

SPAM Latest Updates from the NCGA



From Sen. Natasha Marcus <natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov>
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Date 2021-04-30 14:01

Natasha
MARCUS
NC Senate District 41



NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

April 30, 2021

Updates on Noteworthy Votes



Key Bills on which I voted YES:

- **H279: COVID-19 Related Tax Changes/UI Tech Correct.** Clarifies that the extra credit grants and federal stimulus payments received as COVID-19 relief are not considered income for determining eligibility for homestead exemptions based on income.
- **S60, Disapprove Various Solid Waste Rule Changes.** Requires the Environmental Management Commission to readopt certain rules governing permitting and operation of municipal solid waste and construction and demolition debris landfills in accordance with specific criteria set forth in the bill, and would require DEQ to implement the rules subject to those criteria until permanent rules are adopted.
- **S99, Clarify Law on Theft of Catalytic Converters.** Makes theft of a catalytic converter from a motor vehicle a Class I felony, and modifies the laws related to the purchase of a catalytic converter by secondary metal recyclers to reduce theft.
- **S113, Modify Termination of Parental Rights Appeals.** Changes the direct right of appeal from an order granting or denying a termination of parental rights from the North Carolina Supreme Court to the Court of Appeals (AOC). Requires the AOC to prepare an annual report about the amount of time it takes to resolve appeals related to a termination of parental rights.
- **S183, Begin Modernizing Ignition Interlock Laws.** Modernizes the use of vehicle ignition interlock devices to track people convicted of DUI/DWI to ensure they do not reoffend. It also allows offenders to get a restricted license in order to get to work or school. The bill is supported by numerous organizations, including Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), Governor's Highway Safety Program, NC Conference of District Attorneys, Attorney General's Office, and the DMV.
- **S390, UNC Law Enforcement Recruitment.** Allows UNC system full and part time officers to take a certain number of courses a year for free.
- **S539, Disclose Human Trafficking Conviction/Custody.** Expands the disclosure required during a custody proceeding to include human trafficking convictions and conduct prohibited by the human trafficking law. Additionally, the bill would expand the conduct prohibited by the human trafficking laws to include patronizing another person with the intent that the other person be held in involuntary or sexual servitude.
- **S570, Hold Harmless Star Ratings/ERS Assess. Resume.** Holds certain licensed child care facilities harmless when DHHS resumes environmental rating scale assessments and would allow for certain temporary flexibilities in awarding quality rating improvement system 'education points' for star rating purposes.
- **S660, Regulate Dissemination of Booking Photograph.** Regulates the publication and removal of booking photographs by explicitly stating that booking photos are not a public record and creating a civil action for failure to remove a booking photo from a publication or website.
- **S666, Update Reqs./Advance Health Care Directives.** Eases requirements for completing health care powers of attorney and advances health care directives and authorizes secretary of state to receive electronic filings of advance health care directives.

Key Bills on which I voted NO:

- **H243, UNC Legislative Priorities/COVID-19 Impacts.** Addresses budgetary issues in the UNC System due to COVID-19. The bill includes some positive provisions (minor adjustments to early retirement and health insurance for furloughed employees),

- but given that the bill sponsors would not remove the provision that could result in pay cuts to our valuable university employees, I could not support it.
- **S346, Emergency Management Act Provisions.** Requires the Governor to have the agreement of the majority of the members of the Council of State in order to exercise certain emergency powers and sets expiration dates for executive orders. This limits Governor Cooper's authority to lead us through the COVID-19 pandemic, slowing down our emergency response and creating a political tug of war on each emergency decision, contrary to the Constitution's grant of powers. The photo above is from when I spoke against this bill on the Senate floor.
 - **S360, Prohibit Collusive Settlements by the AG.** Gives NCGA Senate and House leaders new powers over the Board of Elections to disapprove settlement agreements negotiated by the Attorney General. This bill was introduced in reaction to and attempts to perpetuate false claims of fraud and collusion during the 2020 election and seeks to undermine the responsibilities of the Attorney General, which is why I voted no.

Connecting Cornelius: Virtual Legislative Update This Monday

Cornelius Mayor Woody Washam has invited me to be a speaker at his online Connecting Cornelius Coffee Chat this Monday, May 3 at 8:30am. Connecting Cornelius is a series of monthly meetings designed for the Cornelius resident or business owner who wants to stay connected with Cornelius. I will be providing a legislative update on my bills, committee meetings, and more. Representative Bradford and Mecklenburg Public Health Director Gibbie Harris will be presenting as well. I'd love to have you join us.

Stay informed. Be engaged. Get Connected.

CONNECTING CORNELIUS

Coffee Chat





**Natasha
MARCUS**
NC Senator District 41



**JOHN
BRADFORD**
NC Representative District 10





Special Guest Speakers

Senator Natasha Marcus
Representative John Bradford
Public Health Director Gibbie Harris

Monday, May 3

8:30 - 9:30 a.m. (via Zoom)

Visit [Cornelius.org](https://www.Cornelius.org) for more details



[Register Here](#)

Updates from Senate Judiciary Committee



Many important bills have been discussed in Judiciary Committee over the past two weeks. Below are some of the noteworthy bills:

- **[S35](#), Amend Lawful Age to Marry/18 Years of Age.** The original version of this bill amended the lawful age to marry in North Carolina to 18 years of age or older. North Carolina is currently the **4th highest state** nationwide for incidents of child marriage. Currently, children as young as fourteen can get married in North Carolina. While I am very supportive of this bill in its original form, the bill was amended in such a way that it gutted a lot of the protections the bill was designed to provide. In its current (amended) form, the bill allows persons as young as 14 to marry, so long as the spouse is no more than four years older. Additionally, the amended bill keeps the harmful "pregnancy exception" for minors. More information on the bill can be found [here](#). I spoke out against these changes to the original bill and will keep working to get a better bill that ends child marriage in NC.
- **[S355](#), Government Transparency Act of 2021.** Creates a new requirement that state government employers make a general description of personnel actions available to the public, including reasons for terminations, demotions, promotions, transfers, etc. I generally support the bill's effort to increase transparency concerning state employees, particularly "bad apples," but believe the the current version of the bill is too broad and could violate due process and privacy rights, concerning health reasons for job reassignments and/or complaints that are still in an appeals process.
- **[S455](#), Decriminalize Non-Statutory Offenses.** Decriminalizes non-statutory criminal offenses and violations.
- **[S473](#), Enhance Local Government Transparency.** Allows more independence for annual local government audits, makes it a crime for elected official to misuse office for personal financial gain, and prohibits public officer serving on nonprofit board from self dealing w/ regard to award of public contracts. While I voted favorably for this bill, I do have concerns that it may be too broad especially for small towns and know that amendments are in the works.
- **[S539](#), Disclose Human Trafficking Conviction/Custody.** Expands the disclosure required during a custody proceeding to include human trafficking convictions and the conduct prohibited by the human trafficking law. Additionally, the bill would expand the conduct prohibited by the human trafficking laws to include patronizing another person with the intent that the other person be held in involuntary servitude or sexual servitude.
- **[S574](#), Life Insurance Beneficiary Changes.** Allows change of beneficiary for life insurance if said beneficiary was selected under fraudulent/false pretenses.

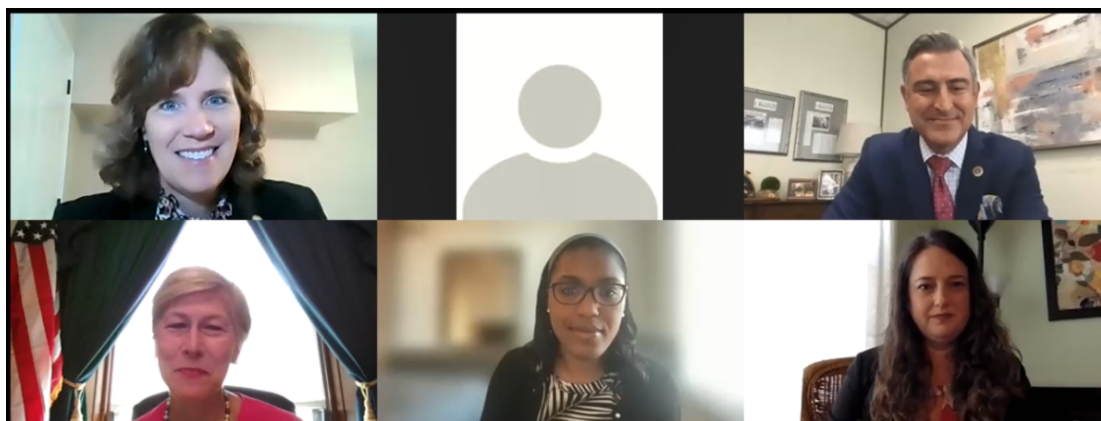
Updates from Appropriations/Base Budget Committee



The Senate Appropriations/Base Budget Committee heard 2 important bills this week (I voted favorably for them both):

- **[H142](#), UNC Building Reserves/Certain Projects.** Appropriates funds for the University of North Carolina building reserve for building projects, including **\$982,000 for the Science Building at UNC Charlotte**. I am also a co-sponsor of the Senate's version of this bill, [S130](#).
- **[S172](#), 2021 COVID-19 Response and Relief (PCS).** Appropriates certain federal grant funds provided to the state under the American Rescue Plan Act. This proposed spending includes pass throughs to Mecklenburg County (and 11 other counties) for rental assistance.

Equal Pay Act Press Conference



I am proud to have joined Congresswoman Deborah Ross, my Senate colleagues, Moms Rising, and Action NC last week for a press conference about the NC Equal Pay Act. I filed **NC Equal Pay Act, [S573](#)**, with Senators deViere and Salvador, to give NC women the right to sue employers who pay them less than their male counterparts. Passing the Equal Pay Act is not only a matter of women's equality and justice, but also a matter of tackling poverty and promoting economic security. Join me in supporting the Equal Pay Act. It is an injustice for women doing comparable work, in the same office, store, hospital or courtroom as our male co-workers, to receive less compensation because of our gender.

[Watch the Press Conference Here](#)

Calls for Criminal Justice and Policing Reforms

Weeks before the shooting of Andrew Brown in Elizabeth City and the ensuing fight to release the police bodycam and dashcam video, our Senate Democratic caucus filed **[S510](#)** to require the release of such footage within 48 hours of a request. This is one of many criminal justice and policing reforms we are seeking this session. Read more about the reforms we are seeking at the link below.



[Read More Here](#)

Mecklenburg Delegation to the NCGA Hosting Second Virtual Listening Session of the Year

THE MECKLENBURG COUNTY DELEGATION TO THE
NC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SECOND VIRTUAL LISTENING SESSION OF 2021



Thursday, May 13 | 7-8PM
Sign up here: <http://bit.ly/ncgamecksignup>
*Attendees must sign up in advance to join the Listening Session

The Mecklenburg County Delegation to the NC General Assembly is hosting our second virtual listening session of the year on **Thursday, May 13th from 7-8pm**. The 17-member Delegation wants to hear from you about what is on your mind, what you would like us to know about your community, and what you would like us to work on. **This is your opportunity to talk to us and for us to listen.** Attendees must sign up in advance to join the Listening Session. I hope you will join us.

[Sign Up for the Listening Session Here](#)

COVID-19 Updates



NC.gov/COVID19

On Wednesday, Governor Roy Cooper and North Carolina DHHS Secretary Mandy K. Cohen [gave an update](#) on the state’s current data, trends and vaccination progress. As the state’s metrics and key indicators remain stable, Governor Cooper also signed an Executive Order outlining safety measures for the month of May. [Executive Order No. 209](#) will take effect April 30 and is set to expire June 1. As more North Carolinians get vaccinated and adhere to safety protocols over the course of the next month, the state anticipates lifting more restrictions on June 1.

Under the new Executive Order, **masks will still be required indoors but are no longer mandated outdoors**. Masks are still strongly recommended outdoors in crowded areas and higher risk settings where social distancing is difficult.

Executive Order No. 209 will also **increase mass gathering capacity limits**. The number of people who may gather indoors will increase from 50 to 100 and the number of people who may gather outdoors will increase from 100 to 200. Occupancy limits currently in place will remain the same.

For information on how to get your COVID-19 vaccine, go to yourspotyourshot.nc.gov. COVID-19 information specific to Mecklenburg county can be found [here](#).

NC Community Health Care Association Meeting



NCCCHA @NCCCHA... ·4h ...

Thanks to Mecklenburg NC delegation

[@CunninghamNCRep](#)

[@LoftonforNC](#)

[@NatashaMarcusNC](#)

[@RepBeckyCarney](#)

[@MaryBelkNC](#) staff fr

[@MMohammedNC](#) 4 meeting

w/ NC Community Health

Centers today, to talk about

[#COVID19](#) pandemic, testing

&vaccinating, all while doing

the usual primary care work



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Earlier this month I met with local Community Health Centers (CHCs) serving Mecklenburg County. The **NC Community Health Center Association** discussed the important work being done by both the C.W. Williams Community Health Center & the Charlotte Community Health Clinic to **equitably administer COVID-19 vaccines** while continuing to provide comprehensive primary care services regardless of patients' ability to pay, insurance status, or immigration status.

Earth Day Video and Lunch & Learn Panel



Yesterday I joined Senators Murdock, Mayfield, deViere, and Garrett to discuss our **environmental priorities for the session**. I discussed my environmental bills, Improve Pipeline Safety, Reinstate Mt. Island Lake Marine Commission, Coal Ash Structural Fill Protection and more. Many thanks to the NC League of Conservation Voters Foundation and Power the Vote NC for putting on this event. If you missed it live, you can watch it now at the link below.

I also spoke about **my commitment to a greener future in an Earth Day video**, which you can watch on Facebook [here](#) and on Twitter [here](#).

Watch the Event Here

Governor Cooper's State of the State Address

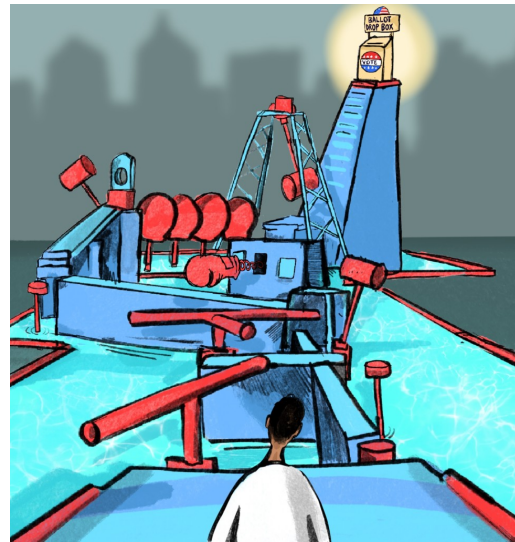




On April 26th, Governor Cooper gave his State of the State address to House and Senate members, the Council of State, and the NC Supreme Court. His speech emphasized COVID-19 relief efforts, Medicaid expansion, investment in early childhood education, broadband access, and more. You can read more about the speech [here](#). The photo above is of members of the Mecklenburg Delegation at the event.

Davidson Weighs In on Voter Suppression Bills

Thank you to [The Davidsonian](#) for interviewing me on the topic of voting rights in North Carolina and proposals to restrict voting. I spoke about my concerns with [S326](#), which would throw away ballots if they arrive after election day, regardless of why they are late. So it forces anyone who wants to vote by mail to make their choices before all the information is in and get their ballot in the mail very early. As we know, there's been a slowdown with the US Postal Service. It's not a voter's fault if the mail is slow. You can read the article at the link above.



NC Housing Coalition Legislative Day



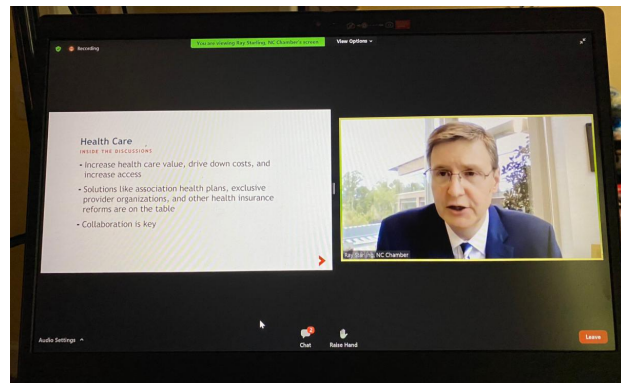
I attended the NC Housing Coalition's Legislative Briefing, where we discussed statewide

needs for affordable housing, how to address the housing crisis, and various appropriations measures. 27% of all households in North Carolina are cost burdened and 43% of renters have difficulty affording their rent.

I am proud to have introduced [S252](#), **Cornelius Affordable Housing Funds**, which provides \$150,000 for a comprehensive redevelopment plan to increase affordable housing in the town. I am also a co-sponsor of [S386](#), **Expand Workforce Housing** and [S588](#), **Low-Income Housing Tax Credits**.

NC Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Summit

I attended the NC Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Summit, where we reviewed issues ranging from healthcare to elections. I am grateful for Senate Minority Leader Dan Blue, who took the time to call on the chamber to support our efforts to expand Medicaid. Given that it would help our state's economy and public health in a variety of ways, we believe it should be on the Chamber's list of priorities.



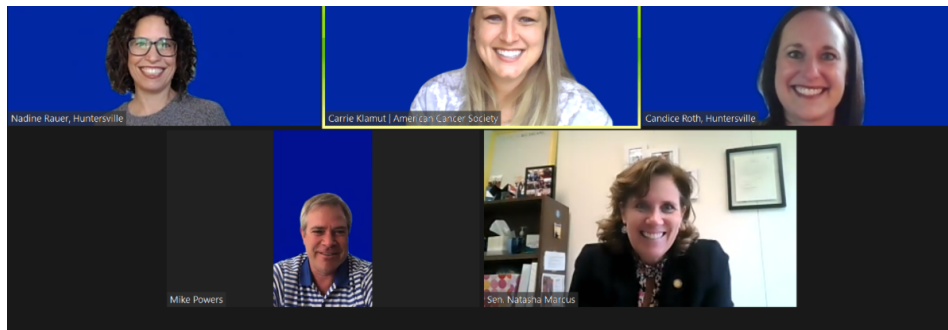
Joint Caucus on the Arts and Arts Education Meeting



I joined House and Senate colleagues to attend the first meeting of the re-established **Joint Caucus on the Arts and Arts Education**. We listened to a presentation from the Executive Director of Arts North Carolina and Secretary of the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources Reid Wilson. We heard about the **civic, economic, and educational impact** of the arts in our state, and how the General Assembly can take action to empower the relief, reopening, and recovery of the cultural sector.

NC Cancer Action Day





I am grateful to the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network for briefing me on their legislative priorities during NC Cancer Action Day. We discussed **Medicaid expansion** and tobacco use prevention funding. Their organization also supports QuitlineNC, a 24/7 hotline that provides free cessation services to any North Carolina resident who needs help **quitting tobacco use**. You can reach the hotline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).

Periods Don't Stop for Pandemics: Menstrual Equity for NC Kick-Off Event



Students and Faculty from UNC-Wilmington have launched a campaign to **raise awareness about period poverty**, and I joined them for their kick-off event with Senator Murdock and Representative von Haefen. I discussed my bill **Senate Bill 614, Feminine Hygiene Product Sales Tax Exemption**, which would help address period poverty by acknowledging that feminine hygiene products are a medical necessity and should not be subject to a sales tax. North Carolinians with periods pay a total of \$8 million per year in taxes on period products. This economic burden is unfair and discriminatory.

If this newsletter was forwarded to you and you would like to receive future editions, please subscribe at [this link](#) or email me at Natasha.Marcus@ncleg.gov and let me know you want to subscribe to the biweekly newsletter.

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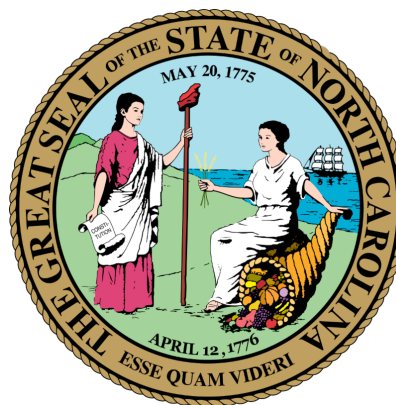
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How can we help you? Let us know and [reach out](#) to our office! We want to hear from you.

Senator Natasha Marcus | [Website](#)



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