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### Legislative Updates

Representative Nasif Majeed [majeedla@ncleg.net]

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Sent: Friday, June 05, 2020 7:03 PM

To: Steve Johnston

## June 5, 2020

### Representative Nasif Majeed District 99 - Mecklenburg County

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

PEACE. "I CAN'T BREATHE!!!!" It was painful to see the video of George Floyd's death at the hands of the police in Minneapolis. However, it was good to see the response of millions protesting the horrible criminal act in cities throughout our nation and the world. Maybe the violation of George Floyd's human rights will usher in the change we seriously need on our national, state and local levels of government. These human violations, as it relates to African-Americans, have been going on for so long that this abnormal behavior has become the normal. We have to change the paradigm and initiate structural changes in law enforcement, economics, health care and government that facilitate justice for all.

Our Mecklenburg Legislative Delegation issued a press release [posted below]. It is past time that we commence with concrete actions to facilitate concrete changes in order to correct the injustice experienced by African-Americans in our American society. Ironically, I reflect back on the Hate Crimes Bill I introduced in the House last year that is still sitting in committee this year. The savage act committed on George Floyd is a pure hate crime. Our citizens in North Carolina have experienced the same type of criminal acts that resulted in death and it hurts my heart to know that the Republican majority's inaction on my bill, as well as many others that have been submitted to address the social, economic and health inequities have fallen on deaf ears.

African-Americans demand justice and want to also realize the American Dream. I pledge to work to change the status quo and to work for a better society where there is justice for all.

## NC House Democrats Highlight Crucial First Steps in Addressing Systemic Racism

House Democrats came together today in a press conference [posted below] to discuss crucial first steps in addressing systemic racism. You can [listen to it here](#).

When tackling a crisis that is centuries in the making, there are lots of things that need to be done. We are in session now and now is when we need to make progress. Democrats are in the minority in the General Assembly, but we want to work with all of our colleagues who have open minds and open hearts.

Here are some specific issues we can work on:

### **Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Reform**

- The Second Chance Act and Other Expunction Reforms ([SB 562](#), [HB 284](#), [HB 202](#), [HB 132](#), [HB 121](#))
- Citizen Review Commission bills to empower communities ([HB 916](#), [HB 465](#))
- Reform how drivers' licenses are revoked ([HB 853](#), [HB 909](#))
- Ban the Box bills ([HB 1077](#), [HB 834](#), [HB 46](#))

### **Addressing Economic Disparities**

- Equal Pay for Equal Work ([SB 486](#))
- Minimum Wage Increase ([HB 146](#), [HB 359](#), [HB 366](#))
- Paid Leave ([HB 1046](#), [HB 696](#))
- Unemployment Reform ([HB 1075](#), [HB 1061](#))

### **Education and Health Care Disparities**

- Medicaid Expansion ([HB 1040](#)) will help everyone, but it particularly benefits African-American communities. African-American babies are twice as likely as white babies to die in infancy. A recent study proved that rates of prematurity and low infant birth weight IMPROVED in Medicaid Expansion states and DID NOT IMPROVE in states like North Carolina that refuse expansion.
- COVID-19 hits African-American communities harder as well. 39% of all COVID-19 deaths are African-American, even though black citizens are only 22% of the population. We need to target resources to protecting vulnerable individuals and front-line workers (who are more likely to be people of color). [HB 1117](#), [HB 1085](#), [HB 1057](#)
- Public education is at the heart of the fight against racism. In our state, every student has a right to a sound, basic education. Our courts recognize this right in the Leandro court decisions. Yet school funding in poorer areas of the state lags far behind.
- We cannot afford any more lost time to make the investments necessary to provide all students a basic education. We have two bills, [HB 1129](#) and [HB 1130](#) that take important steps to implement the recommendations of a blue-ribbon study outlining what needs to be done to serve ALL students.

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 5, 2020

Contact: Brigid Godfrey

**ICYMI: NC House Democrats Highlight Crucial First Steps in Addressing**

## Systemic Racism

**Raleigh** - North Carolina House Democrats today held a press call on addressing crucial first steps in addressing systemic racism. Representatives spoke on how racism permeates every sector of our society.

“It is unacceptable that in 2020, African American North Carolinians cannot live without fear on a daily basis,” Democratic Leader **Darren Jackson** (HD-39). “No legislation can solve a centuries long racist system rooted in slavery, but we can take steps in the right direction.”

Deputy Leader Robert Reives spoke about the importance of reforms to our Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice System.

“Law enforcement and criminal justice must be color-blind and serve all communities,” said Deputy Democratic Leader **Robert T. Reives, II** (HD-54). “We know that is too often not the case. We need to increase local ability for accountability in law enforcement and commit the resources for training on community engagement for everyone who serves in our criminal justice system.”

Democratic Whip Amos L. Quick III and Representative Yvonne Lewis Holley spoke about how racial disparities have hindered progress within our Black communities in terms of economic advancement, education, and access to health care.

“Health care disparities are not hidden, they are right before our eyes. The infant mortality for African-American babies is twice as high as for white babies. States with Medicaid expansion have seen significant improvements in the health of African-American babies and mothers,” said Democratic Whip **Amos L. Quick, III** (HD-58). “With COVID-19, Black North Carolinians make up 22% of our state’s population but have accounted for 35% of coronavirus deaths.”

“Black women make 61 cents on the dollar that a white man makes, and minimum wage workers who are disproportionately black have not seen a raise in over a decade,” said Representative **Yvonne Lewis Holley** (HD-38). “A system which pays African-Americans less is one that continues the cycle of poverty and reinforces our racist system. This must stop.”

## Governor Cooper Signs Executive Order to Address Disproportionate Impact of COVID-19 on Communities of Color

This week Governor Roy Cooper signed Executive Order 143 to address the social, environmental, economic, and health disparities in communities of color that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Order directs state agencies and offices to provide targeted measures to help communities of color that have been affected by the pandemic.

To make sure all North Carolinians can recover physically and economically from the COVID-19 pandemic, this Order identifies specific actions North Carolina departments and agencies must take to eliminate disparities across sectors.

**The Order does the following:**

- Establishes the Andrea Harris Social, Economic, Environmental, and Health Equity Task Force to focus on economic stability, health disparities, and environmental justice in North Carolina;
- Tasks the North Carolina Pandemic Recovery Office to ensure the equitable distribution of pandemic relief funds;
- Directs the Historically Underutilized Business Office to provide small historically underutilized businesses with access to opportunities, tools, and resources that promote equitable economic recovery and procurement of State contracts;
- Directs the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to ensure all communities have access to COVID-19 testing and related health care;
- Tasks the Office of Public Engagement to increase awareness about COVID-19, COVID-19 relief services and resources, and provide education on eliminating disparities;
- Directs the Division of Emergency Management to continue coordinating efforts to protect the food supply chain and support feeding operations at food banks and school systems;
- Directs the North Carolina National Guard to provide planning and logistical support and personnel where feasible to support mass testing of food processing plant workers in impacted communities and migrant farm workers; and
- Tasks the Department of Environmental Quality to create a common discourse on environmental justice and coordinate with state executive agencies on the integration of environmental justice considerations into current and future policies, programs, and procedures.

COVID-19 disproportionately affects communities of color for several reasons, including existing social, environmental, and health inequities. Despite making up 22 percent of North Carolina's population, as of June 1, African Americans account for 30 percent of confirmed COVID-19 cases and 34 percent of COVID-19 deaths in cases where race is known. Similarly, Hispanics account for 39% of confirmed COVID-19 cases, in cases where race or ethnicity is known, despite only making up about 10% of the population in North Carolina.

Read more about the Order in a [Frequently Asked Questions document](#).

Read the full [Executive Order](#).

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**PEACE,**

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

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