%	5.1%
Interest on General Debt	\$1,343	\$162	\$262	0.6%	0.9%	6.3%	3.1%
Other	\$5,154	\$620	\$904	2.3%	3.0%	8.1%	6.5%
To Federal Government	\$0	\$0	\$15	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	1.9%

\*Education includes higher and lower education; public safety includes police, fire, corrections, and protection and inspection.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2002 data are the most current available.)

## State and Local General Expenditures, FY 2002 (excluding payments to federal government)



<b>2002 Debt Ratio Measures</b>	Total Debt Outstanding			Long-term Debt		Short-term Debt	
	Debt (billions)	Per Capita	Per \$1,000 of Personal Income	Debt (billions)	Percent of Total	Debt (billions)	Percent of Total
North Carolina (State and Local)	\$33.5	\$4,026	\$148.45	\$33.4	99.7%	\$0.09	0.3%
United States	\$1,681.4	\$5,839	\$192.88	\$1,638.1	97.4%	\$43.24	2.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census