

## Latest Updates from the NCGA



**From** Sen. Natasha Marcus <natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov>  
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**Date** 2024-08-09 15:30



## NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

August 9, 2024

### 2024 Legislative Session In Recess



The NCGA ended our official short session in June. As a result, there have been no committee meetings or votes over the last two weeks. I'll keep you posted about any special sessions that may arise.

### Child Care Cliff Update: A Dramatic Decrease In Licensed Child Care Programs



Childcare is critical for working families and for our state's economy. The number of licensed child care programs in North Carolina has decreased by 5.3% in the last four years, but that loss increased rapidly this year. Using data provided by the NC Child Care Resource and Referral Council and the NC Division of Child Development and Early Education, EdNC found that 40% of the net loss in these programs that has occurred since the beginning of the pandemic happened between June 2023 and June 2024. While the General Assembly approved \$67.5 million to extend compensation grants to child care providers in an attempt to stave off the funding cliff created by the end of federally-funded grant programs, that amount is only a fraction of what we will need to fill the gap caused by the expiration of the federal government's childcare subsidies. Instead of "falling off a funding cliff, North Carolina's licensed child care system is now rolling down a steep hill toward the end of 2024," according to Katie Dukes with EdNC. Learn more [here](#).

## Toll Road Text Scam



The Federal Bureau of Investigation put out an alert warning Americans of a new scam involving outstanding tolls citizens supposedly owe. One such scam involves texts claiming to be sent on behalf of the NC Turnpike Authority, which operates toll roads in Mecklenburg County and around the state. **The Turnpike Authority will never request toll payments via text.** If you receive a text with a link to a website claiming to request payment for outstanding tolls, **it is fake.** The correct website to pay tolls is [www.ncquickpass.com](http://www.ncquickpass.com). Learn more [here](#).

## Senator Marcus in the Community



I participated in a mentoring program with the non-partisan group [Running Start](#), for young women who are interested in learning leadership and political skills. One of the mentees with whom I met is Tatenda Dzvimbo, who is originally from Zimbabwe and was delightfully excited to learn about the American system of government from the perspective of a state senator.



I joined the Lake Norman Business Network for Women (LKNBNW) in Cornelius to help celebrate their five-year anniversary. LKNBNW is a networking group for women professionals in the Lake Norman area. Find out more [here](#).

## Sneaker Recycling in Davidson Update





In May, News of Davidson announced a sneaker recycling program in which they would donate any proceeds made to the Davidson Veterans Monument Fund. Though they originally planned for Town Day to be the one event at which they collected sneakers, Town Day was canceled due to inclement weather. However, the efforts of CrossFit Davidson, the Davidson Area Running Team, and CSD Spartan 5k runners meant that the cancellation of Town Day had almost no impact on the collection process. By late May, News of Davidson had collected more than 300 pairs of shoes. Due to the program's initial success throughout the town, News of Davidson has continued 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](#).

## Lake Norman Marine Commission Resumes Free Life Ring Program



Anyone with a dock on Lake Norman can apply to the Lake Norman Marine Commission (LNMC) to receive a free US Coast Guard-approved life ring. The LNMC will deliver the ring to you, or the ring can be picked up at the Commission's monthly meeting. To get your dock safety life preserver, just download [this form](#), fill it out, and either return it to the LNMC or email it to [LNMC@LNMC.org](mailto:LNMC@LNMC.org). Learn more [here](#).

## August 10: Davidson Fire Department Invites Community to "Stuff the Truck"



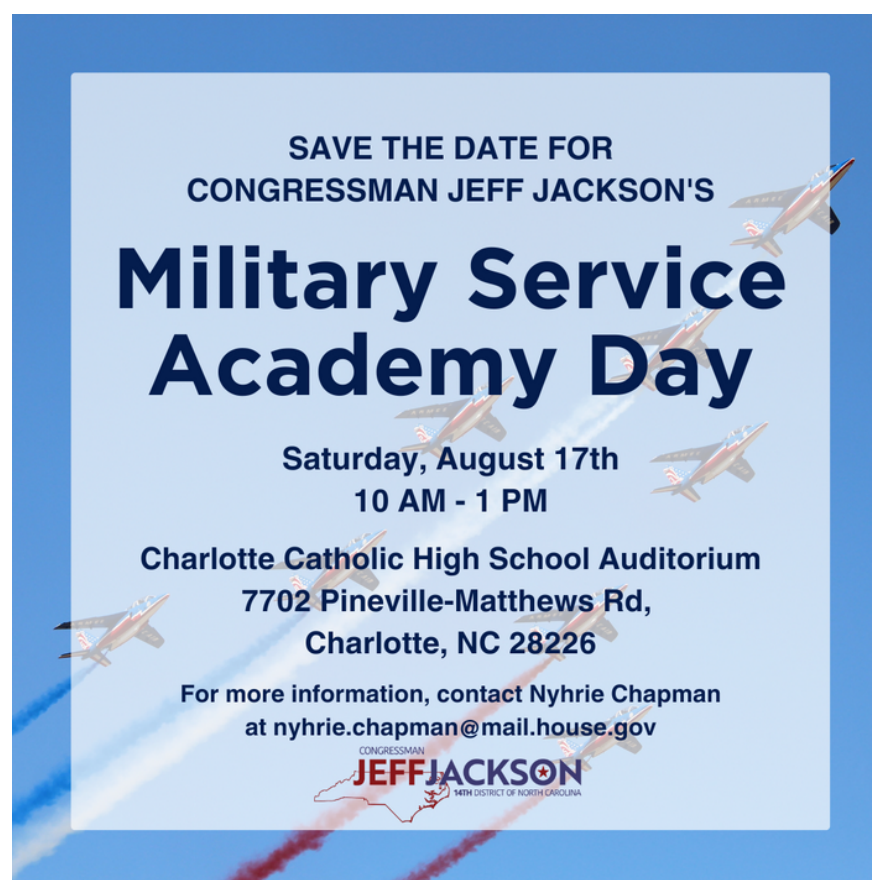


Thanks to the collaborative efforts of FeedNC, the Davidson Fire Department, and the Mecklenburg County Professional Firefighters Association (Local 5326), a back-to-school Stuff the Truck event will be held on **Saturday, August 10**, at Davidson United Methodist Church (233 S. Main Street). **Donations can be made from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM.**

This annual event collects critical school supplies to ease the burden on children and their families. Suggested donations include lunch boxes, hygiene items, granola bars, Goldfish, fruit snacks, applesauce pouches, breakfast bars, chewy bars, gluten-free snacks, Cheez-its, animal crackers, pretzels, popcorn, individual peanut butter packets, cookies, graham crackers, and other individually wrapped crackers. First Responders will be on site with Fire Engine 3 to assist with drop-offs throughout the event.

For questions regarding the 2024 Stuff the Truck event, please contact Bonnie with FeedNC by emailing [bbattalia@feednc.org](mailto:bbattalia@feednc.org).

### August 17: Military Service Academy Day Event in Charlotte



On **Saturday, August 17, from 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM**, Congressman Jeff Jackson will host a Military Service Academy Day event at Charlotte Catholic High School (**7702 Pineville-Matthews Rd, Charlotte, NC 28226**). High school students who may have an interest in one or more of the U.S. Military Service Academies are encouraged to attend and explore their options in service. For more information, email Nyhrie Chapman at [nyhrie.chapman@mail.house.gov](mailto:nyhrie.chapman@mail.house.gov).

## September 24: State Health Plan Transition to Aetna - Information Event in Charlotte



For state employees and retirees with questions about the impending switch from BCBS to Aetna - mark your calendar! In 2025, Aetna will be the new Third-Party Administrator for the North Carolina State Health Plan Network. To aid in the transition, Aetna is hosting 20 information events across the state.

On **Tuesday, September 24**, the Open Enrollment Aetna Outreach Bus will be at Central Piedmont Community College (**1201 Elizabeth Avenue Charlotte NC 28204**) from **11:00 AM - 3:00 PM**, and Aetna representatives will be available to answer questions about the transition, including the ability to look up your providers. **Attendees will have the opportunity to receive a flu shot on a first-come, first-served basis.** No registration is required, and attendance is free. Learn more [here](#).

## Mecklenburg County Homes Program Now Available for Homeowners in Charlotte and Davidson



The Helping Out Mecklenburg Homeowners with Economic Support (HOMES) Program has returned for another season. From **July 1 – Nov. 22, 2024**, Mecklenburg County is partnering with the City of Charlotte and the Town of Davidson to provide **grant funding to qualifying residential homeowners to help address the rising costs of retaining their homes**. Program recipients must apply for consideration annually.

Grant funds will be paid to the Mecklenburg County Tax Collector, **who will reduce the total amount of taxes due for qualifying recipients' primary residence**. The amount granted will equal 35% of the Mecklenburg County tax amount on the last available tax bill, rounded to the nearest dollar, not to exceed \$648.

**Applicants must not be participants in any of the following programs:**

- North Carolina Homestead Exclusion
- North Carolina Property Tax Homestead Circuit Breaker
- North Carolina Disabled Veterans Exclusion
- North Carolina Present Use Value (PUV) Program

To be eligible:

- The property must be located within Mecklenburg County, NC.
- The property must be the owner's legal primary residence at the time of application and consistently for the past three consecutive years, as verified by recorded legal documents.
- The resident grant recipient's name(s) must be on the recorded deed, title, or life estate.

Paper applications can also be obtained from:

- Department of Community Resources (**3205 Freedom Drive, Suite 1000, Charlotte, NC 28208**)
- County Assessor's Office (**3205 Freedom Drive, Suite 3500, Charlotte NC 28208**)
- Ella B. Scarborough Community Resource Center (**430 Stitt Road, Charlotte, NC 28213**)

Learn more about the program and complete the application [here](#). Contact the HOMES Program at **980-314-4663** or [4homes@mecknc.gov](mailto:4homes@mecknc.gov) for help with the application process.

## North Carolina Summer Meals Programs for Kids



More than 900,000 North Carolina students rely on the nutritious meals and snacks served during the school year through the School Breakfast, School Lunch and Afterschool Snack Programs. When school is out, those low-income children lose access to meals. Summer Meals Programs provide nutritious meals at no cost for children and adolescents ages 18 and younger to help close that gap.

To find nutritious summer meals at no-cost near you for kids and teens:

- Text "Food" to 304-304 for information in English or "COMIDA" to 304-304 for information in Spanish.
- Use the [N.C. Site Finder Map](#)
- Check your local school district website, social media or other communications.
- Learn more [here](#).

As part of these programs, there will be fitness, fun, and farm-to-summer activities across the state that encourage program operators to serve local food as part of meals and snacks and teach about agriculture. Learn more and sign up for the Farm to Summer challenge [here](#).



## Sun Bucks

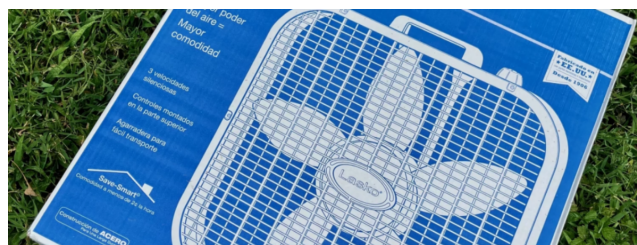


The USDA has launched a permanent program to provide food assistance to children and families during the summer. SUN Bucks will provide grocery-buying benefits to qualifying families with school-aged children during the summer months when schools are on summer break. SUN Bucks will be issued to EBT cards that families can use to purchase nutritious food. Beginning in summer 2024, families will receive \$120 per eligible child for the summer period. Some families will have to apply for the program, but many students will automatically qualify. Children will automatically qualify if they already participate in any of the following programs:

- Free or Reduced-Price (FRP) meals at school because they have an approved FRP application at school, or
- Food and Nutrition Services (FNS, food stamps), or
- Work First (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), cash assistance), or
- Medicaid with household income below 185% of the federal poverty level, or
- Foster care.

Families will be able to use their EBT cards to buy food at grocery stores, farmers' markets, and [some online retailers](#). Find out if your child automatically qualifies or if you will need to apply for the program [here](#). View the Sun Bucks FAQ [here](#). Learn more [here](#), and receive information on the program as it becomes available [here](#).

## Fans Available for Seniors and Adults who Receive Disability Income (Registration Required)



Seniors (60+) and adults 18-59 who receive disability income in Mecklenburg County may receive box fans for free by registering [online](#) or calling one of the eight pickup locations listed below:

- Albemarle Road Recreation Center (5027 Idlewild Road North in Charlotte) 980-314-1101
- **David B. Waymer Recreation Center (14008 Holbrooks Road in Huntersville) 980-314-1127**
- Eastway Regional Recreation Center (3150 Eastway Park Drive in Charlotte) 980-314-3772
- **Northern Regional Recreation Center (18121 Old Statesville Road in Cornelius) (980) 314-6772**
- **Southview Recreation Center (1720 Vilma Street in Charlotte) 980-314-1105**
- Sugaw Creek Recreation Center (943 W. Sugaw Creek Road in Charlotte) 980-314-1124
- Tyvola Senior Center (2225 Tyvola Road in Charlotte) 980-314-1320
- **West Charlotte Recreation Center (2401 Kendall Drive in Charlotte) 980-314-1120**

Fans are limited to one per person. When picking up a fan, you must show a valid ID providing proof of age and a current Mecklenburg County address. Pre-registration is required, and walk-up requests will not be accepted. Learn more [here](#).

## Financial Update on the State's General Fund

<b>Beginning Cash, Friday, July 26</b>	<b>13,666,231,212.02</b>
<b>Add Receipts:</b>	
Tax and Non-Tax Receipts	325,707,237.88
Coronavirus Relief Receipts	0.00
Other Receipts	1,502,251,938.02
<b>Less Disbursements:</b>	
Payroll	756,796,841.18
State Aid	29,684,919.62
Medicaid/Other Provider Payments	243,171,256.01
Tax Refunds/Distributions	33,015,915.50
Debt Service	0.00
Coronavirus Relief Transfers Out	0.00
General Operating	1,251,181,073.50
<b>Ending Cash, Friday, August 02</b>	<b>13,180,340,382.11</b>
<b>Less Reserved Cash:</b>	
Due to Local Governments – Sales and Use Tax	955,391,301.73
Other Reserves	11,278,663.58
American Recovery Plan Act Reserve	38,860,806.99
Carry Forward Reserve	669,658,947.90
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	735,832,000.00
Federal Infrastructure Match Reserve	121,758,723.00
Housing Reserve	0.00
Hurricane Florence Disaster Recovery Reserve	27,681,316.00
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	48,571,688.89
Public School Contingency Reserve	0.00
Public School Need Based Capital Reserve	0.00
Reg Economic Dev Reserve	0.00
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	720,874,062.95
Transportation Reserve	0.00
Unfunded Liability Solvency Reserve	0.00
Wilmington Harbor Enhancements Reserve	283,800,000.00
World University Games Reserve	0.00
<b>Unreserved Cash Balance, Friday, August 02</b>	<b>2,619,169,330.09</b>

The Office of the State Controller (OSC) released the General Fund Cash Watch numbers for the week ending Friday, August 2. OSC provides a weekly update on the State's General Fund cash position, which can be found at [osc.nc.gov](https://osc.nc.gov). **The current unreserved cash balance in state coffers is \$2.619 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.

**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](#).

**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](#).

## Contact Our Office

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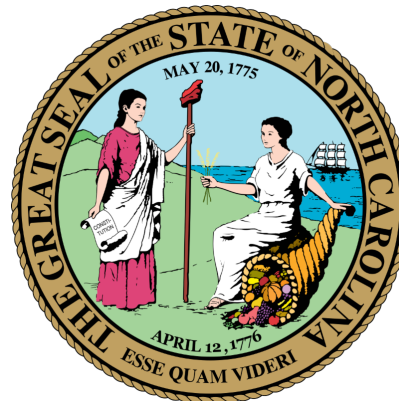
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How can we help you? Let us know and [reach out](#) to our office! We want to hear from you.

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