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The latest news for you

Representative Nasif Majeed [majeedla@ncleg.net]


Sent: Wednesday, July 03, 2019 6:34 PM


To: Steve Johnston

July 3, 2019

Representative Nasif Majeed

District 99





Updates from Raleigh:

PEACE. Last week House and Senate Republicans introduced their Budget Compromise Report [HB966]. This week I wanted to breakdown what I see as that budget's main shortcomings:

Health Care: No Medicaid Expansion and Large Health Care Cut

The budget fails to expand Medicaid to close the health care coverage gap for 500,000 North Carolinians. [Estimated number of additional Medicaid enrollees if Medicaid expands in Mecklenburg County – 47,088 in 2020; 58,996 in 2021; and 64,281 in 2022] Just this year Virginia expanded Medicaid through its State Budget. Now we are one of only 13 states that refuse to act.

What are the consequences of refusing to act?

1. People die or have their lives diminished for lack of health care coverage.

2. Billions of North Carolina tax dollars go to Washington DC and never come back home to close the coverage gap.

3. Those billions of dollars cost us health care jobs that are never created and even more billions of LOCAL economic activity that never happens.

4. We miss out on the single best thing we can do to fight the opioid crisis.

5. We miss out on the single best thing we can do to lower our infant mortality rate.

6. We miss out on the single best thing we can do to help struggling rural hospitals.

7. We miss out on the single best thing we can do to inject money in rural NC.

Every year that we refuse to act and every year that we miss out on what other states are doing cannot be caught up. The lives lost and the lives diminished and the dollars wasted will never be recovered.

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7/3/19, 9:18 PM

Not only does the budget fail to **expand** health care in North Carolina, it actually **cuts** it. The House and Senate budget imposes a \$42 million cut on how health care services are provided in North Carolina. It is the largest cut in two decades to the Department of Health and Human Services. It is a cut that comes in a budget with a \$363 million corporate tax cut and \$353 million dollars in pork projects.

Once legislative leaders are forced to start over with the budget, we will work to expand Medicaid and restore the health care cuts. We have to do a better job on health care so all North Carolinians in every neighborhood will have better opportunities to lead healthy, fulfilling lives.

Public Education: Corporate Tax Cuts Over Teacher Pay

Legislative leaders are very proud of the budget because it increases teacher pay. What is also true is that the budget invests \$124 million in teacher pay raises. The average teacher will get a 3.8% raise spread out over two years. All of that may sound good until you consider the following:

- The budget spends THREE TIMES MORE ON CORPORATE TAX CUTS than it does on teacher pay raises (\$363 million for corporations versus \$124 million for teachers).
- Governor Cooper proposed a budget with NO corporate tax cut and \$579 million for teacher pay increases. **That is nearly a half a billion dollars more for teachers** than we are doing in this budget.
- There are 477 pork projects in the budget that total \$353 million. **Yes, there is more money for pork in this budget than there is for teacher pay raises.**

No COLA for Retirees

There is no cost of living adjustment for retirees in the budget. No COLA despite the fact we have \$363 million for corporate tax cuts and \$353 million for pork. No COLA despite the fact we are in year 10 of a national economic expansion. If this budget were to become law, we would have had three COLAs in the past ten years plus the two years of this budget.

Although there is no COLA, the budget does include a one-time bonus of one-half of one percentage point in each year of the budget.

Governor Announces Release of 2019 Status of Women in North Carolina Health & Wellness Report

Last week the Governor announced the completion of the 2019 Status of Women in North Carolina: Health and Wellness Report, released by the NC Department of Administration's Council for Women and Youth Involvement.

Key findings from the 2019 Status of Women report include:

- North Carolina ranks 11th highest in infant mortality and 9th highest in stroke mortality among women – and the problem is even worse in rural counties and for women of color.
- North Carolina's mortality rates for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and breast cancer, among other diseases, have decreased since the 2013 report.
- In North Carolina, more than one-third of women (35 percent) have experienced at least one type of intimate partner violence (IPV) and more than 35 percent of North Carolina women report having experienced some form of aggression or control by an intimate partner.
- Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, North Carolina ranks in the middle or bottom on indicators of health and wellness. North Carolina's best ranking

is for heart disease mortality (27th out of 51) and its worst is for AIDS diagnoses (44th).

- There are wide disparities in North Carolina women's disease mortality rates by race and ethnicity. The heart disease rate among Black women in North Carolina is more than three times higher than the rate of Hispanic women, the racial and ethnic group with the lowest rate. Black women also have a rate of breast cancer mortality that is more than three times higher than the rate for Hispanic women.

"This report outlines serious concerns for women's health in our state, especially when it comes to infant and maternal mortality," said NC Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy Cohen. "North Carolina women have the highest rates in the country for diabetes, which, if left untreated, puts them at risk for strokes and complicated pregnancies. If North Carolina expanded Medicaid, nearly 280,000 women of reproductive age could access affordable insurance and the means to address health issues before they become expensive and life-threatening."

My view is the results of the new Status of Women in North Carolina report reinforce the importance of Medicaid expansion and early childhood investments. These are some of the best investments we can make to help women in North Carolina lead better lives.



Here I am at last year's Hickory Grove Parade

Finally, as we approach tomorrow's July 4th holiday, people across our country are gearing up to celebrate our nation's independence with their families and friends.

I will be celebrating at the 51st Annual Hickory Grove Parade and Celebration; East Charlotte's biggest Block Party of the Summer.

The parade starts at 10:00 a.m. and will begin at Lawrence Orr Elementary School, 4853 Shamrock Drive and follows Shamrock Drive to Castle Rock Drive.

The celebration also has a new venue on the grounds of Aldersgate (directly across from Castle Rock Drive).

INDEPENDENCE DAY HINTS, TIPS, & FACTS

Independence Day is a holiday with unique safety challenges — namely, fireworks. Americans have enjoyed the thrill of fireworks for centuries, but the fireworks, firecrackers, sparklers and rockets that often appear around July 4th can be very dangerous, causing severe eye injuries, burns, loss of limbs and even death. According to the National Fire Protection Association, more than 60 percent of all fireworks injuries occur around July 4th.

In fact, the U.S. Consumer Product and Safety Commission reported that more than 5,000 people were treated for fireworks-related injuries in hospital emergency rooms in July last year. More than 70 percent of injuries were to the eyes, head, face, ears, hands and fingers. Six people died as a result of fireworks-related injuries.

The Fourth of July is a wonderful opportunity to spend time with family and friends celebrating our country, its history, and our service men and women. Fireworks safety begins by leaving the fireworks shows to the professionals. The safest way to enjoy

fireworks is to attend a public display.

However, if you are at a celebration that includes consumer fireworks, we encourage you to take the following precautions:

- Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks, and ensure that an adult is always present to supervise fireworks activities.
- Keep a bucket of water or hose close by in case of a fire.
- Avoid fireworks that are packaged in brown paper because this is often a signal of fireworks that are strictly for professional displays.
- Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
- Never place any part of your body directly over a fireworks device when lighting the fuse.
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person or carry fireworks in your pocket.
- Never shoot off fireworks in metal or glass containers.
- Never attempt to re-light or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully.
- After fireworks complete their burning, douse the fireworks with water from a bucket or hose before discarding it to prevent a trash fire.

If anyone you know does sustain injuries at an Independence Day celebration, get them medical attention immediately.



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Stay safe! PEACE!

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Representative Nasif Majeed, District 99 | Legislative Building, 16 W. Jones Street, Room 1008,
Raleigh, NC 27601

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