

Hate Crimes On The Rise Nationwide / First American Rescue Plan (ARP) Bill Passes General Assembly



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



Peace. "Hate Crimes are on the rise nationwide and according to the latest FBI data, North Carolina has reported a dramatic increase in Hate Crimes and Hate Group activity. NC Legislators need to step up, take action and pass my Hate Crimes Prevention Act." Recently, I shared information about the Hate Crimes Bill that I sponsored, with members of the Asian Americans Together Organization in a NCGA Press Conference.

First American Rescue Plan (ARP) Bill Passes General Assembly

Earlier this year President Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan. The Plan invests billions of federal dollars in North Carolina for a variety of purposes.

Today, the NC House voted to pass the first bill, [SB 172](#), related to this federal investment. The investments in the bill were largely "automatic" meaning that the State did not have much discretion in how the money was spent because of federal guidelines. SB 172 also makes important technical changes important to administering this federal money once it comes to North Carolina. The bill now goes to Governor Cooper who is expected to sign it in to law.

Emergency Rental Assistance is one area where SB 172 established what counties will receive to help their citizens. COVID-19 has highlighted and made worse the gaps between the wealthy and the rest of our country and the lack of affordable housing in many places. You can read a [Fact Sheet on the Emergency Rental Assistance Program here](#).

SB 172 allocates how much money each county will receive in this Emergency Rental Assistance to help families with rent or utilities. Mecklenburg County will receive \$49,474,851.

Governor Cooper's American Rescue Plan Proposal

North Carolina will receive soon \$5.7 billion from the federal American Rescue Plan. There are rules on how the money can be spent, but there is some flexibility too. Last week Governor Cooper outlined his proposal for how to invest the money wisely. The recommendations include assisting families most impacted by the pandemic, upgrading our infrastructure, helping more people get a degree or trade after high school, preparing the state's workforce and

promoting business development and innovation.

To see the governor's recommendation, click here:

[Governor's Budget Recommendations](#)

Governor Cooper Announces \$51.4 Million in Education Grants, New Financial Aid Program

This week Governor Cooper directed \$51.4 million in new funding to help students access and complete postsecondary education. The funding is North Carolina's share of the Governor's Emergency Education Relief fund. Here is where the money goes:

- \$44 million to make more affordable community college and college;
- \$5 million to support mental health initiatives; and
- \$2.4 million to equity-focused initiatives for K-12 and college students.

Longleaf Commitment Program

- Guarantees that graduating high school seniors from low- and middle-income families receive at least \$2,800 in federal and state grants to cover tuition and most fees at any of the state's 58 community colleges.
- Supplements the federal Pell grant and existing aid by providing an additional \$700 to \$2,800 grant per year for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 academic years for students to earn an associate degree and/or credits to transfer to a four-year college or university in North Carolina. · Info on how to apply will be available at www.nccommunitycolleges.edu.

NC Guarantee Grant Program

- Governor Cooper is funding the first step of this program and asking legislators to fund the rest with federal American Rescue Plan Act funding.
- If enacted, NC Guarantee would ensure that students from eligible families receive at least \$6,000 per year in federal and state grants toward attending any UNC institution or North Carolina Community College.

Longleaf Complete Program

- Help college students whose education has been interrupted during the pandemic complete their degrees.
- \$12.5 million in flexible funding to the UNC System Office, NC Community College System, and independent colleges and universities provide financial aid or expand student support services to help students who are near

completion of their degree or credential and need the extra help.

In addition to these three affordability programs, Governor Cooper is directing \$5 million to the UNC System Office to rapidly expand mental health services for students across the state. According to UNC, 8 in 10 students say their mental health has been negatively impacted by the pandemic.

Finally, there is \$2.4 million for equity initiatives:

- \$825,000 to expand the Jobs for North Carolina Graduates (JNCG) program (currently in eight rural high schools), which teaches 11th and 12th grade high school students employability and workplace skills in preparation for the workforce after graduation.
- \$750,000 to develop an Education Recovery Dashboard, which will empower education leaders with data necessary to better serve students, families, and educators as school districts and colleges manage more than \$10 billion in federal education aid.
- \$650,000 to develop and promote an accessible digital literacy toolkit that educates students and parents on the digital literacy skills that are critical to remote learning and workforce opportunities.
- \$173,000 to further support the NC School of Science and Math and UNC School for Arts, which each received limited to no federal COVID relief funds because of the size of their high school student populations.

Enjoy your Memorial Day weekend...PEACE!



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