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Senator Joyce Waddell's January 30, 2017, Newsletter

Jyrita Moore (Sen. Joyce Waddell) [Waddelljla@ncleg.net]

Sent: Monday, January 30, 2017 10:31 AM

Senator Joyce Waddell's January 30, 2017, Newsletter

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NC Senate
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Raleigh, NC 27601-2808

*Serving District 40 and
Mecklenburg County*

The Waddell Weekly Bulletin

Vol. 3 Ed. 1
No. 2

January 30,
2017



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Dear Friends:

On Wednesday, January 25, my fellow legislators and I returned to Raleigh to convene for the 2017-18 legislative session. Although there were no votes taken during session this week, lawmakers have been busy filing bills to be presented to committee and on the Senate and House floor for debate and vote.

The House and Senate Democrats held a news conference on Wednesday to describe our legislative goals for this year. Our priorities include a full repeal of House Bill 2, raising teacher salary, cutting taxes, and Medicaid expansion. With the support of Governor Roy Cooper, we hope to make this a highly productive session. Moving forward, my newsletter will outline our legislative priorities. *I cannot achieve anything without the support of my constituents. Thank you very much for your continued support!*

Please continue to refer to the North Carolina General Assembly website www.ncleg.net. You will be able to track legislation, sign up for committee notices, and review the citizen's guide.

I encourage you to contact us with your thoughts, comments, or suggestions. Please feel free to have others join in on conversation by sending contact information to Joyce.Waddell@ncleg.net.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Legislative Priorities

• Full Repeal of House Bill 2

House Bill 2, the controversial measure that limits the rights of LGBT citizens, continues to have a devastating impact on North Carolina's economy. The solution is simple; repeal it. During our fifth special session last year, Senate Democrats were ready to fully repeal this disastrous law; however, the Republicans introduced a bill that included a six-month

cooling-off period. Our citizens deserve better. It is time to get North Carolina back on the right track as the welcoming state that protects citizens from all forms of discrimination. We cannot let this harmful bill determine the fate of our state.

- **Raise Teacher Pay**

North Carolina is the 9th largest state in the nation but ranks 41st in teacher pay. The pay raises included in the state budget the last biennium benefited starting teachers, while veteran teachers only received little in salary increases. Low pay is one of the top reasons why teachers leave the profession. 52 percent of teachers have a second job to make ends meet. The legislature's inability to offer competitive pay has cost North Carolina thousands of fine teachers to other states. When we fail our teachers, we inadvertently fail our students. Teachers are one of our state's best resources. It is time to invest and appreciate those who train and groom our future leaders.

- **Tax Policy**

North Carolina has one of the lowest corporate tax rates in the Southeast region. The most valuable contributors to our economy, middle-class families and small businesses, have been paying more taxes while large corporations and wealthy individuals have been receiving breaks. Our tax policy should be aimed to help hard-working citizens, not hurt them. We have strategies, such as Earned-Income Tax Credit, to promote our working families and small businesses.

- **Medicaid Expansion**

Medicaid expansion will benefit low-income citizens who work hard to make a positive contribution to our state. The Republican leadership resisted expanding the program in North Carolina to cover the low-income population. North Carolinians are already paying federal taxes for the program but not reaping the benefits of the expansion. The tax dollars that would be returned if we expanded Medicaid would boost rural hospitals and increase access to health care. North Carolina deserves a government that does not play partisan games when dealing with the health of its citizens.

At the General Assembly



Senator Joyce Waddell speaks with her Democratic colleagues, Senator Jay Chaudhuri and Senator Erica Smith-Ingram, before Session on Wednesday, January 25, 2017.



Senator Joyce Waddell joins the House and Senate Democrats in a press conference to discuss their legislative priorities for the 2017-18 session on Wednesday, January 25, 2017.

[Click Here to View the NC Democrats' Top Priorities for the 2017-2018 Legislative Session](#)



Senator Joyce Waddell meets with the Father's Rights Movement of North Carolina to discuss shared parenting legislation on Wednesday, January 25, 2017.


The County News



Senator Waddell's office is open Monday through Friday during Session. You may reach her office by calling her Legislative Assistant, Jyrita Moore, at 919-733-5650 or by email at waddelljila@ncleg.net.

All committee meetings and press conferences can be heard on the General Assembly's website at www.ncleg.net. Once on the site, select **"Audio"** and then make your selection: House Chamber; Senate Chamber; Committee Room or Press Conference Room. A schedule of committee meetings and other events is also available on the website.

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