



**February 7, 2019**

Peace. January was a great commencement, with oath of office ceremonies in Charlotte (for the convenience of the Charlotte community) and in Raleigh. The super majority is broken and there is a new environment in Raleigh and I am optimistic that this environment will produce positive change as related to improvements in education and Medicaid expansion. Additionally, I will be sponsoring a hate crime bill that will change the penalty from a misdemeanor to a felony.

The beginning of session starts off slow as legislators introduce bills, which are the ideas they want to pass into law. Once bills are filed, committees can start meeting to recommend bills, and we can vote on bills. This year's session of the General Assembly is what is called our Long Session. It is called that because it starts in January and lasts until July or August – which makes it longer than next year's session which will start in the spring of 2020 and also end around July or August. That's called the Short Session.

House Speaker Tim Moore announced a new approach to the weekly schedule for this year's session. On Mondays, the House Rules Committee, which vets and determines committee assignments for newly filed legislation, will meet prior to the Monday session that usually begins at 7:00 p.m. At this time there will be no recorded votes during the Monday sessions unless a vote is necessary on legislation. Tuesdays will be dedicated to committee meetings to allow ample time to debate and amend bills. Committees will continue to meet on Wednesdays and Thursdays, however, the focus will be on House floor sessions. Speaker Moore wants to maximize committee time to ensure legislation is thoroughly vetted.

### **Medicaid Expansion: Better Health Care and More Health Care Jobs**

On the first day of session, I proudly cosponsored [HB 5](#) to expand Medicaid in our state and make health care more affordable for 500,000 North Carolinians.

Medicaid expansion is fiscally responsible. 90% of the cost is paid for with federal taxes North Carolinians have been sending to Washington for years without getting expansion benefits returned back to us. The remaining 10% of the cost will be paid for by hospitals.

37 states have expanded Medicaid. None have changed their mind. It's past time for North Carolina to join their ranks and I look forward to working with all of my colleagues on getting this done.

## **Committees I Serve On**

The NC House Speaker appointed me to serve on the following committees: Agriculture, Appropriations, Appropriations – General Government, and Homeland Security, Military, and Veterans Affairs.

Here is a quick summary of each committee's purpose –

### **Agriculture:**

Farming is a critical job creator in our state. We have over 50,000 farms, 252 farmers' markets, and an economic impact of around \$12.5 billion. Helping farm families earn a living while protecting our natural resources and feeding the world is a top priority. Farmers need better broadband infrastructure to run their businesses and timely relief from natural disasters like floods. I look forward to working with Republicans and Democrats to help North Carolina farmers.

### **Appropriations:**

The list of important issues facing lawmakers is long. What matters most though is what your priorities are. The Appropriations Committee is about setting priorities. It is where lawmakers spend \$24 billion of your money. Every politician talks about how they support public schools. The budget is where the real proof lies. For example, there has been a lot talk about providing pay raises for teachers but North Carolina still trails the national average by nearly \$10,000 – showing that teacher pay raises are not a priority for a lot of legislators.

I am excited to serve on Appropriations so I can vote to fund my priorities: meaningful pay raises for all teachers and school employees, Medicaid expansion that will cover more folks and lower costs for the rest of us, state employee pay raises, and job creation infrastructure like rural broadband.

### **Appropriations, General Government:**

When it's working correctly, state government serves citizens in a lot of different ways and through a lot of different agencies: housing finance, department of insurance, and department of military and veteran affairs – just to name a few. On this committee, I will help decide how we invest in all of these areas and help shape how state government works for all of us.

### **Homeland Security, Military, and Veterans Affairs:**

North Carolina strives to be the most veteran and military friendly state in the nation. The military is critical to our economy and to our state identity. Being a decorated Air Force combat pilot, I am honored to serve on this committee, and I look forward to passing laws that serve our military families and help them prosper while dealing with all of the challenges involved with military service.

### **Work Opportunity Tax Credits**

The North Carolina Department of Commerce issued more than 75,000 Work Opportunity Tax Credit certifications to more than 2,500 employers in 2018. Both figures represented increases from 2017.

These are federal tax credits available to employers who hire individuals from eligible target groups who are qualified for positions but face significant barriers to employment. A business can claim from \$1,200 to \$9,600 for each eligible employee, depending upon the target group of the person hired, the wages paid to that worker in the first year of employment, and the number of hours worked.

Among those who may qualify are certain veterans, recipients of public assistance, people with felony convictions, people with disabilities, and the long-term unemployed. Only new hires are eligible.

For more information on work opportunity tax credits visit [www.nccommerce.com/grants-incentives/workforce-grants/work-opportunity-tax-credit](http://www.nccommerce.com/grants-incentives/workforce-grants/work-opportunity-tax-credit).

Finally, I had the opportunity to speak before the NC Utilities Commission here in Raleigh. I addressed the need to extend the discussions surrounding the proposal for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP), (that would run through NC), so more public hearings could be scheduled throughout the state. The commission needs to get more input from experts in the field of climate science and clean energy. There are unanswered questions relating to environmental safety, fracked gas and methane release causing global warming. Communities of color, Native American historic tribal lands and African American communities whose health/safety could be seriously impacted, need to be heard.

It's been a dynamic commencement for me and it's going to get much busier, so keep me in your prayers as I work to improve the quality of life for District #99 and North Carolina.

Enjoy your weekend,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nasif', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Legislative Sessions can be seen via WRAL's live streams daily, Monday through Thursday, @ [www.wral.com](http://www.wral.com). Also, you can listen to *committee meetings and press conferences on the General Assembly's website at [www.ncleg.net](http://www.ncleg.net). Once on the site, select "Audio," and then make your selection – House Chamber, Senate Chamber, Appropriations Committee Room or Press Conference Room.*

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