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Sen. Joyce Waddell [joyce.waddell@ncleg.net]

Sent: Friday, June 07, 2019 11:00 AM

To: Steve Johnston

From the Office of Sen. Joyce Waddell, NC Senate

Mecklenburg County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, June 7, 2019

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Senate Budget

Charlotte, NC- Last week was one of our biggest of the year: the Senate budget came to the floor! There were some promising moments of bipartisanship, such as when Republican and Democratic Senators came together to ensure funding for a water quality research center and NC Supreme Court Chief Justice Cheri Beasley’s staff.

There were also lots of proposed amendments that did not pass, including:

- From Senator Natasha Marcus: Amendment to defund Crisis Pregnancy Clinics that discourage abortions
- From Senator Davis: Amendment to remove language defunding Vidant Health in Eastern North Carolina
- From Senator Robinson: Amendment to expand Medicaid
- From Senator DeViere: Amendment to increase pay for teachers with masters degrees

Senator Waddell proposed an amendment which would have added a 2% cost of living adjustment to the pensions of North Carolina teachers and government employees. As the Senator said on the Senate floor, “Between 2008 and 2018, inflation increased the cost of living by 18.5%. But our teachers and state employees’ pensions received only a 3% cost of living adjustment [over those 10 years]. Ladies and gentleman, that’s a shame!” A pension increase would go a long way toward preventing retirees from being hard-strapped to make ends meet. It would also ensure the state economy continues to receive stimulus in the form of pensions, resulting in about \$7 billion additional output.

Unfortunately, Senator Waddell’s amendment was quickly tabled, and the Senate never returned to it. (Tabling is a form of postponing discussion in under Robert’s Rules of Order. Tabling is a non-debatable motion, meaning that once it is suggested, it must be immediately voted on, and if it passes, the topic which was tabled cannot be discussed again without a majority vote to take it from the table. In practice, this becomes a way to quickly defeat amendments by preventing discussion)

The budget did not follow Governor Cooper's calls to expand Medicaid, nor to raise teacher pay by 9% (it did include some pay raises for teachers, but only to an average of about 3.5%).

For all of these reasons, Senator Waddell could not support the budget in its current form, and voted against it. It did, however, receive the support of the majority of the Senate, and passed 30 – 16.

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