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Legislative Updates from the Office of Rep. Nasif Majeed
 Representative Nasif Majeed [majeedla@ncleg.net]

Sent: Monday, October 07, 2019 3:46 PM
 To: Steve Johnston

October 7, 2019
Representative Nasif Majeed



Representing District 99
Mecklenburg County

Legislative Updates:

PEACE. This past week was very frustrating for me in the House of Representatives because Mecklenburg County was slighted in funding related to [HOUSE BILL 1001, RAISE THE AGE FUNDING](#).

I cosponsored this bill but I was totally disappointed in the absence of funding for Mecklenburg County in this mandate as related to an antiquated funding formula.

North Carolina will soon implement Raise the Age legislation, which mandates that 16 and 17 year old individuals who commit crimes will no longer automatically be charged in the adult criminal justice system.

In 2017, the North Carolina General Assembly raised the age of juvenile jurisdiction for nonviolent crimes to age 18 following years of research, study and education. This program will allow people who have made mistakes as young people, to learn from them and get a second chance. They are far more likely to stay in school, get jobs, go into the military or college.

Under the Raise the Age law, juveniles can apply for college without a felony on their record, become eligible for student loans, and apply for public housing. This new law could double the amount of juveniles in the court system requiring more resources to manage local youth. This mandate will require Mecklenburg County to take on this task with no extra funding. Now that's the Catch 22; I'm from the old school so if you pinch me, I will holler.





So **when the bill came up for discuss** during our Appropriations committee meeting, **I hollered!** I was accused by the chairman of impugning the character of legislators who constructed the funding for this bill, but I was just fed up and called it like it was.

Mecklenburg County's 15% input into the total General Revenue Fund is the largest in the State. We understand the plight of our rural counties to generate a tax base to fund schools, roads and utilities, etc., however it was a slap in the face to receive zero funding for this added responsibility.

First thing the next morning, **I filed an amendment** to HB1001 **[to increase to five positions based on Mecklenburg County's District Court needs for a District Court Judge, Assistant District Attorney, Clerk, Public Defender, and a Victim Witness Assistant]**. Even though the Speaker's subjective ruling of not allowing the amendment to be heard, I was able to discuss my concerns during the appeal.

The bottom line for my amendment boils down to public safety. Currently, the Mecklenburg County court system has far more cases than we can effectively handle. Mecklenburg County has been dismissing 70% of its weapons charge cases because we don't have staffing to handle the workload.

Most people whose cases are thrown out and avoid punishment, often go on to be arrested for more serious crimes, including murder. We are in crises mode in Mecklenburg County and the **unfunded** Raise the Age added work load will only aggravate the public safety conundrum facing us. Even without the funding for Raise the Age, our current court system is understaffed.

Because of this shortage, Charlotte City Council and our Mecklenburg County Commission, for years have supplemented court staffing in order to address court backlogs and we still have, under the circumstances, had to dismiss 70% of our weapons charge cases.

This is a serious public safety issue that you would think that the GOP majority would understand and allow funding for the Raise the Age mandate. Unfortunately, they just smirk and carry on like "business as usual". We need to ensure that in 2020, Democrats take back the House and we can begin to clean up all of their mess. **#IWillNotYield**

Hearing Offers Testimony on How Medicaid Expansion Will Help North Carolinians

A nationally recognized health policy researcher and North Carolinians impacted by the health care coverage gap testified before House and Senate legislators this week.

With legislative leaders unwilling to hear a full Medicaid Expansion bill, Senate Democratic Leader Dan Blue and House Democratic Leader Darren Jackson moderated the hearing with four important witnesses.

The General Assembly has been in session for nine months, but has yet to take advantage of federal funding available to expand Medicaid.

The testimony of these witnesses was informative and compelling. If you want to watch the video yourself, the NC Justice Center livestreamed it and a recording can be viewed [here](#).

Only eight states are ranked worse than North Carolina for the percent of population that is uninsured. Expanding Medicaid in North Carolina would provide an estimated 500,000 North Carolinians with access to affordable health care. It would also boost North Carolina's economy by \$4 billion and create more than 37,000 jobs.

Here are some highlights from the hearing, along with the approximate time in the video each person spoke:

- Dr. Leighton Ku, author of the Cone Health Study on Medicaid Expansion in North Carolina. Dr. Ku traveled to Raleigh from Washington, DC where he is the Director of the Center for Health Policy Research at George Washington University. [\[At the 9 minute mark\]](#) Dr. Ku testified on the economic employment benefits of Expanding Medicaid in North Carolina.
- Cassandra Brooks, an early childhood educator and owner of two five-star childcare facilities in Wake and Johnston Counties. [\[At the 24 minute mark\]](#) Ms. Brooks testified on how the lack of access to health insurance impacts children, teachers, and child care providers.
- Robin Jordan, a nurse and self-described conservative whose daughter died while in the health care coverage gap. [\[At the 27 minute mark\]](#) Ms. Jordan testified as the mom of a daughter who died in the health coverage gap. Her daughter Jessica suffered from depression, anxiety and PTSD who self-medicated with drugs until they took her life in an accidental overdose.
- Lynn Pierce, a working single mom who is currently in the health care coverage gap. [\[At the 42 minute mark\]](#) Ms. Pierce testified about her experiences as a working, single mother who lives in the Medicaid coverage gap.

The voices of these four people are ones that all lawmakers should be listening to. Unfortunately, all lawmakers didn't feel the need to attend this very informative session.

[MLK Commission to Offer Grants to Organizations with Programs Aligned to Martin Luther King Jr.'s Legacy](#)

Grants of up to \$1,000 are available from the Martin Luther King Jr. Commission for nonprofit organizations and local government agencies wishing to create or strengthen programs that support the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The theme of this year's 2019 grant program is "A Call for Civil Discourse," a topic taught by Dr. King to encourage the engagement of conversation among citizens to further enhance understanding of one another.

The MLK Commission, housed in the NC Department of Administration (DOA), administers the MLK grant annually in an effort to support programs that educate North Carolina youth on Dr. King's messaging through peer-to-peer activities.

"The MLK grant program seeks to carry on the legacy and teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., by supporting programs that strengthen our communities and reaffirm our state's commitment to diversity, inclusion and nonviolence," said DOA Secretary Machel Sanders.

The Commission is seeking innovative ideas from nonprofits and local government entities to promote Dr. King's philosophy of nonviolence. The Commission's vision is to advance an awareness and appreciation of the life of Dr. King.

Grants will be awarded to entities across North Carolina to ensure statewide distribution of funds. Applicants are encouraged to partner with local Youth Councils, Human Relations Councils and community organizations. Preference will be given to applicants striving to reach 50 or more youth ages 15- 21 years

of age.

Interested nonprofit and government entities should use the application form located on the MLK Jr. Commission's website to define the specific program that will foster and promote the legacy and philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Peer-to-peer youth programs to enhance community relations;
- Digital and social media campaigns;
- Bell Ringing ceremonies in local communities;
- And promotion of cultural arts.

Candidates are encouraged to use the checklist to ensure that applications are complete. Applications must be postmarked no later than Thursday, October 31, 2019. Awards will be announced in December 2019. If you have questions or desire technical assistance, please contact the Department of Administration at 919-807-2425. To learn more about the Commission, follow us on Facebook @NCMLKJrCommission.

In 2020, Our Maps Will Be More Fair

It has been hopeful that our efforts to limit the unconstitutional partisan gerrymandering across our state are working. Our Constitution is clear. The courts are clear: Stop it! With the court's continuing oversight, we are well on our way for 2020 to be the fairest election in a decade.



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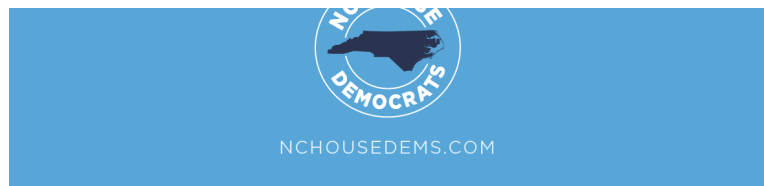



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PEACE,






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