

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



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NC Senate District 41



NC Senate District 41 Newsletter

January 7, 2022



Redistricting Updates





The redistricting trial was held this week before a three judge panel of the NC Superior Court. **Judges heard from political scientists, mathematicians, redistricting experts, legislators, and historians on the impacts these maps would have on voters across the state.** Notable discussion from the trial included testimony from mathematician who are experts on redistricting that trillions of maps showed that the current maps are **"skewed in a partisan way."** It also came to light that, despite Republican leadership's assurances that all maps were drawn on public computers in public view, they used secret **"concept maps"** when developing new redistricting plans and never alerted Democratic members or the public. Closing arguments were Thursday and a final decision from the judges will come on January 11. Appeals to the NC Supreme Court are likely. Keep an eye on my social media accounts for up to date information. You can read more about the trial [here](#).

You can watch a recording of the trial below:

- [Day 1](#) (1/3)
- [Day 2](#) (1/4)
- [Day 3](#) (1/5)
- [Day 4](#) (1/6)

In-Person Learning and COVID-19



I want to thank everyone who has taken the time to contact me **about returning to in-person learning at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.** I share your concerns, especially with the Omicron variant putting us at peak numbers. Some have asked whether CMS should switch to virtual learning (or at least offer that option) until the numbers come down. As I have explained, since passage of [Senate Bill 654](#), K-12 COVID-19 Provisions, school districts no longer have the option to do so and, instead, must maintain in-person learning unless illness at any particular school makes it impossible to operate. The decision must be made day to day and must be school-specific.

SB 654 is a comprehensive bill that includes many education-related provisions, including these new strict limitations on remote learning. This will keep more students in school, which is best for their education and development, but also limits schools' ability to make

changes proactively when community spread is high. In other words, now school leaders must wait to react after many educators and staff get sick. Please do your part to support students and educators by getting vaccinated and boosted and masking when indoors with non-family members.

You can read more about SB654 and its impacts on CMS [here](#). Additionally, [here](#) is a resource that shows K-12 pandemic-related school disruptions nationwide and allows you to track how NC is doing compared to other states.

COVID Tests in North Mecklenburg County



There are many **free opportunities to get tested for COVID-19 in our area.**

- **Davidson Testing:** MSC Industrial Supply Company, 525 Harbour Place Drive, on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays from 10am to 4pm. Anyone can be tested (with or without symptoms) and there is no appointment, identification, or health insurance required. Testing is conducted in the parking lot and can be done curbside for those unable to leave their car. More information [here](#).
- **Huntersville Pick-Up Free Test Kits:** North County Regional Library in Huntersville on Mondays and Wednesdays 10am to 7pm, Fridays 10am to 4pm, and Sundays 1pm to 4pm. The kits are free and no ID, insurance, or appointment is required. More information and additional distribution locations outside of SD41 [here](#).
 - **IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Due to nationwide supply chain issues, the number of kits is very limited and the number of available test kits changes on a daily basis.* Library staff are not involved with the test kits and cannot answer questions regarding availability. The MCPH staff at the libraries have the latest information on supply. Individuals can also call the COVID-19 hotline, **980-314-9400, option 3**, for updates.
- **Atrium Health** has a COVID testing site finder, which you can access [here](#).
- **Novant Health's** COVID-19 testing site finder is [here](#).
- Most primary care providers can administer COVID tests in their offices.
- Additional information about where to get COVID tests (at-home, Rapid, and PCR) across the county (resource from the Mecklenburg County Public Health Department) can be found [here](#).

Governor Cooper Signs Executive Action for NC's Clean Energy Economy



Today Governor Cooper signed [Executive Order 246](#), which **affirms North Carolina's clean energy economy by directing next steps to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions and to create economic opportunities in under-served communities**. This executive order builds on [House Bill 951](#), Energy Solutions for North Carolina, the sweeping bipartisan clean energy bill that I voted for and was signed into law in October. Additionally, the Order directs cabinet agencies to consider climate justice when tackling projects related to climate change, resilience, and clean energy. You can read more about the Executive Order [here](#).

Increased Availability for Health Insurance Assistance Enroll by January 15



North Carolinians' **eligibility for subsidies under the Affordable Care Act Marketplace has expanded** thanks to the American Rescue Plan. The expanded financial assistance will **assist approximately 225,000 additional North Carolinians**. Even if you did not qualify for subsidies before, you may now. **Open enrollment ends on January 15**. More information about this expanded eligibility [here](#).

Dunkin Donuts and American Red Cross Join Forces to Promote National Blood Donor Month





January is National Blood Donor Month and **blood supplies are dangerously low**. Dunkin Donuts and the American Red Cross are teaming up to encourage Mecklenburg county residents to donate. Dunkin Donuts is providing **25,000 vouchers for a free medium iced coffee and a donut** for Red Cross blood and platelet donors in January. To schedule an appointment to donate blood, download the free [Red Cross Blood Donor App](#), visit [RedCrossBlood.org](#), or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). More information about the incentive [here](#).

Business Recovery Grant Program



The [North Carolina Department of Revenue](#) has launched the Business Recovery Grant Program, which will provide assistance to businesses that suffered economic losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. **The application period closes January 31, 2022**. Two types of grants are available to an eligible business that suffered an economic loss of at least 20% during the pandemic:

- A **hospitality grant** is available to an eligible arts, entertainment, and recreation business, as well as eligible accommodation and food service business such as a hotel, restaurant, and bar (NAICS codes 71 and 72).
- A **reimbursement grant** is available to an eligible business not classified in NAICS Code 71 and 72 that did not receive funding from other relief programs including Paycheck Protection Program, COVID-19 Job Retention Grant, and EIDL Advance.

You can read more about the application and apply [here](#).

Be on the Lookout for Armadillos!



Here's something unexpected! The NC Wildlife Resources Commission [sent out an alert](#) to be on the lookout for 9-banded armadillos, which have been spotted in 27 NC counties (including Gaston and Mecklenburg). If you'd like to help, you can report observations to armadillo@ncwildlife.org. The email should include a photo of the armadillo, when it was observed, and the location.

More information at the link above.

50th Annual Youth Legislative Assembly



Applications are live for the 50th Annual Youth Legislative Assembly (YLA). The YLA offers students a **unique opportunity to learn first-hand about the legislative process**. The Legislative Services Office, under the North Carolina General Assembly, is now accepting applications for the conference to be held April 8 – 10, 2022, in Raleigh. Applications will be accepted through February 1, 2022.

The YLA teaches high school students about the laws governing North Carolina's citizens as well as the lawmaking process. Students draft, debate and vote on mock legislative bills while developing skills in research, interviewing, group facilitation and policy writing. As the bills are debated, the students get a chance to practice communicating their ideas, opinions and experiences in a team-building environment. At the conclusion of the three-day program, the participants have a better understanding of the lawmaking process as well as enhanced written and oral communication skills. The YLA program is open to students in North Carolina who are in good standing at a public, private, charter or home school. For more information please email YLA Coordinator, Erica Gallion, at erica.gallion@ncleg.gov or call 919-301-1372.

Apply Here

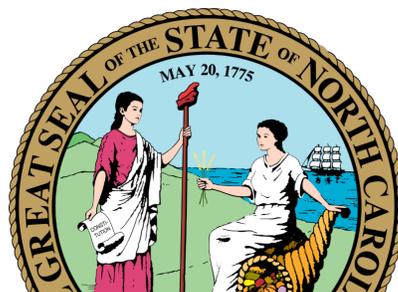
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How can we help you? Let us know and **reach out** to our office! We want to hear from you.

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