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17-07 (45)

17-08 (26)

17-09 (45)

17-10 (41)

17-11 (42)

17-12 (27)

18-01 (43)

18-02 (45)

18-03 (41)

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### For Immediate Release - Senator Joyce Waddell's School Officers and the Handlers Act

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

Sent: Friday, April 20, 2018 4:38 PM



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



#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, April 20, 2018

**CONTACT: Sen. Joyce Waddell**

**(919) 733-5650**

[Joyce.Waddell@ncleg.net](mailto:Joyce.Waddell@ncleg.net)

#### School Officers and the Handlers Act

**Charlotte, NC** – On Tuesday, the House Select Committee on School Safety heard from speakers who offered suggestions to improve the overall quality and quantity of school resource officers statewide. According to the North Carolina Center for Safer Schools, there were approximately 1,000 school resource officers from local departments working in districts statewide in 2015. In Mecklenburg County, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department and surrounding jurisdictions supply full-time school resource officers to all high schools and middle schools in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System. Law enforcement representatives stated that putting more highly qualified officers inside North Carolina schools would require more training and prestige. Subcommittee members were particularly interested in recommendations to make special training mandatory for school officers, as well as to increase state matching funds for local school districts to pay for officers. Two other subcommittees are studying student health and mental needs and working to make safety recommendations for next month’s legislative session.

**“I am glad to hear conversation about school safety in committee. It is imperative that preventive measures be put in place ensuring our students’ safety while obtaining an education within North Carolina schools,”** said Senator Joyce Waddell.

Updates to the state’s Handlers Act could be considered during the short session in May. The Handlers Act governs unfair practices by handlers of fruits and vegetables. The Agriculture and Forestry Awareness Study Commission recommended a draft bill that would clarify definitions and references, and exempt restaurants and retail establishments from having to be licensed under the act. The draft bill would also change language on who can sue a handler and his or her surety bond.

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