

*****SPAM*** For Immediate Release**



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**From the Office of Sen. Joyce Waddell, NC Senate
Mecklenburg County**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Greetings:

Session did not take place any day last week in order to focus on the budget. We hope that the budget process will be completed within the next couple of weeks. Stay tuned and I will surely alert you to the completion of the budget process.

*Sincerely,
Joyce Waddell*

Community Happenings

Please be aware: A redistricting hearing will take place on September 22 at Central Piedmont Community College, in Mecklenburg County at 3 p.m.

At the General Assembly

Committees are continuing to meet at the General Assembly to bring forth legislation for voting.

This week the Rules Committee voted on HB 531 Timeshare Act Changes, HB 797 Deed Stamp Tax Refund by Hearing Officer, HB 776 Remote Electronic Notarization Act.

The Finance Committee voted on SB 550 Modify Surety/Bail Bond/Bondsmen Provisions

Antibody Clinics

When the hospitals that make up a state health care system got overwhelmed with COVID-19 and other patients last month, their chief operating officer, asked the state if it could help by setting up a field hospital. The state said it could not do that, the COO said. It offered something that might be just as helpful: a portable clinic where people who test positive for COVID-19 can get treated with monoclonal antibodies. Monoclonal antibodies that attack the coronavirus have been available for nearly a year; they got widespread attention after an infusion was credited with helping the former US President recover from COVID-19 last October.

Demand spiked this summer, as the delta variant of the coronavirus caused the number of cases to soar, particularly among the unvaccinated. Not only does the treatment help patients get better but it prevents people from getting sick enough to need to be admitted to hospitals that are already near capacity.

The mobile antibody clinic in the parking lot outside the county health department next to the Smithfield hospital is one of a half dozen the state is opening around North Carolina with help of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The two adjoining trailers, with “NC Mobile Disaster Hospital” on the doors and powered by a generator, were ready for the first patients Wednesday.

Monoclonal antibodies are lab-grown proteins derived from the natural antibodies of people who have successfully fought off COVID-19. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration allows their use on an emergency basis, making them the only sanctioned treatment for COVID-19 patients before they are hospitalized. The UNC Health system, which includes some local health organizations, has treated more than 6,500 people with monoclonals since late last year, more than half of them just since Aug. 1, said a UNC spokesman.

Senator Waddell feels encouraged within this process of helping

COVID patients.

Distillery Sales

A new state law will allow N.C. consumers to buy distilled spirits on Sundays at distilleries statewide. The Governor signed the law on Sept. 10. It marks the first time Sunday bottled liquor sales will be allowed since Prohibition. The law will take effect Oct. 3. “Like me, many craft distillers in North Carolina made the decision to close on Sundays because it was not fiscally sound to keep our doors open when we couldn’t sell our product,” said the president of the Distillers Association of North Carolina and CEO of Southern Distilling.

The newly passed bill helps level the playing field between distilleries and wineries and breweries. “Allowing distillers to sell their products seven days a week is a great first step towards modernizing the spirits marketplace in North Carolina,” said the senior vice president and head of state government relations for the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States.

The law does not apply to ABC stores, which are still prohibited from selling distilled spirits on Sundays in North Carolina. According to the Distilled Spirits Council, there are only seven states in the United States that do not allow the sale of spirits on Sundays from off-premise retailers: Alabama, Mississippi, Montana, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and Utah.

Rioting Bill

The Governor recently vetoed House Bill 805, a bill that would have made the punishment for charges relating to protesting more stringent. House Bill 805 was among the most divisive bills of the

current legislative session. First introduced in the state House on May 3 by the GOP Speaker of the House. House Bill 805 was ratified by the House and Senate on Sept. 1. Although the governor has vetoed the bill, North Carolinians continue to voice their opinions.

When this bill came to the floor for votes, Senator Waddell voted against it.

State Budget

The latest goal for a new North Carolina state budget becoming law is mid-October. All year, the Governor, the majority Senate leader, and House Speaker have pledged to work better together and get a budget into law. So that's one of the reasons this process is dragging out again. There is no stalemate right now. The chambers are working out their final budget agreement, and they will send that to the Governor before, not after, it comes to the floor for a vote. That's a major change from previous budgets.

"I feel optimistic that the House and Senate will come to a compromise with the Governor to complete the budget," said Senator Waddell. The budget will remain confidential until the Governor has an opportunity to say whether he will sign it as is, or if there are changes that he would like to see before he would sign it, and then to have negotiations. The House and Senate have agreed on a package of tax cuts, but do not want to make that public before negotiations with the Governor.

Senator Waddell is looking forward to the completion of the budget so that the state of North Carolina can focus on decreasing this virus.

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