

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



From Sen. Natasha Marcus <natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov>
To <sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org>
Reply-To <natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov>
Date 2021-11-19 16:59

Natasha
MARCUS
NC Senate District 41



NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

November 19, 2021



I hope everyone has a happy and restful Thanksgiving week with your loved ones. I got my booster shot this week and now that **boosters are approved for all**, I highly recommend it for maximum protection of you and the people you are near. If you have questions or concerns about how to keep your family safe over the weekend, please refer to **this CDC resource** on holiday celebrations.

Noteworthy Votes



Below are a few noteworthy bills I voted on over the past two weeks. You can find a full list of bills I voted on [here](#).

Yes votes:

- **SB308, Various Building Code Amendment (Conference Report)**. Makes various technical changes to building codes, including clarifying electric wiring requirement references, inspection requirements, and residential development regulations.

No votes:

- **SB105, 2021 Appropriations Act (Conference Report)**. The two-year state budget. More details below.
- **HB91, Accountability and Fair Play in Athletics (Conference Report)**. Creates new requirements for overseeing regulation of high school interscholastic athletics, including a memorandum of understanding that requires specific obligations for a nonprofit authorized to administer high school interscholastic athletics. I voted no because, while some state oversight is warranted, the bill sponsors were unnecessarily aggressive in their approach and have politicized high school athletics.

State Budget Passes the Senate & Is Now Law



After months of negotiations and closed door meetings, the [state budget](#) passed the Senate this week, 40-8. Governor Cooper signed it into law yesterday. Most Democratic members were not involved in the conference report process, meaning we had less than 24 hours to parse through a 600+ page document and determine how to vote. **I voted no**

on the Republicans' budget because, even though it includes many good things in large part due to Democrats' negotiation efforts, there are significant problems that I cannot overlook. While we do need a state budget after more than two years without one, and I understand why Governor Cooper agreed to sign the bill, I wanted to be on the record objecting to some of the worst parts. **Next time, we need to do better.**

Some budget provisions I support:

- Economy:
 - Reduces income tax and the standard exemption (but more benefits for higher incomes due to flat rate and reductions are minimal)
 - Increases the child tax deduction
 - PPP loans tax deductible (but UI payments taxable) - \$427M
 - Eliminates state taxes on military pensions
- State Employees:
 - Bonus for retirees of 5% over two years (but only temporary, not a permanent COLA)
 - State employee raises and bonuses
 - Raise minimum wage for school non-certified employees to \$13, then \$15
- Community Colleges and K-12 Education:
 - Community Colleges get adequate investments, employee raises and bonuses
 - ADM "hold harmless" to avoid drop in funding due to drop in enrollment in K-12 public schools
- Criminal Justice:
 - Mecklenburg not losing an Assistant District Attorney (as threatened in the original budget)
 - Funds to fix the rape kit backlog
 - Funds for anti-human trafficking organizations and domestic violence prevention efforts
- Healthcare:
 - Tobacco settlement money invested in cessation efforts
 - Extends post-partum coverage extended under Medicaid to 12 months and increases Innovation Waiver slots (but not Medicaid Expansion)
- Local Items:
 - Change in policy to provide more state surplus computers to non-profits like E2D to be refurbished and distributed to low-income households
 - Funding for Cain Center for the Arts
- Other:
 - Funding for an African-American Heritage Commission (but not for a monument at the Capitol as originally planned)
 - DEQ's main needs met, including Reedy Creek Lab, PFAS work, and permit modernization (but nothing for improving pipeline safety)
 - \$1 Billion for broadband expansion (but no funding to make it affordable)

Reasons I voted no on the budget:

- Healthcare:
 - **No Medicaid expansion.** The budget's promise to "study" the question is a waste of money and a delay tactic. This decision turns down so much federal funding that uninsured people and healthcare providers need,

- including a \$2.4 billion sign on bonus from the American Rescue Plan.
- **Over \$15.6M to anti-choice "crisis pregnancy centers."** These are fake women's health centers that manipulate people facing an unwanted pregnancy. This is the most state funding ever allocated to CPCs. More info [here](#).
- Education:
 - **Teacher raises are insufficient**, especially after no raises in last biennium.
 - The average 5% raise is partially done with step raises and one-time bonuses and does not even keep up with inflation.
 - **New teacher supplements exclude urban LEAs like CMS based on an unfair "low-wealth county" formula**
 - Raise does not address pay plateaus for long-serving teachers
 - **The Leandro funding is insufficient.** The NC Judge ordered \$1.7B for public schools to meet our constitutional obligation to students, this budget funds only about half and leaves \$2.5B in unused funds in the first year. More details on Leandro impacts later in the newsletter.
 - Way too much money for **private school vouchers** and increased eligibility for vouchers; major expansion of this program (by over 240%) which undermines public education and sends public money to unaccountable private schools, which are permitted to operate on discriminatory policies
 - **No restoration of master's degree pay**
- Local Impacts:
 - **Anti-urban provision in Powell Bill funding** (excludes Mecklenburg and Wake only), which will reduce the county's access to DOT funds for transportation.
 - Anti-urban public school teacher supplement (see above)
 - **No funding for most SD41 projects**, including ocular melanoma funding, affordable housing plan in Cornelius, or improved pipeline safety.
- Economy/Taxes:
 - **Major negative impacts to state revenue.** Non-partisan staff estimates the state will lose \$1.325 billion in the first year, \$4.078 billion by the fifth year, and \$8.1 billion by the tenth year (20% of total revenue). This creates an irresponsible structural deficit that will force cuts to education, healthcare and other services in the future.
 - Corporate tax will decrease from 2.5% to 0% by 2029, meaning that **individuals will pay more than wealthy corporations** (most of which are out of state corporations). We are already a top state for business and have one of the lowest corporate tax rates in the nation. This is an unnecessary and irresponsible corporate giveaway.
 - Changes to the Franchise Tax are more corporate giveaways and already vetoed in a separate bill earlier this year.
- **"Poison Pill" Policy Provisions:**
 - Language that will restrict the Attorney General's authority to settle lawsuits. Unconstitutional policy provisions have no place in a state budget, and this legislation had already been [vetoed](#) by the Governor.
 - Language that will restrict the Governor's power to deal with emergencies. This unconstitutional provision was also debated earlier in session and was [vetoed](#) by the Governor.

- Provisions that could restrict DEQ's ability to respond to any "imminent hazards" identified in North Carolina, instead largely leaving the job up to county health departments.
- Provision that would limit the quarantine powers granted to the Dept of Health and Human Services.
- Unfair Budget Process
 - After delaying a vote on the budget by several months, Republicans forced a vote less than 24 hours after revealing their conference report. It caused hasty decisions and was not good or collaborative governance. In addition, their refusal to negotiate last biennium caused a sense that we (and teachers and various agencies and groups) were forced to take this deal, or get nothing again.

You can read more about the budget [here](#). I also posted a video on my Facebook page earlier this week where I go into some more details, which you can watch [here](#). (Note that some details have come to light since I recorded that video, so I've posted clarifications and corrections in the comments below where appropriate.)

Lead with Leandro



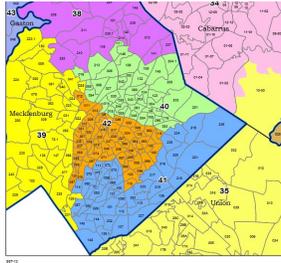
Last week Superior Court Judge David Lee **ordered the transfer of \$1.7 billion in reserves from the state general fund to support the Leandro plan within 30 days**. Republican leadership have called the order unconstitutional, even going so far as calling Judge Lee a "rogue judge".

I am grateful for Judge Lee's willingness to advocate for children across the state. The Leandro case began in 1994. We have been failing the children of this state's by not meeting their constitutional right to a sound, basic education for far too long. Currently, it is unclear how the matter will be resolved. There are reports that Republican leaders will seek to remove the Judge from his position. You can read more about the updates to the Leandro case [here](#) and [here](#).

Status of New Congressional and State District Maps



Allegations of partisan and racial gerrymandering in the new state and



congressional maps continue to grow. Just last week a third lawsuit was filed. You can read more about the recent lawsuits [here](#). I spoke to the Duke Chronicle about the redistricting process. You can read the article [here](#).

Mecklenburg Delegation Tour of Central Piedmont Community College



House and Senate Delegation Members with Dr. Kandi Deitemeyer, President of CPCC
(From L to R: Rep. Majeed, Sen. Salvador, Sen. Marcus, Dr. Deitemeyer, Sen. Waddell, Rep. Harris, Rep. Belk, Rep. Hunt)

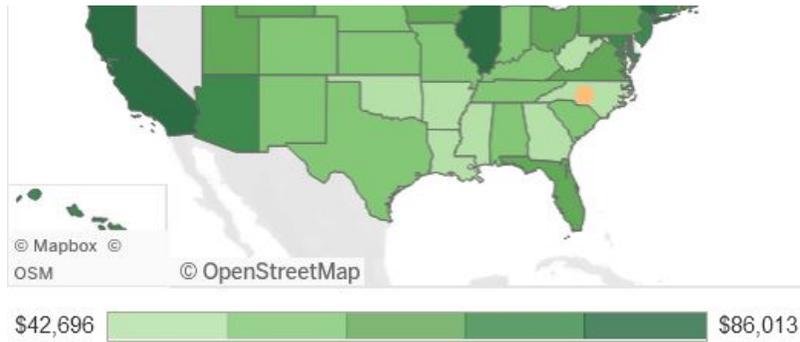


The new Leon Levine Health Sciences Building at CPCC



Training Facility for Computer Integrated Machinery in the Engineering Building





NC ranks 41st in the country for community college salaries

Last week [Central Piedmont Community College](#) hosted the Mecklenburg Delegation for a **tour of campus and a discussion about how the state budget impacts our community colleges**. CPCC's President, Dr. Kandi Deitemeyer, gave us a tour of the new health sciences building, including high quality simulation rooms complete with interactive "patients" in a realistic hospital wing, and the advanced manufacturing and engineering facilities. These facilities are impressive and the opportunities are overwhelming. There are **many degrees available debt-free** due to special COVID relief funding through the [Longleaf Commitment Funding Grants](#).

We also discussed the importance of investing in our community college systems. North Carolina currently **rank 41st in the country for community college salaries**, which makes it difficult to recruit and retain quality educators. You can read more about salary comparisons [here](#).

Davidson Police Department's Angel Tree Program



**DAVIDSON POLICE
DEPARTMENT ANNUAL
ANGEL TREE PROGRAM**

See how you can help at
www.townof davidson.org/angeltree



The Davidson Police Department has kicked off its annual Angel Tree Program. The program has historically provided **toys and clothing for children** in need but expanded in recent years to include providing elder and disabled residents in need with **gifts of grocery and gas gift cards**. You can learn more about the program [here](#).

Mecklenburg Delegation Meeting with Sheriff McFadden



This afternoon the Mecklenburg Delegation met with Sheriff McFadden to discuss various public safety projects throughout the county. **He provided updates on processing of concealed carry permits, evictions, the task force to address crime in known areas, and conditions at local detention centers.** Many of the challenges the Sheriff's Dept faces are a direct result of the pandemic. I am grateful for his service to the county and his willingness to keep the delegation updated.

State Funding for Beaty Park



North Carolina General Assembly Senate

SENATOR NATASHA R. MARCUS
41ST DISTRICT

OFFICE: 519 LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
300 N. SALISBURY STREET
RALEIGH, NC 27603-5925
PHONE: (919) 715-3050
EMAIL: Natasha.Marcus@ncleg.net

COMMITTEES:

JUDICIARY
REDISTRICTING AND ELECTIONS
APPROPRIATIONS ON AGRICULTURE, NATURAL AND
ECONOMIC RESOURCES

June 2, 2020

Nate Halubka
Manager, Grants and Outreach Program
Division of Parks and Recreation
NC Dept. of Natural and Cultural Resources
121 West Jones St. / 1615 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1615
Via US Mail and Email: Nate.halubka@ncparks.gov

Dear Mr. Halubka and Members of the PARTF Board,

I am writing in support of The Town of Davidson's grant application to build Beaty Park, a public park near the heart of our town. This park almost did not happen in our town. There were plans in place in 2016-17 to cut down the trees, fill in the pond, and develop the land into condominiums, stores, office space and more. But the residents of Davidson didn't want all that development. This 19.4 acres in the heart of town is one of the last parcels of undeveloped land we have. Davidson wanted a public park that protected the natural habitat. saved the trees. and provided a place to gather and enjoy nature. It

felt even more important because the land is close to both our town's subsidized apartment complex and our historically African-American neighborhood, areas which are often overlooked when improvements are made.

The community wanted this park so much that a group of over 1,000 people called "Save Davidson" was born, to advocate for the park, educate the citizens about the possibilities for this parcel of land, and push the town board to change course and pursue a park instead of a large development. New town officials were elected in 2017 who supported the park. The new town leaders appointed the citizen-led Beaty Park Task Force to gather public input to shape the park design. The Task Force worked collaboratively over the next few years to make sure many diverse voices were heard about what Beaty Park should include. They held three in-person public input sessions, two online surveys, more than ten guided hikes through the property, an idea wall at Town Hall, and information booths at the local farmers market and at one of Davidson's African-American churches. More than 1,000 citizens, nearly 8 percent of the town's population, participated and provided input. So, you see, the plans for Beaty Park have been created in collaboration with the community, and incorporate years of comments, feedback, revisions, and tweaks to make the park appealing to all ages for a myriad of uses. The Task Force's work

was recognized by the Town Board as "the gold standard" for community engagement efforts. The Task Force chair and vice-chair were recognized as Lake Norman Hometown Heroes for their leadership and citizen involvement.

The end result of all that citizen input is that we have a detailed plan for a unique space that is educational and fun, natural and accessible, and uniquely suited for our town. The citizens of Davidson are eager to get Beaty Park built and it is identified as "high priority" by the Town of Davidson Livability Board and the Board of Commissioners.

I know the committee provided you with a thorough application that describes all the aspects of Beaty Park, so I won't repeat those details here. Instead, I wanted you to know how central this Park has been in the plans that my Town has been making for the past several years. When built, Beaty Park will become a central gathering place in our special, college town, filling a need we've had for years. On behalf of Davidson, I hope that you will grant us the funding we need to make Beaty Park a reality.

Sincerely,



Natasha Marcus

I am happy to report that **Beaty Park in Davidson will be receiving \$285,000 from the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources' Parks and Recreation Trust Fund**. Local residents know that this is a victory for preservation of green space over development. I advocated for state funding in the summer of 2020 (see my letter above) and am glad that the district has received the funds. You can read about the full project timeline for the park [here](#). The Park is projected to open in the summer of 2022.

Governor Cooper Pardons Dontae Sharpe, Wrongfully Imprisoned for 24 Years





Last week Governor Cooper pardoned Dontae Sharpe, who spent 24 years behind bars for a crime he did not commit. Mr. Sharpe maintained his innocence throughout his sentence, and his case was given a new trial following a medical examiner discovering that the state's previous theory about the case was not medically or scientifically possible. **I advocated for and support the Governor's decision and want to thank everyone who took the time to email me to share your thoughts on Dontae Sharpe's case.** You can read more about the case and pardon [here](#).

NC Unemployment System Updates



NC DEPARTMENT
of COMMERCE
EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

Under [Senate Bill 311](#), a bill I supported and which Governor Roy Cooper signed into law on November 10, the base contribution rate to the state's **Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund for experience-rated employers will remain at 1.9% for 2022.**

Based on the solvency of the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund, **the rate was initially calculated at 2.4% for 2022. However, SB311 freezes the rate at 1.9% for the year.** The base contribution rate is one of the factors used to calculate an employer's unemployment insurance taxes for the year. These taxes go into the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund to pay state unemployment benefits to eligible workers in North Carolina. **The current balance of the fund is approximately \$3 billion.** The Division of Employment Security will send tax rate notices to employers before Jan. 1, 2022. Learn more [here](#).

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.

Contact Our Office

Phone: (919) 715-3050

Email:

Natasha.Marcus@ncleg.gov

Jessica.Bolin@ncleg.gov

Mailing Address:



300 N. Salisbury Street,
Rm. 519
Raleigh, NC 27603



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

Senator Natasha Marcus | [Website](#)



Sen. Natasha Marcus, District 41 | 300 N. Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC 27603

[Unsubscribe sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org](mailto:sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by natasha.marcus@ncleg.gov powered by



Try email marketing for free today!