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May Newsletter

Senator Joyce Waddell [waddellja@ncleg.net]

Sent: Sunday, June 30, 2019 1:00 PM

To: Steve Johnston

Senator Joyce Waddell

NC Senate


1113 Legislative Building

16 West Jones Street

Raleigh, NC 27601-2808

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The Waddell Bulletin

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It's been a busy several weeks in Raleigh since the last newsletter went out! By far the largest bill to come through has been the Senate Budget. There were twenty-nine different amendments suggested (a lot more than normal!), but only a few ended up being included in the bill.

I brought a very important amendment to the floor, which would have added a 2% cost of living adjustment to the pensions of North Carolina teachers and state employees. These retirees have seen their pension values drop dramatically in recent years, as inflation pushes up the dollar cost of everything - from health care, to housing, to food - while the dollar amount in pensions stays the same. Unfortunately, the amendment was voted down.

Our concerns with the budget did not stop there. The budget did not expand Medicaid or raise teacher pay to the degree Governor Cooper requested. For all of these reasons, I could not support the budget, and voted against it. However, it did pass, with 30 votes for it and 16 against.

Governor Cooper has announced his intent to veto this budget. Unlike the federal government, the state government will not shut down without a new budget; instead, spending will continue on current levels until the Governor can come to some agreement with the General Assembly's majority party.

-Senator Joyce Waddell

Session News

Some bills that passed the Senate in the last few weeks included:

- [House Bill 966: Appropriations Act](#) the Senate Budget
- [Senate Bill 377: Military Base Protection Act](#) as passed in the Senate, would have banned wind turbines from a large swath of Eastern North Carolina to protect pilot training programs around military bases. This bill received criticism for its impact on the North Carolina Wind Energy industry; I therefore voted against it. Fortunately, the House has since removed the ban from this bill.
- [House Bill 924: Teacher Contract Changes](#) would, among other things, require a course in economics and personal finance as a graduation requirement for high school students, as well as require professional development for teachers of that course.
- [House Bill 389: ABC/Univ Athletic Facility](#) would allow university stadiums to serve alcohol. Statistics from other states suggest this will likely reduce student binge drinking prior to athletic events.
- [House Bill 537: Alt. Hwy Use Tax Vehicle Subscriptions](#) would define "vehicle subscription" for purposes of the application of the alternate highway use tax and would set the tax rate at 5%, which would be applied to the gross receipts derived from vehicle subscriptions.
- [Senate Bill 553: Regulatory Reform Act of 2019](#) would, among other things, ease requirements for small businesses to have water fountains and toilets, allow aquaculture in flood areas without a permit, and lower the amount of money the Charlotte Motor Speedway needs to contribute to manage an unlined landfill on its site. This bill originally would have repealed the current ban on throwing computers and TVs into landfills, which currently imposes the heavy costs on waste management across the state. That section, however, was removed due to environmental concerns.
- [Senate Bill 252: Dental Bill of Rights](#) would require insurance agreements with dentists to allow patients to use payment methods other than credit card. It would also prevent insurers from canceling coverage post-treatment.
- [Senate Bill 315: North Carolina Farm Act of 2019](#) would, among other things, allow hemp farming to temporarily continue so as not to harm hemp farmers, who are major contributors to North Carolina's economy. The additional time will hopefully allow police to work out how to tell the difference between hemp and marijuana.
- [House Bill 934: Right to try Adult Stem Cell Treatments](#) would allow North Carolinians with chronic or terminal diseases to use stem cell treatments without FDA approval.
- [House Bill 370: Require Cooperation with ICE Detainers](#) would, among other things, require confinement facilities to query ICE if they could not determine the legal status on a detainee. I voted against this bill. I am concerned it undermines trust between police and immigrant communities, and the ability for counties to choose their Sheriffs' policies through elections. I have also pointed out that this bill will not just affect violent criminals, but falsely accused persons and minor offenders in confinement. Nevertheless, the bill passed 25-18.
- [Senate Bill 290: Distiller Regulatory Reform](#) would allow distilleries (producers of liquor) to operate more like breweries, through expanded liberties such the ability to sell their products on-site and host tastings. We expect this bill to help Charlotte distilleries expand their business and better serve their customers.
- [House Bill 325: Opioid Epidemic Response Act](#) would take a number of measures to fight the opioid epidemic by decriminalizing certain drug testing equipment, supporting syringe exchange programs, and ending the registration requirement for buprenorphine prescribers.

- [Senate Bill 191: Out-of-State Law Enforcement/2020 Rep Convtn.](#) would allow Charlotte to bring in additional law enforcement personnel to deal with the influx of people when it hosts the 2020 Republican National Convention. When this bill went to the house, it temporarily received a provision that would have allowed alcohol to be served until 4:00 AM for the duration of the convention, but this section was removed due to public safety concerns.

You can read all bills, listen to session and committee meetings, and follow the work of the North Carolina General Assembly at www.ncleg.gov

Serving You



Speaking with young North Carolinian DACA recipients about their need to receive in-state tuition at UNC schools





Vance High School Graduation



Senator Waddell held a press conference with Senator Wiley Nickel to explain the need to reform the Electoral College, so the President of the United States will always be the candidate who received the most citizens' votes.



Senator Waddell brought the keynote speech celebrate the continuing community around Second Ward High School, Charlotte's first all-black high school, 50 years after its closing.



Welcoming fellow Charlottean and Miss North Carolina Alexandra Badgett to the Senate



Senator Waddell, along with Senators Nickel, Marcus, McKissick, and Mohammed, and Rep. Logan, met with Mecklenburg's Sheriff McFadden and others to discuss the potential harm of querying ICE for every person confined.

*I cannot achieve anything without my constituents.
Please reach out with any questions, or feedback you'd like to share. Thank you for your support!*
-Senator Joyce Waddell


Senator Joyce Waddell | 1113 Legislative Building, Raleigh, NC 27601

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