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For Immediate Release - Senator Joyce Waddell's March for Students and Rally for Respect

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, May 18, 2018

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



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March for Students and Rally for Respect

Charlotte, NC – On Wednesday, lawmakers were greeted by thousands of teachers from various school districts across North Carolina as they returned to Raleigh for the start of the 2018 short legislative session. The purpose of the March for Students and Rally for Respect was to bring awareness to insufficient state funding in North Carolina for public schools and to advocate for livable wages for teachers. Governor Roy Cooper has taken steps to address the issues of teacher pay, school safety, and job readiness in the state of North Carolina, through his proposed 2018-19 budget.

Governor Cooper’s budget will ensure teachers receive a 5 percent increase in pay, with an average at 8 percent this year, and will put North Carolina on track to reach the national average for teacher pay by the year 2020. North Carolina currently ranks 37th in teacher pay in the nation and is one of the worst states in the amount elected leaders spend per student in our public schools. Governor Cooper’s budget will also put North Carolina on track to be a Top Ten Educated state by the year 2025 by adding 2,000 pre-k slots, allocating \$25 million for textbooks and digital learning, and providing teachers a \$150 stipend to cover out-of-pocket expenses for classroom supplies. The Governor’s budget will also include \$130 million to hire personnel, such as nurses and school resource officers, to address issues of safety and mental health in our public schools. Job readiness is also addressed by Governor Cooper’s budget, which will invest \$30 million in the NC Grow Program to provide free training at community colleges for high-demand industries, and \$20 million in Finish Line Grants to help students facing financial hardship finish their degree. Additionally, NC Job Ready includes \$10 million, which will assist employers to provide on-the-job training.

“As a former educator, I enjoyed speaking with the teachers during the rally. Every teacher deserves to be adequately compensated for the important work their educational skills offer to the State’s students daily. I agree and support the Governor’s proposed budget to increase teacher pay, provide resources for school safety, and continually prepare students for future employment,” said Senator Joyce Waddell.

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