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Rep. Carla Cunningham July 2019 Newsletter

Rep. Carla D. Cunningham [carlacunningham2012@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, July 09, 2019 10:37 AM

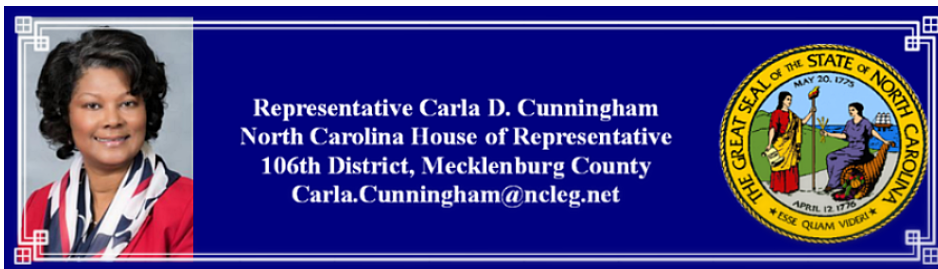
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Rep. Carla Cunningham: House Committee Assignments 2017-2018 Session

Appropriations

Appropriations Health and Human Services

Commerce

Energy and Public Utilities

Health

Wildlife Resources

Non-Standing Committee

Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services

Appointments by North Carolina House of Representative Speaker Tim Moore

Minority Health Advisory Council

Associates Advisory Committee Member- Council of State Government (CSG)

Health Public Policy Committee - Council of State Governments (CSG)

North Carolina Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

North Carolina Institute of Medicine Legislative Health Policy Fellows Program

July 8, 2019



Governor Cooper's Budget Veto

I will be voting "Yes" to sustain Governor Cooper's budget veto for two reasons: **healthcare and education.**

House and Senate Republican leaders unveiled the budget conference report last week and quickly approved it and sent it to Governor Cooper. A budget conference report is a compromise between the budgets previously passed by the House and Senate. Importantly, it was NOT a compromise involving Governor Cooper and the Democratic caucuses.

On Friday, June 28, 2019, Governor Cooper vetoed the budget conference report meaning it will not go into effect unless a number of Democrats join with the Republican to override the veto.

I voted against the conference report and welcome Governor Cooper's veto. There is much we can do to make this budget better. A veto will force Republicans to compromise and make this a better budget for North Carolina.

[Cooper to veto state budget, calling it 'an astonishing failure'](#)

WRAL

[Gov. Cooper Says He'll Veto State Budget](#)

WFAE

Here is what I see as the budget's main shortcomings:

The budget fail to expand Medicaid to close the health care coverage gap for 500,000 North Carolinians. 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. [Insert local numbers.]
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.

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.

[NC health department would face 'dramatic' cuts under proposed budget](#)

North Carolina Health News

[New report says 634,000 more North Carolinians would get health-care coverage under Medicaid expansion](#)

Winston-Salem Journal

[Medicaid expansion projected to bring jobs to every NC county, and not just in health care](#)

The News & Observer

[Expanding Medicaid is not just the right thing to do, it's smart economics](#)

NC Budget and Tax Center

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

Governor Cooper this week 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.

[Report: Women's Health Could Be Improved By Medicaid Expansion, Rural Health Investments](#)

WilmingtonBiz

[Study: Medicaid expansion would bring benefits](#)

Elizabeth City Daily Advance

[Editorial: Speaker Moore's opposition to Medicaid expansion is prejudiced fantasy](#)

Capital Broadcasting Company

["I'm a Republican. I Never Thought I'd Fight for Medicaid."](#)

NY Times

[Our View: No longer any reason to stop Medicaid expansion](#)

The Fayetteville Observer

[Our Opinion: Irrational resistance to Medicaid expansion](#)

Greensboro News & Record

Supreme Court Redistricting Update

Last week the United States Supreme Court declined to order NC lawmakers to redraw our state's congressional districts. Previously, all nine justices on the Court had ordered North Carolina to redraw its congressional lines because they were racially gerrymandered.

When forced to draw the lines again legislative leaders claimed not to use racial data, instead proudly proclaimed their sole intent was to elect as many Republicans as possible. So another lawsuit was brought and it said the districts were unconstitutional *partisan* gerrymanders. Four justices agreed with that argument (so do I), but five justices said it is

not the job of the federal courts to referee partisan disputes and so the districts will not change in 2020.

While the refusal of our highest court to do something about the problem of partisan gerrymandering is disappointing, all of the justices acknowledge some important points. They agree gerrymandering is wrong. They note that non-partisan redistricting ideas like the ones I support are a way to stop gerrymandering. Most importantly, they recognize that state supreme courts have the authority to strike down gerrymandering if the districts violate state law.

Right now, in North Carolina, we have an ongoing lawsuit in state court that challenges our current gerrymandered districts. Nothing in this week's opinion hurts that case. Hopefully, it will be resolved prior to the 2020 elections.

[The Supreme Court won't overturn NC's congressional maps. Will lawmakers act?](#)

The News & Observer

[A Supreme Court cop-out on gerrymandering](#)

The Charlotte Observer

[Editorial: N.C. can and must act for fair districts even if high court won't stop gerrymandering](#)

Capital Broadcasting Company

[With Census citizenship question in limbo, here's how it could affect the Carolinas](#)

The News & Observer

Other News

[NC budget would quadruple money for anti-abortion group questioned on oversight](#)

The News & Observer

[Lawmakers bring forth another bad budget for kids](#)

NC Policy Watch

[Budget includes \\$50,000 raise for former legislator](#)

WRAL



'I'm Republican. I Never Thought I'd Fight for Medicaid.'

Medicaid expansion could benefit 4.5 million Americans. North Carolina is taking on the fight, as health care for 500,000 hangs in the balance.

[Read more](#)
www.nytimes.com

Gov. Cooper Signs Bills Into Law

Governor Cooper signed the following bills into law:

- Senate Bill 225: [Repeal Tuition Surcharge](#)
- House Bill 537: [Alternate Highway Use Tax Vehicle Subscriptions](#)
- House Bill 934: [Right to Try Adult Stem Cell Treatments](#)
- Senate Bill 219: [Modify Teacher Licensing Requirements](#)
- Senate Bill 55: [Continuing Education for General Contractors](#)
- Senate Bill 483: [Vacation Rental Act Changes](#)
- Senate Bill 610: [Authorize Northern Peaks Trail](#)
- Senate Bill 95: [Veterans Memorial Funds/ Do Not Revert](#)
- Senate Bill 556: [GSC People First Language 2019](#)

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