

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

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Date 2022-03-08 12:55



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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, March 07, 2022
Volume 9

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**Greetings:**

I have filed to become your senate representative again for my 5th term. I have truly enjoyed being your Senator and have always tried to put the needs of the community first.

Joyce Waddell

Urban Counties

Wake County and Mecklenburg County will each have 13 House seats when the 2023 legislative session convenes. How many of those are held by Republicans could determine whether or not the GOP has a super majority in the 120-member House. Currently, two Republicans represent those counties in the chamber.

The new House districts, which were approved 115-5 by the chamber but still must be approved by the courts, show the magnitude of the challenge in Wake and Mecklenburg. The past President carried

just one of the 26 districts, the 37th in southeastern Wake County, in his 2020 re-election bid.

License Lawsuit

Tens of thousands of North Carolinians whose driver's licenses were revoked for failure to pay traffic tickets could have a better shot of getting their licenses back—even if they can not pay the fines. It is part of a settlement that is expected to end a nearly four-year-old federal lawsuit against the state's Division of Motor Vehicles. A judge still has to sign off on the settlement, but indicated during a Tuesday hearing in Winston-Salem that he is inclined to do so, according to parties involved in the case.

The settlement's key provision requires the Division of Motor Vehicles to tell people who are about to lose their driver's licenses for failing to pay that they can keep their licenses if they convince a judge that they can't afford the fines. The DMV will also send people a form to fill out and file as a motion with the court in their traffic cases, attesting to their inability to pay.

Drivers have had this right for years under North Carolina law, but the DMV was not mentioning it in revocation notices it sent, instead telling people who were about to lose their licenses they needed to "comply" with the traffic ticket to keep their license. "As a result drivers rarely, if ever, invoke this process," the coalition said in its lawsuit, which was filed in 2018.

As part of the settlement, the DMV would also reach out to people who've had their licenses revoked for nonpayment since 2015 and tell them they can file the stock motion. That's an estimated 150,000 people, according to the proposed settlement.

North Carolina drivers can also have their licenses revoked for driving while intoxicated or failing to appear in traffic court, but this settlement will not affect them; only people revoked for failing to pay fines, fees and court costs.

Toll Trouble

Some people who drive on North Carolina's toll roads are getting a bad deal from companies that offer to pay their toll bills online, according to the N.C. Turnpike Authority. Companies using the N.C.

Quick Pass name and logo often charge an extra fee to pay toll bills and then can be slow about transferring the money to the Turnpike Authority, said a spokesman.

The Turnpike Authority uses license plate readers to bill drivers who don't have an N.C. Quick Pass or EZ Pass transponder in their car or truck. A bill is mailed to the address tied to the license plate when a vehicle uses the Triangle Expressway in Durham and Wake counties, the Monroe Expressway in Union County and the Interstate 77 Express Lanes north of Charlotte.

Drivers who want to pay their bill online can go straight to the Turnpike Authority's website, www.ncquickpass.com, and not have to pay an extra fee or wait for the payment to be relayed to the state. The Turnpike Authority has been waiving late fees for customers who used the unauthorized payment companies. They declined to name the companies, but said the state has sent a "cease-and-desist letter" to one company over use of the trademarked Quick Pass name and logo and is considering further legal action.



Senator Waddell Files

Senator Waddell files for a 5th term to represent NC Senate District 40 in Mecklenburg County.





Senator Waddell files for re-election to NC Senate District 40.

Senator Waddell and members of the Mecklenburg Delegation file for additional terms.

Sen Waddell visits CPCC

Senator Waddell visited CPCC along with Governor Cooper, the President of NC Community Colleges and others to participate in a discussion with student recipients concerning the Longleaf Commitment Grant.



Senator Waddell talks with students at CPCC concerning future careers.

Settlement Funds

North Carolina will start to see the first payments in just a few months from the \$750 million it will receive in a multi-state settlement finalized with four major pharmaceutical companies over their role in the national opioid crisis, the Attorney General said Friday. Three distributors, Cardinal, McKesson and AmerisourceBergen, as well as manufacturer Johnson & Johnson will pay a total of \$26 billion after 52 states and territories signed onto the settlement.

States negotiating the \$26 billion settlement first announced an agreement had been reached last July. Since then, all 100 North Carolina counties and 47 municipalities have signed on, meaning the state will receive its full share of \$750 million. More than \$637 million, about 85% of the total, will go to local communities in North Carolina “to support treatment, recovery, harm reduction, and other strategies to address the opioid epidemic,” the release stated. The remaining 15% will go to the state to be used for the same purpose.

The pharmaceutical companies will start releasing funds to a national administrator April 2, according to the release. State and local governments are expected to start receiving money in the second quarter of 2022. The agreement requires companies to pay out the money over 18 years, but the payments are front-loaded. That means that a significant percentage of the total sum will be paid to states and localities in the first five years. In 2022 alone, the companies will pay North Carolina approximately \$93 million, about 12% of the total settlement, according to a payment schedule provided by the Attorney General’s office.

As part of a framework reached last year on how North Carolina’s funds will be allocated and spent, the state said it will set up an opioid settlement dashboard. That publicly available tool will require every local government to detail exactly how they spent their share of the money, what programs did they fund, and how effective were those programs at achieving the desired end.

Senator Waddell is working tirelessly for Senate District 40, but she cannot do this alone. Can she count on your help to continue working for the district?

- DONATE \$25**
- DONATE \$50**
- DONATE \$100**
- DONATE \$250**
- OTHER AMOUNT \$ _____**

I must emphasize the importance of voting in the primary election as well as the general election, it is often that many elections are decided in the primary. It has been customary that many voters will only vote in the general election, but we must remember that our voice is our vote.

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