

**\*\*\*SPAM\*\*\* Latest Updates from the NCGA**

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NC Senate District 41



## NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

August 6, 2021

### Updates from Senate Redistricting and Elections Committee



The first meeting about the redistricting process for new Congressional and State Legislative districts happened yesterday. The Joint Redistricting Committee came together to discuss **the timeline, access to census data, opportunities for public comment, and the criteria for drawing new maps.**

You are invited to come to Raleigh to provide public comment to the Joint Committee on **Tuesday, August 10 at 8:30am.** This will be the first opportunity for the public to provide in-person comments to the 2021 committee. The hearing will be in the Legislative Office Building, 300 North Salisbury Street, Raleigh NC, Room 544 (room number subject to

change). Additional public forums will be scheduled in the Fall, hopefully in multiple locations throughout the State, to be decided by the committee over the next few weeks. There is also an [online portal](#) by which the public can submit comments about the redistricting process.

**As a member of the Redistricting Committee, I pledge to push for as transparent and fair process as we can get.** We will be calling for clear criteria by which districts can be drawn and tested to make sure partisanship doesn't result in maps that vary widely from what a nonpartisan panel would draw. We will need the input of the public to make a clear public record that voters want a fair process and fair maps.

For folks who are trained in map drawing, you may want to take advantage of the public access that will be available to the public to use the software at the NCGA. More information is available about that [here](#).

### Portal for Public Comments to the NCGA about Redistricting

## Noteworthy Votes



Our legislative work has slowed down as we await the House's version of the budget. We did take a few votes over the past two weeks, including:

- **[HB96](#), Allow Pharmacists to Administer Injectable Drugs (passed unanimously).** Expands the number of vaccines and medications that immunizing pharmacists are allowed to administer including COVID-19 vaccines, FDA approved vaccines, nicotine replacement therapy, oral contraceptives, prenatal vitamins, and HIV post-exposure prophylaxis, and requires parental consent for administration of vaccines under an emergency use authorization to a minor (i.e. vaccines that are not fully FDA approved).
- **[HB461](#), State Auditor Clarifying Amendments (passed unanimously).** Makes technical changes to the State Auditor statutes.

## Budget Update Highlight: Education Policy



The House appropriations committees met this week to **begin presenting their amendments to the state budget**. There will be a full House vote on the budget sometime next week.

I want to highlight potential changes to education policy that are in the current House budget proposal. There are many, some good and some I oppose. They include:

- Rising high school seniors who don't meet the readiness requirements of the state's Career and College Ready program would be required to take **remediation courses in math, reading and English**.
- Until June 2022, students would could get an **eligibility certificate for a driving permit regardless of their grades**.
- **New social studies standards** would be suspended for at least two years, and a politically appointed commission under the Superintendent of Public Instruction would be created to oversee curriculum standards. I am paying close attention to this section due to ongoing debates about so-called Critical Race Theory and my support for education that includes a full history.
- Schools would have to **make all instructional materials and lesson plans available online for public review**. Each school board would have to set up a local community media advisory committee to consider challenges to the appropriateness of instructional materials.
- School districts that aren't teaching **cursive handwriting and multiplication tables** would face financial penalties impacting the superintendent's salary.
- The state's two struggling **virtual charter schools** would be allowed 20% expanded enrollment and permitted to operate for at least four more years. This is despite their consistent inability to meet student achievement goals.
- Every district would be required to set up at least one **threat assessment team** under the guidance of the state's Center for Safer Schools to assess threatening behavior by students.
- **Teachers would no longer be required to pay \$50 to help pay for a substitute teacher** if they want to schedule a personal day.
- **Competitive robotics programs** would become a recognized interscholastic athletic activity regulated by the State Board of Education.

You can read more about proposed education policy changes [here](#).

## Women's (In)equality Day: Celebrating the Right to Vote and Advocating for the Passage of the ERA

**WOMEN'S  
(IN)EQUALITY  
DAY**

**ERA  
YES**

**CELEBRATING** women's right to vote  
and **DEMANDING** ratification of  
the Equal Rights Amendment.

**Thursday, August 26, 10 am–Noon**  
**NC General Assembly Building**  
**16 W. Jones St., Raleigh**

**Speakers include ERA ratification bill sponsors:**  
Reps. Julie von Haefen and Susan Fisher  
Sens. Natalie Murdock and Natasha Marcus  
Former N.C. Chief Justice Cheri Beasley  
Mandy Carter, co-founder, National Black Justice Coalition  
*See full list of speakers at [www.era-nc.org](http://www.era-nc.org)*

**Presented by ERA-NC Alliance with partner organizations:**

**ERA-NC ALLIANCE** **AAUW** **NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS** **LWV** **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**WomenNC** **Business and Professional Women/NC** **Lillian's List**

[www.era-nc.org](http://www.era-nc.org)

I am proud to be a primary sponsor of the ERA ratification bill because I believe that the US Constitution should enshrine equality of rights under the law for all. The ERA was introduced into Congress in 1923, and nearly a hundred years later we are still waiting for the protections it will give to women across the country. Please [join the ERA-NC Alliance and me on August 25th](#) as we speak about the importance of finally ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment in NC. For more information on the ERA and its importance for stopping discrimination in the United States, please [see this FAQ](#).

## COVID-19 Updates

**COVID-19**  
**NC UPDATE**

[NC.gov/COVID19](http://NC.gov/COVID19)

Due to the Delta variant, COVID-19 cases are on the rise again across the state. The best protection against COVID-19 is to get vaccinated. Don't wait. For more information about the vaccines and to find a vaccine location near you, visit [myspot.nc.gov](https://myspot.nc.gov) (English) or [vacunate.nc.gov](https://vacunate.nc.gov) (Spanish)

Additionally, as part of its effort to help more North Carolinians protect themselves against COVID-19 and the highly contagious Delta variant, **North Carolina is now offering \$100 Summer Cards** at some vaccine sites across the state to offset the time and transportation costs of getting vaccinated. Through August 31st the \$100 Summer Cards are available to anyone 18 and older who gets their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine at a participating site—while supplies last.

In addition to providing a \$100 Summer Card to those who get their first dose of vaccine, North Carolina **continues to offer \$25 Summer Cards to those who drive others to their vaccination appointment.** They receive a \$25 card each time they drive someone to a first dose appointment at the completion of the vaccination. Those interested in the \$100 Summer Card for first-time vaccinations and \$25 Summer Card for drivers should call 888-675-4567 or find a participating location [here](#).

## Joint Legislative Women's Caucus Breakfast with the Governor



Governor Cooper with the women of the Mecklenburg Delegation

It was an honor to visit the Executive Mansion at the invitation of Governor Cooper, along with the bipartisan members of the **Joint Legislative Women's Caucus** this week. He provided breakfast and talked with our group about **the importance of having women in positions of power, vaccines, and broadband expansion**. He also discussed the newest \$1 million dollar vaccine lottery winner and emphasized the help available for rent and utilities through the HOPE program. If you are a Mecklenburg County resident who needs help paying rent or utilities, contact RAMP CLT at this [link](#).

## Public School Forum Hosts Webinar on H324



Today I attended an online forum hosted by the Public School Forum entitled "Digging Deeper: A Conversation on the Impact of HB 324 on Students, Educators and Classrooms."

The 90 minute forum allowed legislators to hear directly from educators and students about this important topic. **The students spoke about the importance of culturally relevant curriculum to their education** and how classes that allowed them to think critically about major events in our nation's history were compelling and encouraged them to want to be active citizens and to learn more. They also shared how, as students of color, they have been made to feel uncomfortable and devalued for many years, making the bill's desire to protect white students from any discomfort by using euphemisms and avoiding difficult truths seem especially problematic. We also heard from educators who **worry that a bill like H324 will have a quelling effect on teachers' ability to teach a full and honest curriculum** and to engage their students, many of whom are members of historically oppressed groups. The educators also expressed frustration that instead of being trusted to teach, a profession for which they are expertly trained, legislators who have no education credentials are attempting to control their classrooms through bills like H324.

The forum was recorded and will be available for viewing soon. You can learn more about the Public School Forum and their various resources [here](#).

## Emergency Broadband Benefits: Qualified Individuals Save \$50/Month on Internet Access

The [Emergency Broadband Benefit program](#) will provide a discount of up to \$50 per month towards broadband service for eligible households. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if they contribute more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase price. This program was created **to assist families struggling with internet access during the COVID-19 pandemic**. More information can be found in the graphic below or at [this link](#).

### DO YOU WANT TO SAVE \$50/ MONTH ON INTERNET ACCESS?

Apply for the Emergency Broadband Benefit  
(EBB) Program

**SPECIAL  
OFFER**



Step 1: Do you participate in the Lifeline program?

What is Lifeline?: A program made by the FCC to help make phone and internet services more affordable

I Participate In Lifeline	I Do Not Participate In Lifeline
 Give your existing internet provider your consent and you will receive discount	Check with current internet provider and see if they are participating in EBB program  You must apply for the discount by...
 How do you give consent?	 Apply online at <a href="https://bit.ly/3zrwQje">https://bit.ly/3zrwQje</a>
 Contact existing provider and opt in to receive discount  <b>OR</b>	<b>OR</b> Apply by mail at <a href="https://bit.ly/3vsOFNw">https://bit.ly/3vsOFNw</a>  Mail application to: Emergency Broadband Support Center P.O. Box 7081 London, KY 40742
Not sure if your provider participates in the	<b>OR</b>

<p>program? Go to <a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KXEh8Mpeh7-ilWKAZG_tQ2WVNYPkspID/view?usp=sharing" style="color: white;">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KXEh8Mpeh7-ilWKAZG_tQ2WVNYPkspID/view?usp=sharing</a> to find out</p> 	<p>Find participating providers at <a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KXEh8Mpeh7-ilWKAZG_tQ2WVNYPkspID/view?usp=sharing" style="color: #0070C0;">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KXEh8Mpeh7-ilWKAZG_tQ2WVNYPkspID/view?usp=sharing</a> and apply directly with them</p> 
<small>For more information and help visit <a href="http://getemergencybroadband.org">getemergencybroadband.org</a> or contact the Emergency Broadband Support Center at (833) 511-0311</small>	

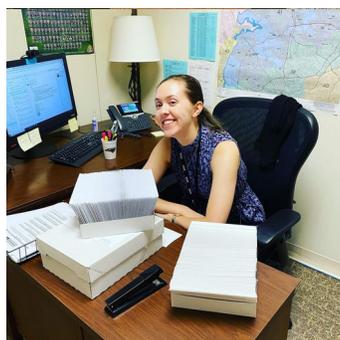
## Rental Assistance for Mecklenburg County



If you're a renter having trouble paying your rent, utilities, or other housing costs – or if you're a landlord trying to stay afloat with tenants in this situation – help may be available. State and local programs are distributing billions of dollars in rental assistance to help renters stay housed during the pandemic.

**[Visit the CFPB's \(Consumer Financial Protection Bureau\) Rental Assistance Finder](#)** to find out what this means for you and what you can do. The CFPB's site also includes resources to help renters and landlords understand other resources to help navigate various financial hardships related to the pandemic. Mecklenburg County specific resources can be found **[here](#)**.

## Thank You for Registering to Vote!



If you are a newly registered voter in Senate District 41, you will be getting a welcome letter from me soon. This week my Legislative Assistant, Jessica, prepared over 2,200 letters to new voters. That's a lot of new voters this year! Yeah Democracy!

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](mailto:Natasha.Marcus@ncleg.gov) and let me know you want to subscribe to the biweekly newsletter.

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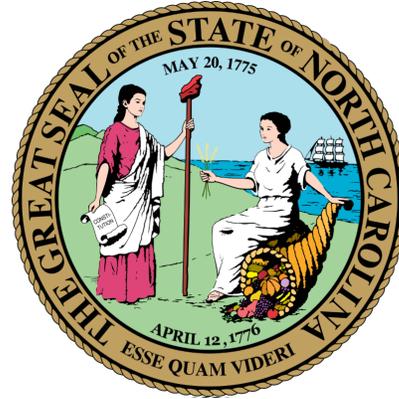
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How can we help you? Let us know and [reach out](#) to our office! We want to hear from you.

Senator Natasha Marcus | [Website](#)



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