

*****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:

The budget has been completed. Last week legislators and the Governor signed off on an official North Carolina budget for 2021-2022.

Joyce Waddell

***Community Happenings
with Senator Waddell***





Senator Waddell participates in street clean up in Mecklenburg County.

Budget Votes

We legislators on Wednesday sent a final state government budget that's over four months late to the Governor. His announcement the day before that he would sign the plan into law halted any drama over a possible repeat of a 2019 budget impasse. The House and Senate voted separately by overwhelming margins in favor of the plan that spends \$25.9 billion this fiscal year and \$27 billion next year, not including several billion dollars more in COVID-19 relief from Washington.

The Senate, which voted 40-8 for the measure, already gave its initial approval by a similar vote on Tuesday, just after the governor said he would sign the measure when it reaches his desk. In reviewing the budget the good within the plan outweighed the items he disliked during a time of great need following the pandemic. North Carolina has not had a comprehensive budget in place in 2 1/2 years because the 2019 stalemate never got fully resolved.

You can review the entire budget by going to <https://www.ncleg.gov/BillLookUp/2021/s105>.

Gerrymandering Lawsuit

Another lawsuit is challenging North Carolina's new district maps for both Congress and the state legislature, alleging both racial and partisan gerrymandering. Numerous outside analyses of the new maps have found that if Republicans and Democrats split the statewide vote roughly 50-50, Republicans would likely win 10 of the state's 14 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives due to the way the district lines are drawn. A GOP candidate could also flip an 11th seat that's considered highly competitive and could go either way. That seat, represented by Democratic Rep. G.K. Butterfield, used to be one of

two majority-minority districts in North Carolina but lawmakers redrew it to be majority-white.

Republicans would also be nearly guaranteed to keep a majority in the state legislature in future elections under the new maps, due to the number of safe seats that lawmakers drew for themselves. The lawsuit claims that even if Democratic candidates were to win the statewide vote by a significant margin, it still would not be enough to take control of the legislature.

Sports Oversight

Legislation that likely will create a formal agreement between the nonprofit body currently governing North Carolina high school sports and state education leaders received final approval on Wednesday. The compromise scales back specific demands previously advanced by legislators that the North Carolina High School Athletic Association fought against. The House and Senate voted separately for the measure almost two months after bill supporters had announced a deal had been reached. That announcement had followed a meeting with representatives of the association, the State Board of Education, the Governor and legislators from both parties.

There was little debate Wednesday about the final product, which tells the State Board of Education it can reach a memorandum of understanding with a nonprofit — presumably the association — to administer and enforce board requirements for high school sports. The agreement, which would have to be signed by mid-March, would begin next fall and initially last four years.

It says the education board must adopt student participation rules, but can delegate rules on items like school penalties and participation fees to the association, which currently serves more than 400 schools. Appeals must be handled by a panel separate from the association, which also must subject itself to annual audits, conduct open meetings and disclose financial information to the board.

The measure, which now heads to the Governor's desk, comes after House and Senate GOP members scrutinized activities of the association, which began in 1913. They complained about what they called the group's oversized control over member schools, eligibility decisions and monetary penalties, even as the association has flush coffers.

The NCHSAA's board did not oppose passage of the final measure, the

board president said in a statement, “considering the changes to the legislation, and assurances that the State Board of Education will partner with the NCHSAA so that we can continue to serve our member schools.” The legislation say the Department of Public Instruction would oversee sports if no agreement is reached. The bill passed the Senate by a vote of 41-7 and 71-43 in the House.

I want to wish a Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family. Please continue to exercise precaution if traveling and be sure to wear a mask and wash your hands.

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