

*****SPAM*** Latest Updates from the NCGA**



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NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

May 17, 2024

Bills Introduced & Co-Sponsored



The 2024 Legislative Short Session has begun. Here are the bills I have co-sponsored in the last two weeks. You can find a full list of the bills I have supported this biennium [here](#).

Co-Sponsored Bills

- **SB789, NC Health Benefits Exchange Implementation.** Authorizes the Commissioner of Insurance to establish and operate a State-run Health Benefits Exchange under the Affordable Care Act, allowing all North Carolinians access to health insurance.
- **SB802, C-PACE Program.** Establishes a program that allows property owners to finance clean energy, energy efficiency, and resilience improvements on private property.
- **SB803, Homes of Hope Adoption Tax Credit.** Reenacts and updates the state adoption tax credit, providing a \$2,000 credit per child to eligible individuals, including those who have received a federal adoption tax credit, provided a foster home for more than 270 days, or received kinship foster care reimbursements for at least 9 months within the taxable year.
- **SB806, Community Emergency Response Training.** Appropriates funds to the Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management, to expand the Community Emergency Response Team program and develop outreach strategies to boost community participation in training sessions. Community Emergency Response Teams are dispatched after natural disasters.
- **SB808, Right to Use Contraception Act.** Ensures the right to access and use contraceptives without government interference, and appropriates funds to support the Medicaid Family Planning Program to expand education related to contraceptive use.
- **SB809, Expand Workforce Housing.** Expands workforce housing by providing a one-time allocation and establishing ongoing funding for the North Carolina Housing Trust Fund to address the critical shortage of affordable housing in the state.
- **SB811, Age with Dignity Act (Caregiver Tax Credit).** Creates a caregiver tax credit. This credit is worth \$12,000 for most North Carolinians who are eligible, and \$15,000 for veterans.
- **SB812, Student Tax Reduction (STAR) Act.** Eliminates the state tax burden placed on borrowers, in the event that a borrower receives student debt relief.
- **SB813, Create Department of Housing and Community Development.** Establishes the North Carolina Department of Housing and Community Development as a cabinet-level department, defining its structure, functions, and funding to improve housing and community development initiatives.
- **SB815, NC Paid Family Insurance Act.** Introduces a comprehensive framework for paid family and medical leave benefits within the state. Outlines eligibility criteria, including requirements for covered individuals. It defines covered services, such as caring for a new child, family members with serious health conditions, or covered service members, along with qualifying exigency leave. Sets rules for leave duration, benefit amounts, notice requirements for employees, and certification procedures for medical leave. Outlines penalties for non-compliance and emphasizes confidentiality provisions to safeguard employee information.
- **SB816, Reenact Earned Income Tax Credit.** Reenacts the Earned Income Tax Credit, restoring it to its previous form with a 5% credit against the tax imposed. Includes provisions for refunding any excess credit to taxpayers.
- **SB820, School Workers Fair Pay Act.** Mandates that the hourly rate of the minimum salary for noncertified public school employees must be at least \$17 per hour, requiring adjustments to the salary grades and ranges maintained by the State Board of Education, with accompanying appropriations and effective date.
- **SB821, Train Infrastructure Acceleration Act.** Allocates additional state funding to expedite the development of train infrastructure in North Carolina by enhancing existing routes and implementing new ones, with each identified route receiving funds for engineering and feasibility studies. Additionally, the Department of Transportation is mandated to submit annual reports on the progress of implementation to the relevant legislative committees. Three of the routes to receive funding through this bill begin in Charlotte.
- **SB822, Child Care Omnibus.** Aims to enhance child care in North Carolina by increasing the child tax deduction, creates the Child Care Stabilization Fund to support the child care workforce and ensure access to quality care, and establishes a Child Care Provider Support Program to offer financial assistance to child care providers.
- **SB825, Go Big for Early Childhood Education.** Appropriates funds to support the NC Prekindergarten (NC Pre-K) program and the NC Partnership for Children, Inc., raises base reimbursement rates for NC Pre-K sites, and provides tax credits to certain early education teachers and directors.
- **SB827, Homes for Heroes.** Creates a home buyers' assistance program through the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency for first-time home buyers who are public servants and provides an income tax credit to certain volunteer workers for unreimbursed expenses.
- **SB829, Bright Beginnings Child Care Access/Support Act.** Reduces the parent co-payment for subsidized child care from 10% to 5% of gross family income.
- **SB830, Young Families Investment Act.** Appropriates funds to establish a two-year

child development associate apprenticeship pilot program and reduces parent co-payments for subsidized child care.

- **SB832, 2024 Safe Drinking Water Act.** Mandates the Commission for Public Health establish maximum contaminant levels for probable or known carcinogens and other toxic chemicals in drinking water, appropriating \$6 million dollars for the 2024-2025 fiscal year to fund these activities.
- **SB833, Main Street Resilience Act.** Allows small businesses to deduct up to \$75,000 of net business income per taxable year, with a maximum of \$150,000 for married couples filing jointly, provided the business meets specified criteria.
- **SB834, Invasive Species Control and Prevention.** Addresses the control and prevention of invasive species in North Carolina by defining such species, mandating the Wildlife Resources Commission to establish hunting and trapping rules, and creating an Invasive Species Management Fund to support eradication, management, and educational programs.
- **SB835, Protect Whistleblower LEOs from Retaliation.** Requires law enforcement officers to intervene and report instances of excessive force or other improper activity, providing protection from retaliation for making such reports, and extends similar protections to criminal justice and justice officers.
- **SB837, Mental Health Support for Military Veterans.** Appropriates funds from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, and Department of Commerce to enhance mental health services, support networks, and overall well-being for military veterans in North Carolina, including programs for mental health services, suicide prevention, transition support, and employment.
- **SB838, MOMnibus 2.5.** Tasks the Department of Health and Human Services to develop an evidence-based implicit bias training program for maternal care professionals involved in perinatal care and provides funding for the program. Enumerates the rights of perinatal care patients. Establishes a grant program to expand perinatal education in underserved areas.
- **SB839, State Employees/Give Leave for Pregnancy Loss.** Provides state employees at least 56 hours of paid leave following a pregnancy loss.
- **SB840, Funds for Lactation Consultant Programs at HBCUs.** Appropriates \$500,000 to support lactation consultant training programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities in North Carolina.
- **SB841, State Employees/Give 3-Days Bereavement Leave.** Provides up to three consecutive work days of paid bereavement leave to state employees following the death of an immediate family member.
- **SB842, Study State Employee Bereavement Leave/Funds.** Authorizes the Legislative Research Commission to study the need for bereavement leave for state employees, and to report its findings.
- **SB843, The Freedom from Fentanyl Act.** Aims to curb the sale of vapor products near childcare facilities, schools, religious places, and institutions of higher education, and establishes a Fentanyl Misuse Task Force to address the misuse of fentanyl in NC. Allocates funds to the Department of Health and Human Services for the purchase and distribution of opioid antagonists to combat opioid-related drug overdoses.
- **SB845, Community Safety Act.** Strengthens policies and standards surrounding law enforcement officers by directing the Department of Justice to assist agencies in applying for grant funds, appropriating funds for grant writers, supporting community policing programs, creating incentives for officers and agencies, revising police use of force policies, and establishing minimum standards for hiring and training officers.
- **SB846, Protect Our Schools.** Directs the Department of Transportation to identify school walk zones, set lower speed limits in these zones, creates and appropriates funds to the Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Fund, and increases criminal penalties for injuring a minor in specific areas, and establishes the Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Fund with allocations for assessing areas likely to be designated as school walk zones, infrastructure improvements, training for school crosswalk guards, and public awareness campaigns.
- **SB847, Supporting Law Enforcement.** Strengthens North Carolina's law enforcement policies and standards by providing assistance for grant funding, supporting community policing programs, creating incentives for officers and agencies, revising the use of force policies, establishing minimum hiring and training standards, and funding additional detective or investigative positions, with provisions becoming effective at different times and including a severability clause.
- **SB848, Protect Reproductive Health.** Seeks to safeguard women's reproductive rights by codifying *Roe* and *Casey* protections, ensuring access to out-of-state abortions, criminalizing interference with abortion seekers, establishing a private right of action against interference, affirming contraception use rights, prohibiting tracking of emergency contraception sales, clarifying non-liability for transportation providers, and banning geofencing near abortion facilities, with provisions for implementation funding.
- **SB849, Increase Safe Use of Firearms.** Enhance gun safety measures by enabling the issuance of extreme risk protection orders, reinforcing laws on firearm safe storage, mandating universal background checks, transferring responsibility for pistol purchase permits to the State Bureau of Investigation, reinstating permit

requirements for private pistol sales, and exempting firearm safety and storage items from sales tax.

- **SB850, Coastal Plain Resilience and Economic Prosperity Act.** Allocates funds to the Department of Environmental Quality for various purposes, including staffing positions for programs focusing on coastal resilience, flood risk reduction, habitat assessment, flood resiliency blueprint implementation, technical assistance to businesses, grant administration, customer service improvement, marine patrol officers, air quality monitoring, overtopping studies for dams, Superfund cleanups, addressing emerging compounds, and water infrastructure projects.
- **SB851, Keep Tranq Off Our Streets.** Designates xylazine as a Schedule III controlled substance, citing its potential for abuse and established medical use, with appropriations allocated for enforcement.
- **SB852, NC Universal Background Check Act.** Requires universal background checks for firearm sales, establishes procedures for federally licensed firearm dealers and private persons, defines prohibited persons, specifies verification processes, imposes penalties for violations, and appropriates nonrecurring funds to the Department of Public Safety for creating and disseminating a public service announcement about the new law.
- **SB853, OPS Moratorium/OPS & PESA Accountability.** Temporarily suspends taxpayer-funded private school vouchers until public schools are fully funded, highlighting the misuse of funds that could alternatively elevate public education services. Provides accountability measures for private schools receiving vouchers.
- **SB858, Blue Ribbon Task Force/Sewer Infrastructure.** Establishes the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Wastewater Infrastructure Development in North Carolina to review and assess the state's wastewater infrastructure, develop strategies for effective implementation of wastewater treatment projects, and identify funding mechanisms, with specific appointments, responsibilities, and appropriations outlined.
- **SB861, Repeal Service Tax.** Repeals the service tax and makes various conforming changes necessary to effectuate the repeal.
- **SB866, Wetlands Protection and Restoration Act.** Proposes the establishment of a fund with \$15 million allocated to the Department of Environmental Quality for wetland restoration and protection in North Carolina. This act also includes the repeal of legislation limiting state protections for isolated wetlands, redefining "isolated wetlands" to ensure broader protection under state law, and mandates ongoing research and monitoring to guide conservation efforts.
- **SB868, Governor's Budget.** Details the [budget provisions recommended by Governor Cooper](#) for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.
- **SB873, End Book Bans Act.** Establishes procedures for reviewing and potentially removing instructional materials, including books, in public and nonpublic schools that accept Opportunity Scholarship Grant funds, and outlines a process for challenges from parents and setting criteria for removal.
- **SB874, Community Health Center Grants for LARCs.** Appropriates funds to the Department of Health and Human Services in North Carolina to award grants to local health departments and nonprofit community health centers for the purchase and distribution of long-acting reversible contraceptives.
- **SB875, Total Maternal Care Act.** Establishes and administers the Maternal Mortality Prevention Grant Program, establishes an implicit bias training program for healthcare providers who engage in perinatal care, enumerates the rights of perinatal patients, allocates funding to support and diversify lactation consultant training programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and establishes a statewide, evidence-based stillbirth prevention program.
- **SB877, Greater Access to Fertility Medication.** Increases access to ovulation medication through any health benefit plans offered by an insurer that already provides coverage for any fertility treatment and removes any annual or lifetime limitations on the coverage for ovulation medication and ovulation induction cycles for services offered in-network under the State Health Plan.
- **SB878, Working Families Act.** Reduces parent copayments for subsidized child care, reinstates the child tax credit, raises the state minimum wage to \$15 per hour, and grants local governments flexibility to establish a higher local minimum wage. Increases the income eligibility limit for the property tax homestead circuit breaker, establishes a home buyers' assistance program with the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency for first-time home buyers who are public servants, enacts the North Carolina Paid Family Leave Insurance Act to support working families, and creates the Employer Grant Fund to assist employers with associated costs, appropriating funds for this purpose.
- **SB881, Restore the American Dream.** Provides ongoing funding and a one-time allocation of \$30 million dollars to the North Carolina Housing Trust Fund, aiming to address the critical shortage of affordable housing in the state.
- **SB890, Hate Crimes Prevention Act.** Increases the scope and punishment of hate crimes, establishes a hate crimes statistics database maintained by the State Bureau of Investigation, mandates training for law enforcement officers on identifying and responding to hate crimes, and provides for civil actions and restorative justice sessions.
- **SB893, Guarding Freedoms & Public Safety Act.** Implements an exemption from sales tax for firearm safety and storage items while also increasing the punishment

for possessing, carrying, or accessing firearms in prohibited areas.

- **SB895, Parents' and Students' Bill of Rights.** Outlines parental rights related to the upbringing, education, healthcare, and mental health of minors. These rights include access to education records, healthcare decisions, and transparency in the reception of school performance data. This bill also outlines student rights, such as a discrimination-free environment, safety, and access to extracurricular program.
- **SB896, Investing in North Carolina Act.** Appropriates funds to increase salaries for teachers, state employees, community college employees, and University of North Carolina employees, provide cost-of-living increases for retirees, expand the WAGE\$ program statewide, and establish a tax credit for qualifying employers based on employee wages paid during the taxable year, capped at either 5% of wages or \$10,000.
- **SB899, Diagnostic Imaging Parity.** Mandates health coverage parity for breast cancer diagnostic imaging, updates mammographic breast density patient notification requirements, and allocates funds to educate healthcare providers about the changes.
- **SB909, Protect Women's Healthcare.** A bill to propose a voter-approved amendment to the North Carolina Constitution to protect access to abortion care, contraception, fertility treatment, the continuation of an individual's own pregnancy, and miscarriage care. This bill would prohibit the State of North Carolina from placing a substantial obstacle in the path of any woman seeking to terminate a pregnancy prior to fetal viability, i.e. returning state law to where it was pre-*Dobbs*.

Updates on Noteworthy Votes



Below are the noteworthy bills I voted on over the past two weeks. You can find a complete list of bills I voted on [here](#).

Key bills on which I voted YES:

- **HB591, Modernize Sex Crimes.** Creates a new offense for both sexual extortion and aggravated sexual extortion, a form of exploitation that enables the coercion of a victim into sexual favors through the use of blackmail. Creates offenses relating to the ways in which technology may aid in the sexual exploitation of a minor, including material modified by technology and communication with a child's parents through the internet for the purpose of solicitation.

Key bills on which I voted NO:

- **HB198, DOT Legislative Changes.** This bill contains several harmful provisions for environmental protections and North Carolina's native vegetation. Section 17 of this bill nearly doubles the area that can be cut down near billboard and overrides local ordinances to save vegetation. In addition, the bill removes protections for North Carolina's native redbud trees, allowing them to be cut down. In addition to these provisions, the bill also increases the maximum total for unpaid toll processing fees by 50%, from \$48 per year to \$72. Learn more [here](#).
- **HB237, Unmasking Mobs and Criminals.** Revokes an exception in North Carolina law made during the COVID-19 pandemic that allows individuals to wear masks in public in order to preserve their health and the health of those around them, making it a Class 1 misdemeanor to wear a mask in public. It denies North Carolinians medical freedom, creates the potential for harassment, arrest and racial profiling of health-conscious people. Not only does this bill ignore the reality that COVID-19 and other highly contagious diseases, [such as the significant increase of whooping cough cases in Mecklenburg County](#), still pose a very real threat to all North Carolinians, it also denies medically fragile, immunocompromised, or otherwise health-concerned individuals and their families the ability to engage with and participate in their communities - or even leave the house - without breaking the law. My caucus proposed three separate amendments in an attempt to address all of these concerns, all of which have been expressed to us by North Carolinians across the state, and all three were rejected. **This bill makes careful people criminals; I voted no.** Learn more [here](#).

Spotlight on HB237: Banning Masks Worn for Health & Safety



This week, I spoke in the Judiciary Committee and on the Senate Floor in strong opposition to HB237, which revokes a law allowing masks to be worn in public in order to protect the health of oneself and others, **making it a Class 1 misdemeanor to do so.**

I have heard from countless North Carolinians, not only in Senate District 41 but across the state, pleading with the North Carolina General Assembly to acknowledge that this bill will cause real harm to immunocompromised, disabled, and medically fragile people and their families. **This bill is getting the attention of national news outlets, like [NBC News](#)**, because it not only threatens the health of North Carolina citizens, but also threatens our First Amendment rights to protest, as it is clearly a response to the protests by students across the state. Learn more [here](#) and [here](#).

The bill passed the Senate on a party-line vote on Wednesday. Next, it will be considered by the NC House, where we hope it will be amended before it goes to the Governor, who will decide whether to veto it.

Whooping Cough In Mecklenburg County



The Public Health Director of Mecklenburg County, Dr. Raynard Washington, has noted an increase in pertussis or whooping cough cases in Mecklenburg County. There is also a rise in cases in several counties in Western NC.

Whooping cough is highly infectious and can be life-threatening for babies too young to be fully vaccinated, immunocompromised individuals, and pregnant women. Symptoms include severe coughing fits that make it hard to breathe, eat, or sleep, whooping sound after a cough, vomiting after coughing, runny or stuffy nose, and low-grade fever, which may not be present. Getting vaccinated is the most effective way to prevent the disease and reduce its severity. Learn more [here](#).

Senate Judiciary Committee Updates



The following noteworthy bills were discussed in the Senate Judiciary Committee over the past two weeks:

- **SB790, State Bar Review Committee Recommendations.** Makes a number of modifications to statutes regarding the North Carolina State Bar in regard to the ways in which grievances may be filed against attorneys, the process of grievance hearings, and tasks the State Bar to adopt permanent rules to implement an expungement process for certain disciplinary actions against respondent attorneys.
- **HB237, Unmasking Mobs and Criminals.** See discussion above and more info [here](#).
- **HB495, Aggregation of Multiple Financial Crimes.** Permits the aggregation of multiple convictions of financial crimes for sentencing. Provides jurisdiction to the court of each county where one of the financial crimes occurred.
- **HB591, Modernize Sex Crimes.** See section titled "*Updates on Noteworthy Votes.*"
- **HB834, Juvenile Justice Modifications.** Modifies the definition of "delinquent juvenile" related to juveniles who are 16 and 17 years old to exclude any offense punishable as a Class A, B1, B2, C, D, or E felony if committed by an adult. Modifies the transfer process for juvenile cases from juvenile to superior court by creating a new indictment return appearance. Modifies certain laws to create a new process for removal of a case from superior court to juvenile court. Modifies the laws regarding notification of a delinquent juvenile's school and how the school can use that information. Increases the punishment for an adult who solicits a minor to commit a crime. Increases the time period a victim has to advocate against a juvenile's deferral from the court process.

Budget Forecast from the Office of State Budget and Management

May 2024 General Fund Consensus Forecast Revision		
Amounts (millions)	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25
April 2024 Consensus Forecast	\$34,139	\$34,369
May 2024 Revised Consensus Forecast	\$33,914	\$34,164
<i>April vs. May</i>	-\$225	-\$205
<i>% Change from April Consensus</i>	-0.7%	-0.6%

Economists at the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) and the General Assembly's Fiscal Research Division have agreed upon a revision to the General Fund revenue forecast for the 2023-25 biennium as the result of April personal income tax (PIT) collections falling short of the April consensus forecast. Some highlights are below:

- Despite April PIT collections failing to meet expectations, the revised consensus forecast still anticipates an increase of \$188M (0.6%) and \$799M (2.4%) compared to budgeted revenues.
- The difference between anticipated and actual PIT collections is the result of the implementation of a new law allowing S Corporations and eligible partnerships to elect to pay NC income tax at the entity level, thereby enabling shareholders to fully deduct those state tax payments on their federal taxes. This change lead to lower final payments and elevated refunds.
- This adjustment to the General Fund revenue forecast is a one-time event and should have no effect on the state's long-term growth.

Learn more [here](#).

Applications Open for Mecklenburg Pre-K



Applications for the 2024-2025 MECK Pre-K School Year opened on January 16, 2024, and will remain open until January 2025. Placement into classrooms began in April in the order they were received and will continue until each site is full. In order to apply, you must provide basic information about your child and your household. This information includes an official document certifying your child's legal name and birthdate, a government-issued parent ID, and a document proving residency in Mecklenburg County. A list of acceptable documents for proof of residency can be found inside the application. You will also search for and indicate your preferred locations for attendance based on sites currently available. Apply [here](#). If you are unable to apply online, email info@MECKPreK.org or call (704) 943-9585 to schedule an appointment to apply in person. Learn more [here](#).

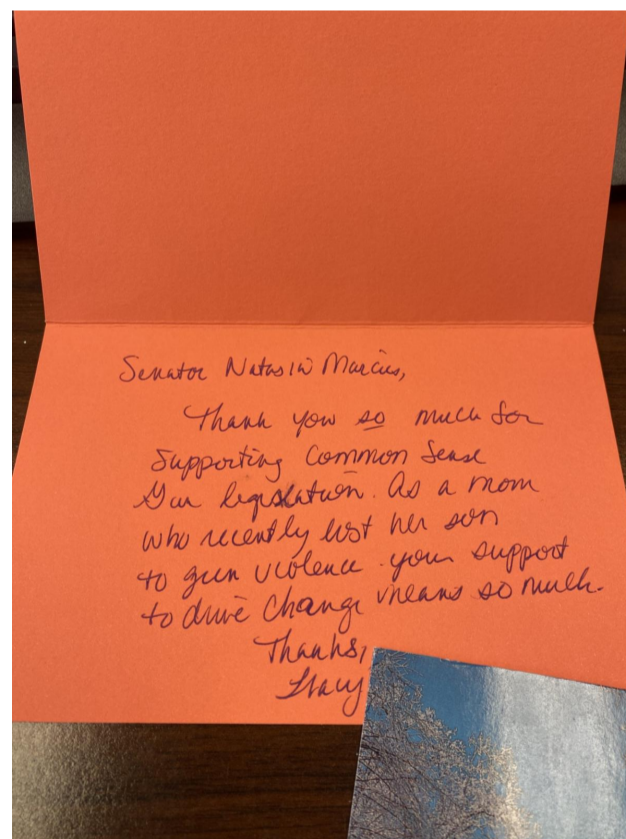
Senator Marcus in Raleigh and in the Community



I met with members of the [NC Academy of Physician Assistants](#) to discuss [SB879](#), PA Licensure Interstate Compact, the value of PAs within a community, and barriers to healthcare for North Carolinian patients, such as affordability, insurance coverage, and access to preventative care.



I met with members of the [North Carolina Community Health Worker Association](#) to discuss how community health workers promote healthy communities by acting as a bridge between communities and health/social services, and how the General Assembly can support this vital workforce.



I appreciate it when constituents take the time to show their support and appreciation for the work I do in the NCGA.



I met with the [Self Advocates of Mecklenburg County](#), an advocacy group that provides a means of taking action for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This may have been the biggest group to ever fit in my office! We discussed the need to improve wages for direct care workers who assist people with disabilities, more affordable housing, making old buildings accessible to people with disabilities, and disability insurance.



I met with [EnergyUnited](#), the largest Electric Cooperative in North Carolina, to discuss support for grid reliability, broadband accessibility, and rural economic development. 93 counties in North Carolina are served by electric co-ops, and these non-profit co-ops belong to the communities they serve.



I met with William Rakatansky, Carol Bacon, and Melanie Reddrick, all architects in Mecklenburg County advocating on behalf of the [American Institute of Architects](#). We discussed legislation to promote workforce development in architecture, support of minority populations within the profession, standardizing conflicting codes and standards regarding elevators between the Department of Labor and the Department of Insurance, and a provision in [SB166](#), which would eliminate the two positions on the Building Code Council that are held by architects.



I met with United Way of North Carolina to discuss the [NC 211 service](#), which connects North Carolinians in need to resources and information via live telephone assistance. This service is available at all hours of the day and in all 100 counties. Data from [North Carolina 211 Counts](#) shows that last year, there were 2,665 total requests from Senate District 41. There have been 831 total requests from SD41 in 2024 so far. This service provides us with data that allows us to see what constituents need help with most, such as housing, utilities, family support, and healthcare.



I met with Quisha Mallette of the NC Justice Center to discuss increased access to expunction relief, the elimination of permanent driver's license suspensions for matters not related to public safety, and the regulation of the distribution, use, removal, and destruction of mugshots. Changes to North Carolina statutes regarding these issues would eliminate barriers to housing, employment, and community engagement for North Carolinians with a criminal record.



North Carolina General Assembly

Senate

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APPROPRIATIONS ON JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY
APPROPRIATIONS/BASE BUDGET
COMMERCE AND INSURANCE
EDUCATION/HIGHER EDUCATION
JUDICIARY
REDISTRICTING AND ELECTIONS

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It is with great pleasure and heartfelt congratulations that I would like to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Bethune/Height Recognition Program. Since its inception in 1974, this program has blossomed into a remarkable movement, embodying the enduring legacy of National Council of Negro Women's esteemed founder, Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune.

Over the past five decades, the Bethune/Height Recognition Program has provided a platform for individuals to embrace Mrs. Bethune's vision and dedication to service. By contributing to the causes she held dear, participants have fostered positive change and progress within their communities.

As we look ahead to the next fifty years and beyond, let us continue to honor the legacy of Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune by upholding the principles of civic engagement, empowerment, and the power of education that she championed throughout her lifetime. Together, may we strive to build upon the foundation laid by the Bethune/Height Recognition Program and work tirelessly to create a brighter, more equitable future for all.

Once again, congratulations on this remarkable milestone.

Warm regards,


Senator Natasha Marcus
NC Senate District 41

I wrote this letter to congratulate the [National Council of Negro Women](#) (NCNW) on the 50th anniversary of their Bethune/Height Recognition Program, which honors individuals who exemplify community leadership and civic duty while supporting the work of the NCNW.



Upon the invitation of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office and Taiwanese Consulate, I attended a performance by the Taiwan Ten Drum Arts Percussion Group, who are known for their interpretations of Taiwanese history, folktales, and culture. This was Taiwanese Heritage Week.

Operation Fan Heat Relief



Operation Fan Heat Relief is a program annually conducted by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services from May 1 to October aimed at providing a more comfortable living environment and reducing heat-related illnesses for older adults and adults with disabilities through the purchase of fans and, in some counties, air conditioning units for adults with more serious health-related illnesses. For Mecklenburg County, the Parks and Recreation Department will facilitate the program. Contact Trena Palmer at **(980) 722-2199** to take advantage of the program if you live in Mecklenburg County. Otherwise, find your local provider [here](#). Learn more about the program and find other tips for cooling off this summer [here](#).

Sneaker Recycling in Davidson



News of Davidson announced a sneaker recycling program at the beginning of this month, donating any proceeds made to the Davidson Veterans Monument Fund. As part of this program, a sneaker collection tent would have been set up at Town Day, which was unfortunately canceled due to inclement weather. However, due to the program's initial success throughout the town, News of Davidson plans to continue collecting sneakers, and will continue to donate any proceeds to the Davidson Veterans Monument Fund.

Sneaker recycling bins are located at Town Hall (inside the main entrance on South Street), CrossFit Davidson, and the Davidson Branch Library. Residents of The Pines can also use the bin in the Arts and Crafts Room within the community. You don't have to reside in Davidson to donate. Learn more [here](#).

She Built This City: Critical Home Repair



She Built This City, a Charlotte-based organization dedicated to creating pathways to employment for women in the trades, offers a Critical Home Repair Program to prevent small repairs from growing into larger problems. Some of the services provided include:

- Minor plumbing repairs (faucet replacement, leaking toilets and sinks)
- Minor drywall repairs
- Door adjustments and hardware
- Outlet replacements (GCFI, light switches)

Eligibility Requirements:

- Must be below 70% AMI (Area Median Income) for household
- Must be within Mecklenburg County
- Must exhibit inability to make repairs independently
- Must be up to date on mortgage payments and/or property taxes
- Must be an owner-occupant
- Must have lived in the home for at least five years with the intention of staying at least five more years after repairs

Learn more and apply [here](#).

Public Input Taken on Red Line Project



In the next ten to fifteen years, Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) plans to complete the Red Line Project, which would connect north Mecklenburg County and south Iredell County to uptown Charlotte. In April, CATS held two meetings to explain the project's history, how the scope of the project has changed, how the commuter rail could benefit the community, and to discuss the current progress of the project. Following Norfolk Southern's policy change on passenger rails in 2013, discussions regarding the project halted between the railway and the City of Charlotte. While there have been some setbacks as a result of the time it has taken to return to project planning, there have also been changes to Charlotte that will be beneficial to the Red Line, such as the existence of the new Charlotte Gateway Station.

The Red Line would help to reduce traffic along I-77, but wouldn't be ready until 2034 at the earliest due to changes in project development, the design phase, engineering, construction, environmental studies, and the need to acquire property. Residents can submit feedback on the project by emailing RedLine@publicinput.com or by calling **855-925-2801** and using project code **1752**. Learn more [here](#) and [here](#).

Financial Update on the State's General Fund

Beginning Cash, Friday, May 03	13,436,099,144.29
Add Receipts:	
Tax and Non-Tax Receipts	444,053,851.12
Coronavirus Relief Receipts	0.00
Other Receipts	1,710,359,275.94
Less Disbursements:	
Payroll	201,126,940.00
State Aid	126,219,552.07
Medicaid/Other Provider Payments	1,868,636,401.81
Tax Refunds/Distributions	48,549,468.95
Debt Service	0.00
Coronavirus Relief Transfers Out	0.00
General Operating	303,787,625.40
Ending Cash, Friday, May 10	13,042,192,283.12
Less Reserved Cash:	
Due to Local Governments – Sales and Use Tax Payable	913,949,974.21
Other Reserves	59,381,037.93
American Recovery Plan Act Reserve	10,397,750.98
Carry Forward Reserve	242,886,016.20
Clean Water Drinking Water Reserve	0.00
Coronavirus Capital Projects Reserve	0.00
Coronavirus Relief Reserve	0.00
Earthquake Disaster Recovery Reserve	0.00
Economic Development Project Reserve	736,800,000.00
Federal Infrastructure Match Reserve	121,758,723.00
Housing Reserve	0.00
Hurricane Florence Disaster Recovery Reserve	56,770,682.30
Information Technology Reserve	410,307,521.00
Local Fiscal Recovery Reserve-ARPA	0.00
Local Govt Coronavirus Relief Reserve	0.00
Local Project Reserve	0.00
Medicaid Contingency Reserve	726,512,736.00
Medicaid Transformation Reserve	60,642,170.00
NC GREAT Reserve	0.00
NC Innovation Reserve	0.00
Opioid Abatement Reserve	35,030,248.56
Public School Contingency Reserve	0.00
Public School Need Based Capital Reserve	0.00
Reg Economic Dev Reserve	4,650,000.00
Repairs and Renovations Reserve	0.00
Retiree Supplement Reserve	0.00
SCIF General Fund Reserve	0.00
Savings Reserve	4,750,001,113.98
Stabilization and Inflation Reserve	1,000,000,000.00
State Emergency Response/Disaster Reserve	669,444,758.49
Transportation Reserve	0.00
Unfunded Liability Solvency Reserve	0.00
Wilmington Harbor Enhancements Reserve	283,800,000.00
World University Games Reserve	0.00
Unreserved Cash Balance, Friday, May 10	2,959,859,550.47

The Office of the State Controller (OSC) released the General Fund Cash Watch numbers for the week ending Friday, May 10. OSC provides a weekly update on the State's General Fund cash position, which can be found at osc.nc.gov. **The current unreserved cash balance in state coffers is \$2.959 billion.**

The State Controller is North Carolina's chief fiscal officer and serves as an independent resource to ensure the financial integrity of the State.

Links to Helpful Information

Domestic Violence Hotline: If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence or partner abuse, please call [Safe Alliance](#) at **704-332-2513** and they can help you.

Mecklenburg's County Bar [website](#) provides a list of pro bono resources for those unable to afford legal counsel.

Mecklenburg's Department of Community Resources provides individuals and families with [immediate access](#) to a diverse range of Mecklenburg County Health and Human Services programs and community partner services in Community Resources Centers throughout the County.

Mecklenburg's Energy Assistance Programs: Do you need help paying your heating or cooling bills? Mecklenburg offers [two different programs](#) to help eligible low-income households with their energy needs.

Property Tax values and histories in Mecklenburg County can be searched on [this site](#) that includes links to Polaris and information about past assessments. You can find more detailed information on real estate values on the [Mecklenburg](#) site.

Suicide Prevention: If you have thoughts of harming yourself, **please call or text 988**, the Suicide Prevention Hotline for help.

Unclaimed Cash! Visit [NCCash.com](#) today to see if you have unclaimed property under the supervision of the NC Treasurer's office. More info [here](#).

Voter Information: You can find your current information on the [NC Voter Lookup page](#).

Free Property Tax Assistance Services



Do you need help with your property taxes? The [Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy](#) is providing free assistance to help homeowners prepare their NC property tax relief applications. Call **980-256-7952** or visit their website to learn more [here](#).

Contact Our Office

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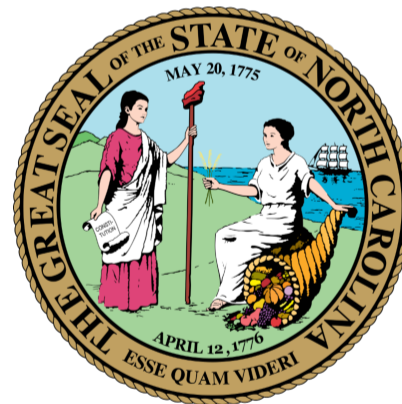
Sara

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Raleigh, NC 27603



How can we help you? Let us know and [reach out](#) to our office! We want to hear from you.

Senator Natasha Marcus | [Website](#)



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