

**Next Round of COVID-19 Relief Passes/Extra Credit Grants Extension/Vaccine Information**

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**Representative Nasif Majeed**  
**District 99 - Mecklenburg County**



**Next Round of COVID-19 Relief Passes,  
 But More to Do**

PEACE. The General Assembly passed [HB 196](#) to invest \$1.7 billion in federal dollars for COVID-19 relief. Here are some highlights of what the bill does:

- \$600 million for testing, tracing, and prevention;
- \$335 million in federal Child Care and Development Block Grant funds;
- \$290 million for higher education;
- \$100 million for K-12 public schools;
- \$84 million to local health departments;
- \$47 million in community mental health block grants;
- \$40 million for summer learning;
- \$20 million for small businesses;
- \$18 million for better virus tracking and vaccine management systems;
- \$11 million in substance abuse and treatment block grants;
- \$8 million for broadband grants;
- \$6 million for food banks.

HB 196 does the right thing in getting out the door the money sent to North Carolina by the U.S. government, but we should have done more. North Carolina has over \$4 billion in unreserved cash sitting in its accounts. Why wait to spend it when so many workers and small businesses are hurting?

I joined my fellow House Democrats in sponsoring [HB 192](#). [HB 192](#) would invest around \$700 million state money in these priorities:

- \$37 million in small business assistance focused on hospitality, tourism, and historically underutilized businesses.
- \$30 million to bring high-speed internet to more places in our state.
- \$50 million for front-line worker hazard pay.
- One-time bonuses for education employees left out of last year's pay raises:
  - \$2500 for K-12 teachers and principals
  - \$1500 for other school workers
  - \$2000 for community college and UNC System employees

Additionally, HB 192 would help unemployed workers. North Carolina is the worst state in the country for a worker who loses his job. Our Unemployment Trust Fund has a \$2.6 billion balance. We should use part of that balance to:

- Extend the maximum duration of benefits for those out of work to 26 weeks.
- Increase the maximum weekly benefit from \$350 to \$500.

On the floor of the House, we ran amendments to pass better unemployment assistance for those out of work and to provide hazard pay and one-time

bonuses in HB 192. The Republican majority voted down these amendments, but I will keep working to make these happen.

## Extra Credit Grants Extension

The deadline for families with children the deadline to apply for \$335 Extra Credit Grants has been extended through May 31, 2021. You are eligible if you did not already receive a payment.

The grant program was established late last year to assist families with virtual schooling and child-care costs during the COVID-19 pandemic. While the NC Department of Revenue sent more than one million checks to North Carolinians last year, some families with qualifying children missed the October 15, 2020 application deadline or did not receive an automatic payment because of a tax preparation software issue.

Individuals with qualifying children who were 16 and younger at the end of 2019 who did not already receive the \$335 grant may apply through the NCDOR website through May 31. By mid-March, the NCDOR plans to allow bulk applications from tax preparers for those affected by the software issue.

The online and printable paper applications and eligibility information are here: <https://www.ncdor.gov/extracredit>

## Vaccine Information

Frontline Essential Workers in Group 3 are now eligible for vaccination.

Group 4 vaccinations will begin March 24 for people who have a medical condition that puts them at higher risk or who live in certain group settings. Higher-risk medical conditions for Group 4 include intellectual and developmental disabilities including Down Syndrome, and neurologic conditions, such as dementia.

State officials continue to prioritize speed and equity in vaccine distribution as eligibility prioritization expands. On February 26, the Kaiser Family Foundation ranked North Carolina as first in the nation for vaccinating the largest share of its 65 and older population.

Detailed information about each vaccine group is online at [YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov](https://YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov) (English) or [vacunate.nc.gov](https://vacunate.nc.gov) (Spanish).

## We're All in This Together

### Continue to Wear A Mask:

A simple cloth face covering or bandana over nose and mouth will cut the likelihood of spreading the virus by a factor of 10. It is 10 times better than no mask. Medical grade masks are even better. Masks cost close to nothing and everyone can do it. With masks our health and economy will fare much better.

### Keep Social Distancing:

Stay 6 feet apart with a mask and avoid crowds, especially indoors. Outdoor and open air gatherings are much safer.

### Keep Washing Your Hands Often:

Additionally, sanitize and disinfect as appropriate to prevent contagion.

### If You're Feeling Any Symptoms, Check Them Out:

If you're sick, isolate and quarantine if appropriate. Then trace and inform your contacts to further protect others.

PEACE,



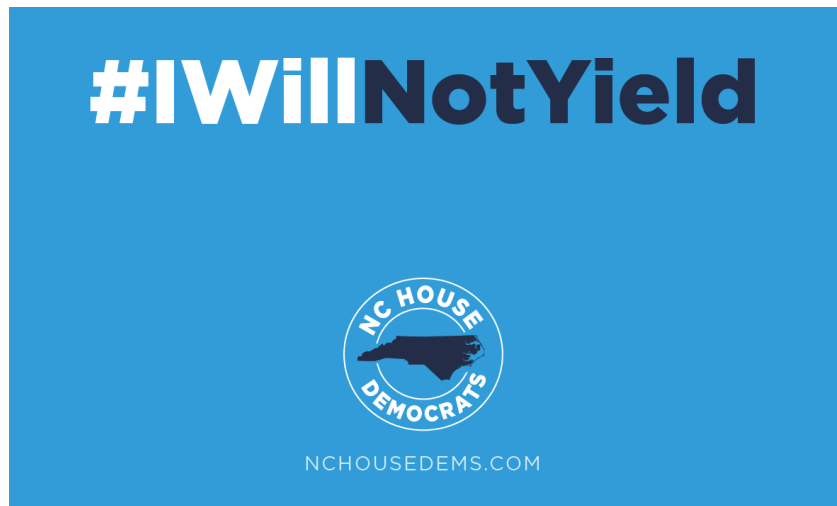
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