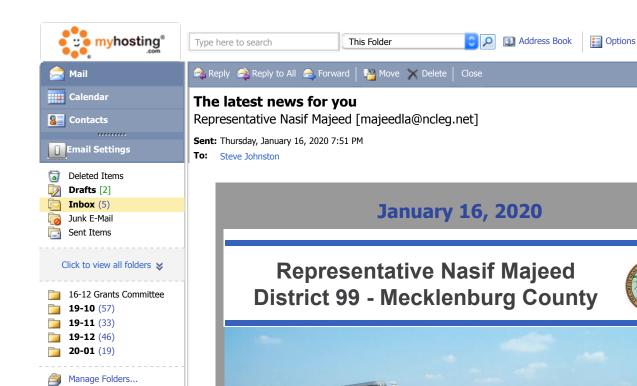
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LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

On Tuesday, the North Carolina House and Senate reconvened for what I thought would be another opportunity for us to work with Republicans to come to a mutual compromise that best benefits all North Carolinians. I hoped we could finally pass meaningful legislature that increases teacher pay, expands Medicaid to close the health care coverage gap and create health care jobs, and raise the minimum wage to a living wage.

However, the 2019 Long Session ended this week with Republican leaders once again scheduling, and then postponing, a vote to override Governor Cooper's veto of the State Budget. They remain unwilling to negotiate with Governor Cooper and legislative Democrats. Instead, they hope to get everything they want with scheduling tricks or sneak attack votes.

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What needs to happen is all sides sitting down to negotiate larger teacher pay raises and public employee compensation, smaller corporate tax cuts, a statewide bond referendum for school construction and clean water and sewer infrastructure, and Medicaid Expansion.

Compromise is not easy and Republican leaders are used to having supermajorities and always getting their way. Yet the voters elected Roy Cooper as Governor and enough Democrats to the General Assembly to sustain his vetoes. It is only right that a negotiated State Budget reflect some of our priorities: greater investment in public schools, expanded health care access, and lower health care costs.



I serve on the Homeland Security, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee in the NC House. Some of the tasks of the Committee is to examine the different local, state and federal resources to help veterans.

The Mecklenburg County Veterans Office located in the newly renovated Valerie Woodard Center on Freedom Drive provides outstanding service to those who served our country. On a recent visit, I was greeted by Veteran Support Specialists Daren Graves and LaKesha Davis.

They briefed me on their current operations and the scope of their increased capacity to serve the needs of our growing Veteran population. From my perspective, as a former Air Force combat pilot, I really appreciate the invaluable service they provide for our Veterans.

Additionally and more important, we discussed the content of the House bills I sponsored last year and a bill I plan to sponsor this year in support of our Disabled Veterans.

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The Mecklenburg Delegation of the NC House of Representatives recently visited the District 5 Highway Patrol Office in Huntersville. We were briefed by District Patrol Officers on the need to provide highway safety in the fastest growing county in the state. Because of unprecedented growth, Mecklenburg County is experiencing a critical Highway Patrol personnel shortage and it is imperative that the legislature provide more officers for District 5.

Thanks to all the fine officers who updated us. We will take the information you shared back to Raleigh and advocate for those much needed officers for District 5 and our entire county.

Enjoy your weekend, PEACE!





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