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Legislative Updates from the Office of Rep. Nasif Majeed

Representative Nasif Majeed [majeedla@ncleg.net]

Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2019 1:29 PM

To: Steve Johnston

April 11, 2019


Representative Nasif Majeed Serving District 99



UPDATES FROM RALEIGH:

PEACE. The North Carolina General Assembly is a dynamic environment for change that affects the quality of life for all North Carolinians. This week I sponsored House Bill 618 and House Bill 696. [HB 618](#), titled UNC HBCU Funding Parity/NC A&T Doctorial Programs, allocates funds to HBCUs under the UNC system and provides a specific amount to NC A&T to support its Doctorial Programs. [HB 696](#), titled NC Families First Act, which will provide paid family leave for working North Carolinians.

My Hate Crimes Prevention Act bill ([HB312](#)) is progressing through the process and I'm working with help from across the aisle to get it to the floor for a vote. I haven't filed my bill that will increase the property tax benefits for 100% disabled veterans because I have to include some fiscal impact data that is currently being researched.

Please know that I am serious about improving community life and working hard for you.

House Leader Introduces Bipartisan Legislation Clarifying 2018 Voter ID Law

Several legislators, Rep. David Lewis (R-Harnett), Rep. Zach Hawkins (D-Durham), Rep. Jon Hardister (R-Guilford), and Rep. Ray Russell (D-Watauga) introduced [HB 646 ID Approval/Flex Muni One-Stop](#) on Tuesday afternoon. This legislation largely makes clarifications to the Voter ID law passed in 2018 to ensure that the Board of Elections can accept secure IDs from universities and state and local governments.

This bill also creates a two year window for ID approvals and allows the State Board to create a no-change form for entities to complete in subsequent years if they haven't changed their ID process.

School Performance Grades

Schools receive grades just like students. Currently, schools' grades are based on test

scores with 80% of the grade coming from how students perform on tests (achievement) and 20% coming on how students' scores improve during the year (growth). The current grading scale for schools is a 15-point scale, but it is scheduled to drop to a 10-point scale.

You may think using test scores to grade schools is a good idea or a bad idea, but even if you think it's a good idea there are two big problems with current law. The first is the grade emphasizes how well students test and not how well schools are teaching students. Imagine two different schools.

- School A is full of lots of wealthy families. The students have pretty good test scores, but for whatever reason the school is not working that well and test scores stay at the pretty good level.
- School B is full of lots of lower income families. The students have low test scores, but the school staff is terrific and the kids make great strides throughout the year and their test scores rise significantly to an average level.

Under our current system, School A will have higher grade than School B – but that obviously should not be the case because School B is doing a great job lifting up its students while School A is not.

HB 354 passed the NC House and would change the scoring formula so growth counts for 50% of a school's grade and not 20%.

The second problem with the current system is we are about to shift from a 15-point grading scale to a 10-point grading scale meaning a bunch of schools will see their A-F letter grade go down even if nothing has changed at the school. Attaching grades to schools based on test scores only is not a good idea. Arbitrarily lowering those grades by changing the grading scale is an even worse idea. That's why I voted for **HB 362** to keep the scale where it is.

A third bill that passed the House is **HB 266** which assigns each school two grades – one for testing achievement and one for testing growth.

Each of these three bills is not perfect, but would improve the current situation. Unfortunately, the outlook for all three in the State Senate is not good.

Great to meet with a contingent of outstanding honor students from my alma mater, NC A&T State University. These "A" students were Engineering and Computer Science majors and I was extremely impressed how they represented the A&T academic tradition so well.

Last week I sponsored **House Bill 618** which would allocate fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000) in additional recurring funds for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. This money is to be allocated to constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina that are designated as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to help address funding disparities between the HBCUs and other constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina. \$7,500,000 in additional recurring funds will be directed from the General Fund to the Board of Governors to be allocated to A&T to support established doctoral programs.





NC A&T State University Chancellor Harold Martin with several other legislators, students, and staff.



Legislators stand with advocates for family leave at press conference to introduce the filing of HB 696

Yesterday I had the pleasure of joining Representatives Graig Meyer, Sydney Batch, and Christy Clark as primary sponsors for [House Bill 696, NC Families First Act](#).

Currently, only 2% of North Carolina's workers benefit from paid family leave to bond with a newborn, care for a sick family member, or simply deal with your own health challenges. And those eligible to take unpaid leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) typically cannot afford it.

This legislation would set up a shared insurance pool to provide paid family leave for working North Carolinians. Employers and employees would each pay about \$2 per

week into the insurance pool. Then when an employee needed leave, they could draw replacement wages from the insurance.

The employer could use that worker's wages to hire a temporary replacement or increase the hours of other employees to do the needed work.

Employees would be eligible for wage replacement of up to 90% of their weekly wages, with the total benefit being capped at the average weekly wage for all North Carolina. It would cover up to 12 weeks of paid leave to care for a child or family member. 18 weeks for a person with serious health conditions, and 26 weeks for those care for someone injured in military service.



TAX FILING DEADLINE REMINDER

April 15 falls on a Monday and it's not a holiday, so the **filing deadline** for your 2018 **tax return** is indeed April 15.

[Why you should file on time](#)

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Have a great weekend! PEACE.

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Representative Nasif Majeed, District 99 | Legislative Building, 16 W. Jones Street, Room 1008, Raleigh, NC 27601

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