

For Immediate Release



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From the Office of Sen. Joyce Waddell, NC Senate
Mecklenburg County

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Greetings:

At the General Assembly
For the Week

Last week the Rules & Operations of the Senate, Education, and Pensions & Retirement and Aging committees met to determine whether to advance bills to the Senate floor.

Joyce Waddell



Moms Against Violence

Senator Waddell participated in a discussion about current legislation after the March with the Charlotte chapter of Moms Against Violence.

Special Education Funding Reform

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (DPI), which oversees the state's public schools, submitted a proposal to state lawmakers in March. This proposal advocates for funding special education based on the individual needs of the child, rather than the current practice of providing a uniform amount for every special education student, regardless of disability.

Currently, North Carolina allocates about \$5,300 per disabled student to districts, up to 13% of total enrollment. However, if the percentage of disabled students rises to 20% (2,000 students), the cap limits state funding to \$6.9 million, reducing per-student spending to under \$3,500, significantly less than the maximum.

Most school systems and many charter schools exceed this cap. Education officials have long advocated for lifting the cap and revising the funding model to better serve the over 200,000 students with disabilities in the state.

The new proposal aims to lift the cap and establish various levels of need, allowing for more flexible funding. While no bill has been filed yet to enable these changes, the increasing recognition of the need for reform among lawmakers offers hope to parents, disability rights advocates, and education officials.

In 2021, lawmakers directed the DPI to study this issue, resulting in a more dynamic funding formula that considers student needs—indicating a growing legislative interest in change.

I believe that capping dollars for our most vulnerable students is not wise. We should be creating additional avenues for our students to learn versus limiting access to much needed resources.

Campaign Finance

HB 237, a North Carolina General Assembly bill, intended as a compromise on changing the state's mask law, also includes provisions that would alter campaign finance regulations to permit more dark money donations.

All state Senate Democrats walked out in protest before the vote on Thursday, which passed 28-0 in the 50-member Senate. The Republican Senate leader called out each Democratic senator's name during the vote, but they had all exited the chamber.

The bill's campaign finance section removes some rules about reporting contributions set by the State Board of Elections and eliminates the requirement for a political group's assistant or deputy treasurer to reside in North Carolina.

In May 2020, the State Board of Elections advised the Democratic Governors Association that federal political committees receiving corporate funds could not donate to state political-party committees, as it would circumvent North Carolina's ban on direct corporate contributions.

The bill was criticized for the lack of process, stating that proper procedures, including committee reviews and public hearings, were bypassed.

This bill has the propensity to circumvent the fair and equitable political process that is in place. I believe this bill will bring some unwanted consequences. After walking out of the chamber, we held a press conference to discuss the negative effects of this bill.



Democrat Press Conference

Senator Waddell and other legislative colleagues participated in a press conference discussing the negative aspects of HB 237.

NC General Assembly

Visit www.ncleg.gov, the official website of the North Carolina General Assembly. Use this website as a tool to track bills, find and communicate with your state representatives, as well as follow chamber activity, meetings and issues before the General Assembly. The 2022 Short Session began on Wednesday, May 18th at 12:00 noon.



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