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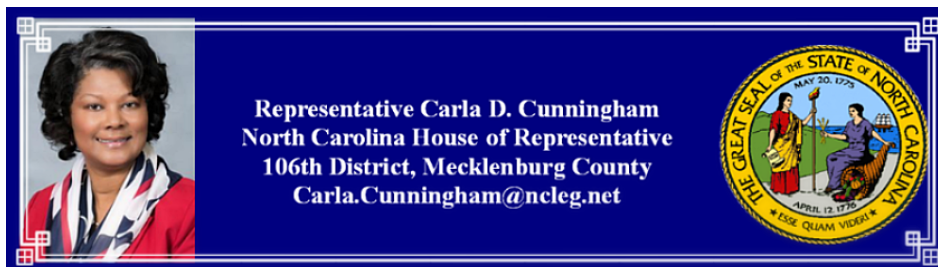
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Rep. Cunningham's June 11, 2020 Newsletter

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

Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2020 12:20 PM

To: Steve Johnston



Rep. Carla Cunningham: House Committee Assignments 2019-2020 Session

Appropriations

Appropriations Health and Human Services

Commerce

Energy and Public Utilities

Health

House Select Committee on COVID-19

House Select Committee on COVID-19 Health Work Group - Chair

House Select Committee on School Safety

Wildlife Resources

Non-Standing Committee

Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services

Appointment by North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper

North Carolina Council on Sickle Cell Syndrome

Appointments by North Carolina House of Representative Speaker Tim Moore

Minority Health Advisory Council

North Carolina Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

North Carolina House Leadership

Democratic Whip

North Carolina Institute of Medicine Legislative Health Policy Fellows Program

June 11, 2020

Dear Friends and Community,

I want to take a moment to reflect on the last couple of weeks and the days to come, I am

sure you feel the pressure of all that's going on. I am sure your hearts is a bit heavy. I am sure you are wondering, how did we get here and where do we go from here. It's an extremely difficult time for you and us, and I humbly ask for grace. Grace as we maneuver through this time. Grace as we all find ways to heal.

As your State Legislator, friend, neighbor, I want to share with you that I will be working to restoring faith in our broken justice system, to restoring race relations, to beginning the healing we all so desperately need. This is not something, I can do alone but with the help of my colleagues, communities and the nation.

I want to assure you of this:

- I stand against police brutality in all forms.
- I stand against a criminal justice system that disproportionately targets Black Americans.
- I stand against the widespread disenfranchisement of Black and Brown communities whose voices are silenced at the polls.

This is not an "us or them" problem. We are all in this together. We have to be. That is the only way we will get through this. So let's come together to find solutions. The Future of our generations depends on it. We cannot let them down.

I am calling on all residents of Mecklenburg County to express their anger nonviolently. We cannot let tragedy beget more tragedy.

Stay strong!

With Gratitude,

Rep. Carla Cunningham

[NC House Democrats Highlight Crucial First Steps in Addressing Systemic Racism](#)

House Democrats came together in a press conference 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.

[NC Supreme Court: Racial Justice Act repeal cannot be applied retroactively](#)

NC Policy Watch

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

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](#).

[North Carolina task force to address racial disparities intensified by COVID-19](#)

WCNC

Completing the Census is Safe, Easy and Important!

Completing the survey is quick and easy to do. You can complete your Census questionnaire online, by phone or on paper. By using your phone, tablet or computer, or simply grabbing a pencil or pen, you can complete the questionnaire, spending less than 10 minutes on what can impact your community in the next 10 years.

The process is safe, easy and important and you can respond in one of three ways:

- Online by visiting my2020census.gov.
- By phone by calling 1-800-923-8282. For information on language support, [click here](#) for a listing of telephone numbers.
- Via [mail](#)

Help Make NC Count! View and [download resource materials!](#)

[Brief | Who isn't responding to the census in North Carolina?](#)

EdNC

Second Chance Act (SB 562)

After 13 months of legislative inaction, the Second Chance Act ([SB 562](#)) passed the NC House on June 10, 2020 on a unanimous vote. It had previously passed the NC Senate unanimously before leadership stalled the bill in the House.

The Second Chance Act is an important step in improving expunctions in North Carolina. Expunctions help people who committed crimes a long time ago to clear their records and improve their opportunities for jobs and other

Here are some important improvements the bill makes:

- Provides automatic record clearing for charges dismissed or disposed of as "not guilty."
- Allows expunctions for people whose convictions are treated as juvenile offenses under Raise the Age.
- Expands eligibility for expunctions for people who have been convicted of multiple nonviolent misdemeanors.

[Long-lingering expunction bill heads back to NC House floor](#)

WRAL

House Democrats Stand Strong to Stop Re-Opening Bars

Last week the General Assembly passed [HB 536](#) to re-open bars in North Carolina even while hospitalizations in our state hit a record-high. Governor Cooper vetoed it.

On Wednesday, the House Republican leadership scheduled the veto override vote. While much of our legislative work and votes can be done using remote means, the wording in our

state constitution requires veto votes to be in person. So lawmakers in both parties who had been using remote technology had to come vote in person.

When it became apparent that the Democrats had all shown up and the Republican leadership would lose the veto vote, they cancelled the vote. So the bill to re-open bars remains blocked.

Re-Opening Bars (again), Gyms, and Taking Power Away from Public Health Officials

The veto of the bar bill prompted Republican leaders to try a different approach. They cobbled together a proposal to re-open bars and gyms into [HB 594](#) (a bill that previously dealt with homeowners' association bylaws). Included was a power play to take power away from Governor Cooper's public health team at the Department of Health and Human Services and give it to the Council of State. The Council of State are elected statewide politicians like the Commissioner of Agriculture and the State Auditor. They are all elected to do important jobs, none of which involve issues of public health. Stripping away the power of Governor Cooper's public health team would limit their ability to respond to illegal mass gatherings and to respond to changing COVID-19 conditions.

The new bill never received a House committee hearing and no amendments or changes were allowed. Instead, it was rushed to the floor for a full vote.

The bill passed 69 to 50 and now heads to Governor Cooper for his signature or veto. [Wednesday's COVID-19 update: Record-high hospitalizations and more than 1,000 new cases across NC](#)

Greensboro News and Record

[Measure to reopen North Carolina bars, gyms heads to Cooper's desk](#)

The Center Square

[Bill to reopen N.C. gyms, bars sent to skeptical governor](#)

Associated Press

[Bill that would reopen bars, gyms clears N.C. General Assembly, but a potential veto by governor looms](#)

Winston-Salem Journal

Governor Cooper Establishes Task Force to Address Racial Inequity in the State Criminal Justice System

Governor Roy Cooper signed Executive Order No. 145 today, forming the North Carolina Task Force for Racial Equity in Criminal Justice. The task force will recommend solutions to stop discriminatory law enforcement and criminal justice practices, and hold public safety officers accountable.

Led by Attorney General Josh Stein and North Carolina Supreme Court Associate Justice Anita Earls, the task force will convene a wide range of stakeholders including: community policing advocates, state and local law enforcement agencies, justice-involved individuals, representatives of the judicial branch, individuals from marginalized populations and more.

The task force will develop and help implement policy solutions to address systemic racial bias in criminal justice and submit legislative and municipal recommendations on or before December 1, 2020.

Additionally, the Order creates a Center for the Prevention of Law Enforcement Use of Deadly Force within the State Bureau of Investigation to track statistics and improve training related to the use of force.

This week, Secretary of the Department of Public Safety Erik Hooks directed law enforcement agencies under the purview of DPS to ensure each division has a duty to intervene policy in place. He also directed that divisions conduct policy reviews on use of force, de-escalation techniques, arrest procedures, cultural sensitivity training and internal investigation processes. Executive Order No. 145 directs cabinet agencies and encourages non-cabinet state agencies with sworn law enforcement officers to do the same.

Read the [full Order](#) and [FAQ](#).

Communities of color are disproportionately affected at each stage of the criminal justice system, with national data showing the following:

- Black adults are 5.9 times as likely to be incarcerated than white adults;
- Hispanic adults are 3.1 times as likely to be incarcerated than white adults;
- Black drivers are approximately twice as likely as white drivers to be pulled over by law enforcement for a traffic stop;
- Black defendants are more likely to be jailed before trial than white defendants;
- The murders of white people are more likely to be solved than the murders of Black people;
- When Black men and white men are convicted of the same crime, Black men receive a prison sentence that is 20 percent longer;
- Black women are imprisoned at twice the rate as white women; and
- Black men are 2.5 times more likely to be killed by law enforcement than are white men, and Black women are 1.4 times more likely to be killed by law enforcement than are white women.

People interested in being on the task force [can visit the Governor's website to apply](#).

[DHHS Shares Health Guidance to Re-Open Public Schools](#)

State education and health leaders announced the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#) health guidance for resuming in-person instruction in NC public schools. The toolkit provides a baseline for health practices to be followed to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19 as North Carolina resumes classroom instruction.

Re-opening plans will be determined by the status of COVID-19. Schools may reopen according to three scenarios – Plan A: Minimal Social Distancing, Plan B: Moderate Social Distancing, or Plan C: Remote Learning Only.

Governor Cooper and health officials warned that people must continue to take COVID-19

precautions to ensure schools can resume in-person instruction.

The Strong Schools NC Public Health Toolkit (K-12) was developed using the most current CDC guidance for schools and includes requirements and recommendations for eight areas: Social Distancing and Minimizing Exposure; Cloth Face Coverings; Protecting Vulnerable Populations; Cleaning and Hygiene; Monitoring for Symptoms; Handling Suspected, Presumptive or Confirmed Positive Cases of COVID-19; Communication and Combating Misinformation; Water and Ventilation Systems; Transportation; and Coping and Resilience.

For example, it requires students and others to be screened for illness before entering school and requires floor markings to maintain social distance. It also includes sample screening symptom checklists in English and Spanish, a flow chart protocol for handling suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19, and a checklist of infection control supplies schools may need. The Toolkit will be updated as new health guidance is released by the CDC and additional resources are added.

Questions regarding the Toolkit in English or Spanish can be directed to StrongSchoolsNC@dhhs.nc.gov.

Coronavirus Update

At least 41,416 people in North Carolina have [tested positive for the coronavirus](#) and 1,121 have died, according to state and county health departments.

The N.C. Department of Health and Human Services on Friday reported an additional 1,768 [cases of the virus](#), the highest single-day increase in the state since the pandemic began. Friday marked the fifth time in eight days the state's new case count exceeded 1,000.

COVID-19 Cases by Zip Code in Mecklenburg County

28202 - 58
28203 - 75
28204 - 27
28205 - 390
28206 - 74
28207 - 23
28208 - 324
28209 - 115
28210 - 484
28211 - 96
28212 - 510
28213 - 404
28214 - 281
28215 - 550
28216 - 282
28217 - 568
28226 - 134
28227 - 358
28244 - 0

- 28262 - 177
 - 28269 - 357
 - 28270 - 55
 - 28273 - 335
 - 28277 - 157
 - 28278 - 104
 - 28280 - 0
 - 28282 - 0
 - 28031 (Cornelius) - 112
 - 28036 (Davidson) - 42
 - 28078 (Huntersville) - 117
 - 28105 (Matthews) - 199
 - 28134 (Pineville) - 67
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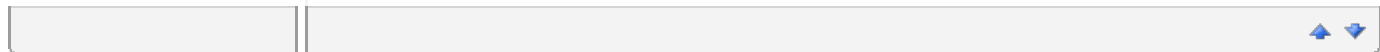



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