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For Immediate Release - Senator Joyce Waddell's NC Elections Board Ruling (Senate Bill 68)

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Sent: Friday, February 02, 2018 4:26 PM



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



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, February 2, 2018

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NC Elections Board Ruling (Senate Bill 68)

Charlotte, NC – On January 26, the North Carolina Supreme Court issued a ruling striking down Senate Bill 68, Bipartisan Board of Elections and Ethics Enforce, saying it violated the state Constitution’s separation of powers clause by limiting Governor Cooper’s power to appoint a majority of the board’s members. The 4-3 ruling, split along the Court’s partisan lines, declared the law unconstitutional. The Supreme Court’s order will be sent to the panel of three judges who initially heard the case on February 15. Those judges will then issue their own ruling on how the Supreme Court’s decision affects the challenged law.

Prior to Governor Roy Cooper taking office, the Republican-led legislature passed Senate Bill 68, Bipartisan Board of Elections and Ethics Enforce, which makes a number of changes to both the State Board of Elections and the State Ethics Commission. Senate Bill 68 combines the State Board of Elections and the State Ethics Commission. The GOP-Leadership General Assembly would appoint four of the members. Previously, the State Board of Elections had five members, with three from the Governor’s party. Under the former leadership of Republican Governor Pat McCrory, the Board attempted to authorize measures which impacted minority communities, such as reducing the days of early voting and preventing out-of-precinct voting. Senate Bill 68 also extends the tenure of the executive director of the State Board of Elections, who was previously selected by Governor McCrory. Governor Cooper opposed the legislation with a veto of which was overridden. Several legal court proceedings were initiated. Currently, based on the Court’s recent decision, the positions on the new State Board of Elections and State Ethics Commission have remained vacant.

“I applaud the NC Supreme Court’s decision. Our job as government officials is to ensure that fairness is present throughout the democratic process,” said Senator Joyce Waddell.

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